University of Nottingham
Access agreement for 2015 entry

Introduction
The University of Nottingham has a long tradition of raising aspirations and supporting achievement by working with young and mature learners, teachers, schools and colleges across Nottingham, the East Midlands and beyond. Despite cuts to Government funding, we are determined to address the needs and challenges of some of the most deprived areas in our country. Our existing strengths across a variety of interventions and partnerships will equip us well to deliver against new targets and we are accelerating and expanding our activities, building on the momentum we have already gained.

The University of Nottingham has made excellent progress in widening participation over the last six years. We are pleased to report that 24.6% of UK students entering the University in September 2012 were from low-income backgrounds, up from 17% in 2004. This represents a rise of nearly eight percentage points in eight years. The interim figure for the 2013 intake is 24.4%, providing every indication that the final figure will rise above last year’s.¹

This success informs our strategy for the future, at the heart of which lies the continuation of our current whole-institution approach. Our outreach includes significant longer-term and altruistic initiatives in the more disadvantaged parts of our region as well as fair access measures and work with mature students. Our fair, clear bursary scheme helps to attract lower-income students from further afield and our flexible admissions scheme, informed by contextual data, facilitates their entry. We are developing new measures to improve our already good retention rates and graduate outcomes. This work is supported by additional funds from a range of sources. Additional fees income, philanthropic support and the Student Opportunity funding will allow us to enhance the financial, academic and professional support we provide our own students, ensuring that a University of Nottingham education provides all our students with fair and equal opportunity to succeed, both as undergraduates and subsequently within society. A significant reduction to the Student Opportunity Funding would reduce the net expansion.

¹ ‘Low income’ for this purpose is defined as residual household incomes under £25,000 for 2013 entry. This is the inflation-adjusted equivalent of qualifying for full fee remission under the pre-2006 system.
1. Fee limits and fee income above £6,000

The University of Nottingham will charge home students **£9,000** pa for all full-time HEFCE-funded undergraduate degree courses.\(^2\) We will not charge any students on part-time courses more than £6,750 in an academic year. We will charge students on a placement year or a sandwich year £1,350 pa.\(^3\) Our estimated total fee income above £6,000 will be £50.8m from 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 entrants, with £1.1m of additional fees income from undergraduate students who entered from 2006 to 2011.

2. Expenditure on additional access and student success measures

The University of Nottingham’s total OFFA-countable expenditure on access and widening participation in 2015-16 will be £16.0m. While this is less than the £16.6m originally forecast, this is due to changes in student number forecasts. Widening participation expenditure as a proportion of higher fees income remains at 31% and is forecast to rise to £16.3m by 2017-18.

Expenditure for 2015-16 this includes
- £2.7m on outreach and student success
- £13.3m on means-tested bursaries for new and continuing students.

Of our total OFFA-countable expenditure on access and widening participation, 15.9% supports outreach, with most of the rest committed to financial support. An additional £504,000 of non-OFFA-countable Student Opportunity funding, if confirmed, will bring our total expenditure on outreach to £3.1m. We believe that this balance between outreach and financial support is appropriate to us as a nationally recruiting selective university, but we will continue to reflect internally on this and to evaluate the impact of our financial support arrangements, as set out below. We may amend our current arrangements as a result.

For the 90% of our intake living beyond commuting distance and for whom regular participation in our outreach is thus impractical, we believe that a generous package of fair, clear financial support is a strong attraction. We surveyed our first-year core bursary recipients in March 2014; respondents indicated that our bursary arrangements influenced 36% of them to choose the University of Nottingham. For those with incomes up to £25,000, this rises to 47%; this is also the income band (amongst bursary recipients) that has increased most within our intake. The survey has also provided clear evidence of the value of financial support in enabling students to benefit from their university education: 89% reported that our bursaries reduced the need for them to work part-time during study, while for 91% bursaries reduce their worry over the cost of going to university and for 76% bursaries reduce their worry over debt. In these respects it is notable that for students in higher income bands, particularly the £25,000 to £35,000 band, bursaries are still very important.\(^4\)

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\(^2\) This is the fee for students entering in the 2015-16 academic year. It is also the fee for students enrolling in the UG Certificate course D321. The fee for students entering in the 2016-17 academic year and in subsequent years may be subject to an inflationary increase.

\(^3\) The fee for Erasmus years and other placement or sandwich years taken in 2015-16 will be £1350, while those taken in subsequent years may be subject to an inflationary increase. This fee is subject to government legislation. Any inflationary increase will be linked to the RPI-X, which is the retail price index, excluding mortgage interest payments, and was 3.34 per cent for 2014-15. Placement or sandwich years form an integral part of some University of Nottingham undergraduate degrees, typically in languages, American studies and politics, or those featuring years in industry.

\(^4\) This survey was designed and analysed by Dr Michelle Haynes of the Nottingham University Business School, with advice from Dr Penelope Griffin, Head of Widening Participation.
Our flexible admissions policy and processes are powerful tools in increasing our WP intake, but are also relatively cost-efficient, so do not add significantly to non-bursary WP expenditure. Nor do we currently allocate significant resources to WP student retention and success, as these are only very slightly below that of non-WP students.

3. Assessment of performance and strategy for the future

a. Performance against the key widening participation performance indicator

The University of Nottingham has made excellent progress to date in recruiting more students from low-income backgrounds. In 2004 we set ourselves the challenging target of increasing our proportion of low-income students by five percentage points in six years. Despite starting from a lower base - 17% in 2004 - than our original calculations had indicated, we have managed to raise the proportion of low-income students by nearly eight percentage points in eight years. In September 2012, 26.4% of UK undergraduate entrants were from low-income backgrounds, and the interim figure for 2013 entry is 24.4%; this figure is likely to rise further by the end of the year. We are delighted to have achieved this increase, despite the rise in fees and the Government’s student number control policy. We aim to increase the proportion of low-income students to 28% by the 2016 intake. The graph below illustrates our progress to date and our ambitions for progress in future years.

Figure 1: Low-income students as a proportion of all UK entrants: progress to date and targets for the future

[Graph showing progress from 2004 to 2016-17]

This includes full-time students on courses that are (or have been) HEFCE-funded, and excludes NHS-funded courses. The definition of ‘low-income’ in this graph uses the definition for 2012 entry since these are the most recent results included.
We will continue to use this definition of ‘low income’ as our key performance indicator for widening participation, as this provides a convenient and accurate means of measuring progress each year. By setting the income threshold at the inflation-adjusted equivalent of qualifying for full fee remission under the pre-2006 fees system (£25,000 for 2013 entry), we can generate consistent trend data over a number of years and three fees systems.\(^6\)

**b. Performance against other indicators**

Our performance against two of the HEFCE/HESA widening participation performance indicators has improved consistently in recent years. The intake from state schools has risen from 69.4% in 2008 to 75.8% in 2012 entry; the intake from NS-SEC 4-7 has risen from 17.4% to 19.1%; and the intake from low-participation neighbourhoods rose then fell again.\(^7\) Our position relative to the Russell Group averages, after a very positive rise, has slipped slightly for 2012 entry on two of these measures and risen on the third. The intake of students from less advantaged areas, as defined by Mosaic, rose. Looking across all indicators, we are confident that we are making good progress in recruiting more students from less advantaged backgrounds.

The University’s continuation rate for students from low participation neighbourhoods is usually within one or two percentage points of that for students from other neighbourhoods. Figures for 2008-09 to 2011-12 have ranged from 94.6% to 96.0%. There is a greater difference in the continuation rates for mature students (91.0% and 87.1% over the last two years). We have taken actions to improve retention for all students, as outlined in section 8 below, and are currently considering how to ensure that mature students and those from less advantaged backgrounds and from minority ethnic backgrounds benefit. The survey results quoted in section (a) above indicate that our bursary levels are high enough to lessen the need to work part-time.

**c. Strategic approach to access**

Over the past decade, the University’s widening participation outreach programme has worked consistently with approximately 100 local secondary school and colleges, supporting progression to higher education generally as well as progression of higher-achieving learners to selective universities and specifically to the University of Nottingham. This work has yielded very positive results since it started in 2000, with students from local widening participation schools and colleges comprising 10% of our 2012 intake, up from 4% in 2002 – a significant achievement, especially in view of the rise in our entry requirements. Half the students progressing from these schools reside in deprived postcodes, more than twice the proportion progressing to us from non-

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\(^6\) The University of Nottingham has used the proportion of low-income students as its key performance indicator for the widening participation strategy and access agreement since September 2006. We chose this indicator for a number of reasons.
- Convenience: we have interim figures on students’ income profile by February. These figures allow us to monitor progress within each current year and help inform planning for the next academic year.
- Accuracy: ‘residual household income’ is calculated by the Government for an individual student and is therefore one of the most accurate measures of wealth and relative advantage available. The sharing of information between the SLC and HMRC is likely to enhance accuracy.
- Stability: the methodology used by the Government for calculating residual household income has remained stable in recent years.

\(^7\) At the point of writing we are seeking to understand the reason for this fall. It may relate to the change in Nursing from diploma to degree.
partner UK schools. We have also maintained a much smaller programme for local primary schools in less advantaged areas.

More recently, changes in the national context – particularly the rise in entry requirements and the increased competition for places – prompted us to design a major expansion and provide a longer-term pathway for the region’s talent. Launched in January 2011, Nottingham Potential is designed to address the mismatch between relatively low local attainment and progression to level 3 study, and increasingly competitive higher education entry requirements. Nottingham Potential has already expanded our outreach output from 22,000 contact opportunities in 2010-11 to 46,000 in 2012-13, and further expansion is currently underway, though any reduction to the Student Opportunity Funding will compromise our capacity to expand. The University is proud of the doubling of our outreach activity to date, of the breadth of our engagement and of the contribution to aspirations, attainment and progression it represents. Our contribution to primary schools has achieved particularly rapid expansion.

Our outreach activities start at primary school with children in Year 2 (seven-year-olds) and continue throughout their education. Much of this activity – including that provided in partnership with IntoUniversity through community based learning centres – is relatively altruistic in nature and aims to contribute to HE progression generally. However two strands of work support the attainment of higher achieving learners – young people and mature learners – and their progression to selective universities, including Nottingham. Work with mature learners focuses on adults aiming to progress to higher education through Access qualifications. Our Ambition Nottingham scheme for higher-achieving young people now starts in Year 9, and at sixth-form level is available to a wider area, with some activities available to a national cohort. We are extending this work to pupils in years 7-8 in 2014-15. Some of these activities are facilitated through collaborating with external partners. For more information, see section 5 and the visual summary in appendix 1.

4. Financial support arrangements

The bursary arrangements in place at the University of Nottingham from 2006 to 2011 were commended by OFFA and there is good evidence that they have been successful in terms of attracting low-income students to the University. All UK undergraduate students paying fees and with an assessed household income within the threshold are eligible for a core bursary – there are no other qualifying criteria. We are aware of evidence that prospective students and their families are concerned about overall levels of debt, particularly living costs, and we therefore offer bursaries rather than fee waivers. Figures for 2012 and 2013 suggest that in 2015, well over one-third of UK undergraduate students are likely to be eligible for a core bursary.

As noted above, our own internal survey of our first-year bursary recipients in March 2014 indicates that our bursaries influenced 36% of them in choosing the University of Nottingham, with this figure rising to 47% amongst those with incomes under £25,000. Sources include unpublished research by the University of Bristol, drawing on focus groups with 120 students; a HELOA ‘Meet your market’ event in January 2011; and anecdotal evidence from staff across the University involved in admissions or recruitment. This finding was broadly in line with the results of earlier surveys. Eighty per cent of 2006 entrants receiving bursaries were influenced by our bursary provision to choose Nottingham. While surveys of the 2008 and 2012 intakes indicated that this had dropped to 30%, the continuing rise in the proportion of low-income student entering the University of Nottingham suggests that bursaries continue to have a positive impact on choice.
Our survey also indicates that 76% of first-year bursary recipients feel that our bursaries reduce their concerns about debt, with this figure rising to 87% for those with incomes under £25,000. We believe that our survey provides strong evidence of the value of continuing our current bursary arrangements. We plan to repeat our survey on an annual basis, monitor the impact of bursaries carefully and reflect internally on results, and may amend current arrangements if our own evidence suggests this is appropriate. We will reassess students’ bursary entitlement annually.

The Vice-Chancellor of the University of Nottingham consulted the Executive of the Students’ Union in detail over financial support arrangements for 2012 entry, and this has been followed up on an annual basis. At the most recent consultation, Students’ Union representatives strongly endorsed the University’s financial support arrangements, particularly welcoming the emphasis on bursaries over fee waivers. Students’ Union representatives also judged the balance of expenditure between bursaries and outreach to be appropriate.

Table 1: Core bursaries at the University of Nottingham for 2015 entry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income bands</th>
<th>Core bursary award level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;£15,000</td>
<td>£3,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>£15,001 - £25,000</td>
<td>£2,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£25,001 - £35,000</td>
<td>£1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>£35,001 - £42,600</td>
<td>£750</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We offer PGCE students the same bursary arrangements as other undergraduate students, but include any TDA bursary in the income level for assessing eligibility.

The University will continue to provide additional guaranteed bursaries for students from particular backgrounds or circumstances with the aim of ensuring that financial support is targeted towards those who need it most. As before, we have designed criteria for bursaries so that most prospective students know their likely entitlements at an early stage in the application process.

Nottingham Potential guaranteed bursaries provide an additional £1,000 a year for students who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- entering via an Access route or with vocational qualifications and with a residual household income figure of up to £42,600
- students with children or adult dependants and with a residual household income figure up to £42,600
- students who have been in the care of a local authority (that is, who have been looked after as children)
- students who have fulfilled specified conditions through participation in the University’s widening participation outreach activities (for example, Nottingham Potential and our summer schools).

At the University of Nottingham we will provide means-tested bursaries to well over one-third of our full-time UK undergraduate students, at a total estimated cost of £13.3m.11

The University of Nottingham is committed to supporting part-time students from a low-income background. We will provide bursaries of between £350 and £750 a year to

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10 Meetings about financial support were held in February 2013 and November 2013.
11 These figures do not include charges for HECS, interest or staffing for bursary administration.
part-time students with incomes up to £25,000 a year, depending on their income and intensity of study.

5. Widening participation outreach work

a. Centrally organised outreach

In 2015-16 we will continue to deliver and expand our Nottingham Potential programme. At this point, confirmed developments include the development of the new Years 7-8 strand of Ambition Nottingham and a further increase in the scale of the primary schools support programme. We are currently in discussion with external partners over other potential developments. Significant cuts to the outreach element of Student Opportunity Funding would require us to reassess overall spend.

School-level targeting is informed by data from the jointly commissioned and managed East Midlands WP Research and Evaluation Partnership (EMWPREP). This uses methodology broadly similar to that used by Aimhigher and utilises socio-economic measures such as IMD and IDACI. Individual-level targeting is informed by national guidance and, for our highly competitive summer schools, assisted by analysis of applicants by EMWPREP. All centrally-led events are designed and marketed to encourage the participation of learners from black and minority ethnic groups, with disabilities, or with other protected characteristics. Please see appendix 4 for more information. A small number of activities are run specifically for BME or disabled learners.

The aims and principal components of Nottingham Potential are as follow.

Nottingham Potential aims to raise attainment through:
- University support programmes in primary schools for literacy, numeracy and curriculum topics
- IntoUniversity’s after-school Academic Support sessions for years 2-13, providing individual children and young people with tutoring and a supportive community-based environment for homework
- University-led subject-specific revision sessions and on-line revision resources for GCSE, AS and A-level examinations
- Additional Biology classes for Access students progressing to healthcare courses.

Nottingham Potential aims to raise learners’ motivation to work hard and their understanding of the importance of education in their future.
- At primary and secondary level, University enrichment activities and taster sessions promote an interest in learning and in academic questions.
- Face-to-face and online mentoring uses University of Nottingham undergraduates respectively to help at-risk pupils build social and inter-personal skills and confidence, and to support sixth-formers through the university application process.
- At primary level, IntoUniversity’s FOCUS Programme works with whole classes to introduce the concept of higher education as an achievable goal and offer young people learning experiences that immerse them in a single topic or subject area.
- At secondary level, Teacher Fellowships promote teacher and school engagement with local communities.
Nottingham Potential aims to equip young people and mature learners to plan for 
progression and make appropriate choices for post-16 study and HE. Key elements 
include:

- University information sessions and IntoUniversity FOCUS activities at secondary 
  level, building young people’s understanding and skills
- Ambition Nottingham Years 7-11, which works with cohorts of high-potential 
  students, their parents and teachers
- Ambition Nottingham post-16, a two-year programme of masterclasses, 
  information workshops, and revision, skills and personal development sessions
- Four residential summer schools and ongoing support in Year 12 and 13, 
  including e-mentoring from undergraduates and support with revision, applying to 
  HE and interviews.

Nottingham Potential students applying to the University of Nottingham receive 
additional support with the application process. Those that successfully enter 
receive additional financial and practical support.

The expansion represented by Nottingham Potential is underpinned by our longer-
standing outreach programme. The Widening Participation Team continues to work with 
over 100 secondary schools and colleges, offering activities for every group from 
year 7 to mature students on Access courses. Over the past two years, we have 
expanded the reach of our service from approximately a 30-mile radius to a 50-mile 
radius. Activities include, for example, awareness-raising visits to the campus, advice in 
year 9 on choosing GCSE options and in Year 11 on choosing post-16 subjects and 
courses, UCAS personal statement workshops and taster days. We have improved our 
capacity to record and analyse the impact of this work.

Our work with and for students studying Access and vocational qualifications has 
expanded to include more pre-Access advice to potential applicants and the provision of 
information and advice to University admissions staff. The latter has allowed us to make 
good progress in clarifying the acceptability of Access and vocational qualifications for 
entry to our courses. Filmed interviews with mature undergraduates help mature 
prospective applicants for healthcare courses to understand the realities of full-time 
university study, and prepare accordingly. We continue to provide additional academic 
sessions pre-entry to boost attainment in Biology.

The University’s long-standing work to support local primary schools has expanded 
significantly in both scale and ambition. The voluntary contributions of both staff and 
students are now presented within a cohesive framework, and have been augmented by 
a centrally led programme of activities. These include for example Discovery Days, which 
allow pupils to experience facilities and activities they would not normally encounter; 
Learning Journeys, which support teachers in developing resources for specific 
curriculum topics; and family learning.

Work to support care leavers and young carers is summarised in appendix 2.

b. Contributions by academic Schools

Staff and students across the University contribute generously to widening participation 
outreach. Engagement initiated by the University’s academic Schools continues to grow, 
increasingly in the form of formal projects, some with external funding and curriculum 
links. These include, for example, Open Air Laboratories (OPAL), Routes into Languages 
and the Further Maths Centre. Staff also contribute to outreach organised by the 
Widening Participation Team: well over 130 (mostly academics) provide masterclasses,
academic sessions for summer schools and other activities. Following an audit, the total input by staff in academic Schools has been valued by the University’s Finance Department at over £500,000 per year. Engagement by students also continues strongly, with approximately 80 students participating in formal schemes such as Undergraduate Ambassadors and in the Teacher Associates and Inspire Mentors schemes, the latter two run in collaboration with Nottingham Trent University. A further 200 students support the Widening Participation Team’s activities as Student Ambassadors and/or Summer School Ambassadors. The University’s Schools and Colleges Engagement Framework and associated central staff support this breadth of engagement.

c. Students’ Union and student-led activities

The Students’ Union and Student Volunteer Centre have a long history of volunteering in local schools and running their own projects. Those contributing to the broader WP agenda include tutoring in computer science and maths by students from HackSoc and MathSoc; and STEM ambassadors from ChemEnv Soc. In addition, the University’s Students’ Union (SU) works with SU counterparts in local FE colleges, sharing good practice and offering opportunities to develop relevant skills. This includes running on-campus workshops that have the additional role of familiarising FE counterparts with the University of Nottingham environment and encouraging them to consider progression.

In recent months, SU officers and WP staff have identified opportunities for collaboration and mutual support, while maintaining the independence of students’ activities. Current practical steps include WP staff providing a menu of volunteering opportunities and raising students’ awareness of the funding available to cover transport to schools.

d. Collaboration in outreach

We will continue current collaboration with Nottingham Trent University on joint activities. These include:
- the Inspire Mentors and Teacher Associates schemes, jointly run and funded; and involving students from both universities
- events for teachers, families, looked after children and young people with disabilities and those working to support both these groups
- regular meetings between representatives of both universities’ WP outreach teams.

Collaboration with the University of Derby focuses on ensuring that our respective outreach provision is complementary. Staff development enables outreach staff to refer as appropriate to opportunities and provision at both universities. We run a joint healthcare professions insight day for Year 10 students and collaborate on an open day for Access students.

Other ongoing collaborations include:
- Organising and hosting a joint Russell Group professional development session on evaluation (March 2014)
- Contributing to the planning and delivery of the third joint Russell Group teachers’ conferences (2014)

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12 This figure is an estimate based on an earlier audit. We will repeat the audit and re-evaluate this figure over the next year.
- Contributing to ongoing sharing of good practice with other Russell Group universities in relation to supporting mature learners, identifying ‘cold spots’ for outreach and more
- Active contribution to EMCLASS, the East Midlands universities’ network for looked after children and care leavers
- Chairing the East Midlands WP Research and Evaluation Partnership, a service funded jointly by most universities in the region to inform outreach and evaluate its impact
- Exchange visits with the University of Birmingham for selected groups of school and college students as well as for staff sharing good practice.

In addition, the University of Nottingham is an active supporter of the Higher Education Liaison Officers’ Association. HELOA is the professional association of higher education staff who provide guidance, information and outreach activities to prospective higher education students, their families and guidance advisers right across the United Kingdom. HELOA has over 800 members from over 130 UK universities and Higher Education Institutions. The Association has a code of practice which encourages collaboration, sharing of good practice and rigorous standards of impartiality.

6. Academy relationships

The Nottingham University Samworth Academy (NUSA) provides a high-quality educational facility for pupils from one of the country’s most deprived inner-city areas. Admissions criteria are set so that pupils living in the catchment are given priority, ensuring that overall improvement in the performance of the academy is not achieved at the expense of a fall in the number of pupils entitled to free school meals. The academy also provides out-of-hours facilities for pupils, including summer schools, and an expanding range of activities for the local community. University staff and students work alongside NUSA staff to develop an innovative curriculum, designed to raise attainment and aspiration in an area with little previous exposure to the world of Higher Education. In 2013 the NUSA Trust took on the sponsorship of Firbeck Primary School, one of NUSA’s ‘feeder’ primary schools, as a step towards encouraging an all-through approach to education in the locality, and to resolving the problems caused at secondary level by poor achievement at age 11.

In addition to our continuing work with NUSA, the University is one of the co-lead sponsors of the new Nottingham University Academy for Science and Technology (NUAST). NUAST is scheduled to open in September 2014 and will provide high quality technical and vocational education and training to 14-19 year-olds. Local, regional and national employers are contributing to the design, development and delivery of the curriculum. The University’s contribution will harness the significant expertise and specialist facilities of our Faculty of Engineering and Centre for Sustainable Energy Technologies.

7. Admissions and special entry pathways

As part of our whole-institution approach, we continue to review and improve our systems to provide contextual information about all UK applicants. Since 2006, we have augmented the contextual information available to admissions staff by including performance information about schools in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales, as well as England. We will augment this with further contextual information from UCAS, once data quality has been improved. When assessing applications, admissions staff take this
school performance information into consideration alongside the personal statement and reference and socio-economic information derived from the home postcode. Our widening participation admissions policy and processes are well established across the University and explained transparently to prospective applicants on our website.\footnote{For details, please see \url{http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/ugstudy/applying/ourpolicies.aspx}}

**Year 0 Foundation courses** are an important tool in facilitating entry to some of the University of Nottingham’s most selective courses. The Certificate in Health Science, a joint initiative with the University of Lincoln, facilitated entry for over 100 students from under-represented backgrounds to Medicine, Pharmacy, Veterinary Medicine and other health-related courses at the University of Nottingham. The Certificate received the THES Widening Participation Initiative of the Year Award in 2006. This initiative laid the foundations for the development of Year 0 courses within the University of Nottingham itself.

The School of Veterinary Medicine and Science admitted the first intake to its new widening participation Gateway year 0 in September 2011. Entry requirements are lower than those required for direct entry. This course complements the Preliminary year 0 for Veterinary Medicine, which attracts a high proportion of students with Access and vocational qualifications. The year 0 for Medical Physiology and Therapeutics also attracts a high proportion of such students and has been used as a basis for the new Medicine year 0, which had its first intake in 2012. The Faculties of Engineering and Science run year 0 courses for a range of students, with the Engineering course particularly attractive to widening participation students. A pre-entry bridging course facilitates the entry of students without the normal mathematics requirements.

### 8. Student retention and success

The University has the ongoing aim of maintaining continuation rates for students from low participation neighbourhoods at over 94%. The University usually exceeds this target, with figures over the past four years ranging from 94.6% to 96.0%. The University’s continuation rate for students from low participation neighbourhoods is usually within one or two percentage points of that for students from other neighbourhoods. There is a greater difference in the continuation rates for mature students (91.0% and 87.1% over the last two years). We are also aware of variation across success rates by ethnicity and have conducted an analysis of factors that might contribute. As part of our Teaching Transformation Programme, academic schools are currently considering how to incorporate more small-group teaching and transition support and how to implement a new peer mentoring scheme for all undergraduates; in all of this there is particular consideration of how to ensure that mature students and those from minority ethnic groups benefit, for example mature students will be paired for mentoring with other mature students. We have already augmented Kickstart, our additional induction programme for mature students, with ongoing support sessions.

All students have benefitted in recent years from an overall reconfiguration of pastoral support, both within our residential accommodation and the academic personal tutoring system within our Schools. We also regard our bursaries as an aid to retention and success, as students have confirmed that they reduce the need to work part-time during study.

The University is aware of its role in promoting social mobility and access to the professions, through ensuring both a diverse intake to our courses and a student experience of the highest quality. We are specifically aware of the need for students
from low-income non-professional family backgrounds to develop greater awareness of the formal steps necessary for successful progression to the professions as well as informal networks and the ‘soft skills’ valued by employers.\textsuperscript{14}

The augmentation of the University’s Careers and Employability Service (CES) by the addition of 22 additional staff is allowing it to expand its specific support for students from low-income and non-professional family backgrounds, both while at University and in preparation for their future careers. This includes CES staff contributing to outreach activities through tailored sessions for local school pupils and teachers, with a focus on access to the professions. CES also helps Nottingham Potential students and other bursary holders to find term-time and holiday employment through our Unitemps agency; and to use specific skills development pathways through the Nottingham Advantage Award.\textsuperscript{15} CES staff use alumni as mentors and to broker work placements and internships which will equip students with the networks and experience to compete in the employment marketplace. WP and CES staff are currently in discussion about additional measures for undergraduates from less advantaged backgrounds.

9. Contributions to local heritage and the arts

Lakeside is the University of Nottingham’s unique public arts centre and museum, presenting an eclectic programme of music, dance, theatre, visual art and family events all year round. The Learning Programme presents school students with excellent opportunities to interact with high quality artistic practice. Lakeside’s Learning Team works closely with schools and colleges, devising activities in collaboration with teachers and other practitioners as well as with Lakeside’s programming staff and staff in the University’s Manuscripts and Special Collections.

10. Monitoring and evaluation

The University of Nottingham is working alongside the Sutton Trust in designing and piloting a new evaluation framework. We are implementing this on a rolling basis, working with the Centre for Evaluation and Monitoring at Durham University (CEM). CEM facilitates access to external data and standardised tests, and provides advice and more complex analysis. The new framework will allow us to assess the impact of individual activities and combinations of activities, with comparator groups used in some cases. A summary of the methods of evaluating impact follows. Where appropriate, these measures are disaggregated for mature learners. Performance on selected measures is included in appendix 3.

Measures to raise attainment are evaluated through:
- Data from the National Pupil Database for Key Stage 2, GCSE and A-level results
- Standardised teacher questionnaires, incorporating both quantitative measures of assessment and qualitative assessment of impact.

Measures to raise learners’ motivation to work hard and their understanding of the importance of education in their future (aspirations) are evaluated through:

\begin{itemize}
  \item [\textsuperscript{15}] The Nottingham Advantage Award is the University’s employability award which accredits student learning derived from co- and extra-curricular activity.
\end{itemize}
- Standardised attitudes and aspirations questionnaires
- Observations, mini-tests, production of piece of work, generic learning outcome questionnaires.

Measures to equip young people and mature learners to plan for progression and make appropriate choices for post-16 study and HE are evaluated through:
- Progression of students with 5+ A*-C GCSEs (including English and Maths) to level 3 study and specifically to facilitating subjects
- Progression to HE, differentiating Russell Group and other universities
- Offer rates for partner FE colleges and specifically for mature students on Access courses.

These measures complement those below, which we have used since 2006 or longer to monitor and evaluate WP activities and policies. Some measures are disaggregated for mature learners.

i. Quality of outreach experience
   a) Monitoring uptake of all outreach activities by targeted learners (against targets as listed in our WP outreach plan; this includes uptake of ‘menus’ of outreach activities with local partner WP schools and colleges)
   b) Gathering qualitative feedback on menu sessions, masterclasses, summer schools and support activities
   c) External evaluation of specified masterclasses through the East Midlands WP Research and Evaluation Partnership (EMWPREP)

ii. Impact of outreach activity
    a) Menu sessions: tracking numbers & proportions of WP & non-WP applicants, offers, accepts, UFs from partner cf non-partner schools and colleges
    b) Masterclass and summer school programmes: tracking participants’ applications, offers, accepts, UFs and registrations to the University of Nottingham for participants in programmes
    c) Summer school programmes: tracking via UCAS participants’ applications, offers, accepts, UFs to all and selective universities
    d) Progression to HE of participants in more intensive activities (through EMWPREP)

iii. Impact of the University of Nottingham’s broader WP programme on intake
    a) Overall WP and non-WP applications, offers, accepts, UFs, registrations (at University, faculty, school & course level)
    b) Registrations by low-income students (University, faculty & school level)

iv. Impact of the University of Nottingham’s broader WP programme on the student experience
    a) Monitoring non-continuation rates for students from low-participation neighbourhoods (University level only, using HESA figures)
    b) Tracking degree outcomes for students from deprived areas (University level only, using Mosaic)

Responsibility for monitoring and evaluation
The University’s Board is responsible for monitoring compliance with the access agreement and progress towards key milestones. Responsibility for monitoring and evaluating component parts is as follows:
WP staff are responsible for evaluating the broader WP strategy and producing reports for senior management. WP staff evaluate the quality of outreach experience and the impact of outreach activity and use this to inform ongoing planning. Widening Participation and Admissions staff jointly review admissions-related data (iii.a) to evaluate the impact of policy and processes. The University’s Management Board reviews university-level data on entry by WP students (iii.a and iii.b) and the student experience (iv). Academic Schools review School-level data on entry by WP students (iii.a and iii.b) and are prompted to address below-average WP recruitment as part of the School planning process.

11. Provision of information to prospective students

The University will continue to provide information through its printed prospectuses and other materials, website, face-to-face meetings at recruitment fairs, open days and interviews, and through responding to individual letters, emails and telephone calls. The Financial Support Team has been progressively augmented to increase its capacity for pre-admission financial advice. All staff involved in enquiries receive additional training in financial support.

On-line information on fees and costs is provided via an enhanced on-line prospectus. The University provides estimates of any additional course-specific costs (for example, specialist clothing and equipment or field trips). The University’s website supports bursary provision through the following functions:

- alerting users across all stages of the application process to both the guaranteed bursaries and additional financial support
- interfacing with HEBSS and the University’s student application system to:
  - allow applicants to find out whether they are eligible for a core bursary and track the progress of their applications for additional financial support
  - explain to successful applicants what they need to do to activate bursary payments once registered
  - trigger payment of awards following provision of bank details by students via a secure on-line system
- providing guidance and assistance in the transition to University
- signposting prospective and current students to support services.

The administration of bursaries funded from additional fees income and other financial support schemes with a value of £500 per annum or above for home students sits with a central Financial Support Team, based within our Student Services Centres, which has extensive experience in dealing with discretionary financial support. This centralisation of bursaries administration ensures a clear point of enquiry, consistency of policy and high quality service to prospective and registered students. The addition of a third Student Services Centre at the Sutton Bonington Campus in 2010 reflects the University’s commitment to improving services to students and has resulted in an increased uptake of services and advice.
12. Equality and diversity

The University of Nottingham’s Strategic Plan 2010–2015 includes the following principles:

- Diversity within our community adds to the richness of the university experience and is vital to the growth and development of staff and students. As a leading global university, we are committed to recruiting a diverse student and staff community.
- The health and wellbeing of students and staff is of paramount importance. We are committed to providing the highest-quality services to students, to underpin and support their wider experience across all our campuses.

We spend £777,000 explicitly on equality and diversity. This includes relevant staffing in Disability and Academic Support and a health promotion adviser, but not outreach.

The Annual Student Diversity Report
http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/studentservices/documents/annualdiversityreport.pdf aims to show where these aspirations are being met as well as demonstrating the University’s legal compliance, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. The ASDR also seeks to celebrate the achievements of the University and its departments in understanding equality and diversity and making changes to enhance the student experience.

In preparing this access agreement, the University of Nottingham has had due regard to equality and diversity. Given our extensive existing provision to support students with protected characteristics and particularly those with a disability, as summarised in the Annual Student Diversity Report, this access agreement focuses on outreach. Details are in appendix 4. In summary, the University’s Widening Participation team embeds a consideration of equality and diversity into all our outreach work through

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people with protected characteristics on all our events
- encouraging people with these characteristics to participate in our activities
- fostering good relations between people who do share a protected characteristic and those who do not by tackling prejudice and promoting understanding
- monitoring the participation of people with protected characteristics in our activities.

In 2012-13, our outreach work for mature students studying Access qualifications comprised 101 activities and reached over 3,000 students. This work is carried out largely during school hours, to facilitate participation by those with family or other caring responsibilities. The Springboard programme, run in collaboration with the Students’ Union, provides specific support for young Afro-Caribbean people. The programme recruited 23 University of Nottingham student mentors to support 30 young people, and also provided campus visits and inspirational speakers.
### Appendix 1: Nottingham Potential: overview of main components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>University of Nottingham</th>
<th>Students in classroom schemes: UoN students mentor individuals and provide assistance in the classroom; Teacher fellowships: teachers work with pupil groups and UoN on community-focused projects Curriculum link activities with the Mansfield Learning Partnership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 13</strong></td>
<td>All Nottingham Potential students applying to the University of Nottingham receive enhanced support with the admissions process and special consideration by admissions staff.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Summer holidays</strong></td>
<td>Ambition Nottingham activities: mentoring, revision support, mock interviews, finance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year 12</strong></td>
<td>Mature students: activities include elements of Ambition Nottingham and menu activities, tailored to the circumstances of mature students. Includes the option of activities tailored to students on vocational courses.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'Menu’ activities: work with whole classes on researching university choices, how to apply, personal statements, study skills and financial arrangements. Includes the option of activities tailored to students on vocational courses.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Academic support after school: work with individuals – entry by WP criteria + recommendation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Focus days: work with whole classes to support the transition to 6th form and university, and develop skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years 9-11</strong></td>
<td>Ambition Nottingham pre-16 programme: masterclasses, information, skills development - Work with individuals – entry by WP criteria + academic potential</td>
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<td></td>
<td>'Menu’ activities: work with whole classes to raise aspirations, improve study skills, support achievement and plan for progression.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Academic support after school: work with individuals – entry by WP criteria + recommendation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Focus days: work with whole classes to support the transition to secondary school, develop skills and build awareness of university and careers</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Years 7-8</strong></td>
<td>Teacher fellowships - working with whole classes; Learning leaders: UoN volunteers run activities to enrich the curriculum; Learning journeys: support for curriculum-based projects in schools</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Discovering university and engaging with learning: curriculum-related work with whole classes, enrichment work with groups and remedial support for individuals.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Academic support after school: work with individuals – entry by WP criteria + recommendation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Focus days and Focus weeks: work with whole classes to explore a curriculum topic in depth and learn about university</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Years 5-6</strong></td>
<td>Teacher fellowships - working with whole classes; Learning leaders: UoN volunteers run activities to enrich the curriculum; Learning journeys: support for curriculum-based projects in schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helping individual young people with high academic potential to progress to selective universities</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Helping mature learners progress to university and specifically the University of Nottingham</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activities for whole classes of pupils / students to support learning, raise awareness of university and facilitate progression</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Activities run in partnership with IntoUniversity, many at our community-based learning centres, to support attainment, raise awareness of university and facilitate progression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 2: Supporting care leavers and young carers in higher education

Care leavers
The University of Nottingham has developed a Plan of Commitment to Care Leavers in Higher Education.¹ The Buttle Trust has approved this Plan and given it the Trust’s Quality Mark; more recently the Trust confirmed that the University has made good progress in implementing the Plan. Measures to support looked after children and care leavers include targeted outreach in collaboration with other HE providers and the local authorities. Care leavers applying to us are offered additional support services pre-entry, which continue to be available to those taking up a place with us. We also provide an additional bursary of £1,000 a year for the duration of study; this is in addition to the Core Bursary of up to £3,000 a year. The University continues to seek improvements in implementing the Plan.

Young carers
Young Carers Event 2013
Over 120 young carers, aged from 13 to 25, from across the UK, attended the Impact funded Young Carers Taster Day in June 2013, organised and hosted by the University of Nottingham. It was the first time that any university had opened its doors for a dedicated day for young carers, to give them a taste of what a university is like, to provide some fun, some learning, a good experience and to raise aspirations. Academic sessions were provided throughout the day and these were supplemented by information, advice and guidance sessions as well as sporting and cultural activities, which utilised all aspects of University Park. The sessions were designed to showcase all elements of university life. The young carers were supported by over 40 support staff from young carer groups across the country.

Young Carers Event 2014
Building on the success of the inaugural event in 2013, the Carers Trust and the University of Nottingham are running a two-day residential young adult carers event. The event will introduce young adult carers to the world of university life, including its academic and social sides as well as providing a platform for research and discussion, which will involve policy makers and young carers themselves. Information, advice and guidance will be provided by the NUS as well as Student Finance England, with University of Nottingham academics again providing the academic taster activities. The young carers have the opportunity to stay in a University of Nottingham hall of residence. The event is aiming to attract 200 young carers from across the UK.

¹ The University’s Plan of Commitment to Care Leavers is available at http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/recruitmentandadmissions/aboutus/wideningparticipation/inreach/lookedafterchildrenandcareleavers.aspx
Appendix 3: Impact targets for outreach, admissions and bursary administration

We have made good progress against most targets and have set ourselves stretching targets for the next five years. The enrolment of summer school ‘graduates’ on our own courses is now increasing again, after a levelling-off due largely to the increased competition for places.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Progress to 2012-13</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At least 40% of students enrolled on our summer school support programmes will enrol at a selective university, rising to 45% by 2016.</td>
<td>39% of the 2007 summer school cohort progressed to selective universities. While the proportion of the 2008 and 2009 cohorts progressing dropped to 34% on average, this is a considerable achievement, given the increased competition for university places and concomitant rise in entry requirements. Applications remain strong. We continue to aim for at least 40% progression, but acknowledge that the effect of the new AAB student number controls makes this an ambitious target.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enrolment has fluctuated considerably in recent years, from a low point of 11.1% for 2010 entry to 20.7% for 2012 entry and 14% for 2013 entry. Applications to us from summer school participants remains strong, but anecdotal evidence indicates that the lifting of the cap above ABB has increased the likelihood of participants receiving offers from other universities.</td>
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<tr>
<td>At least 20% of students enrolled on our summer school support programmes will enrol at the University of Nottingham, rising to 25% by 2016.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The number of students entering the University annually from local WP partner schools will rise to 800 by 2016.</td>
<td>Our list of partner schools changes on an annual basis to reflect changes in local schools, as well as the expansion of our WP outreach programme. We therefore re-calculate figures annually, producing three years of data. While the up-to-date figures are therefore not directly comparable with those on the left, we seek to maintain the same magnitude of improvement within a consistent dataset.</td>
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<tr>
<td>We achieved a decade of very positive local progression, during which the percentage of local partner school students in our intake more than doubled, and numbers increased from 149 to 546. After a drop in local progression to 484 in September 2011 associated with the change in Nursing from a diploma to a degree, numbers recovered to 579 for 2012 entry. This reflects changes in admissions practice in Nursing and Sociology and Social Policy and also increased work with mature students on Access courses on personal statements.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Of the students from local WP partner schools entering the University, the proportion from deprived backgrounds will rise from 46% in 2009 to 56% by 2016.</td>
<td>Of the students from local WP partner schools entering the University, the proportion from deprived backgrounds rose from 49.8% in 2011 to 51.6% in 2012. While this is still slightly less than the 2010 intake, the proportion is more than twice that within the University’s total UK UG intake (24.7% in 2012). Figures are not directly comparable with those to the left due to revision of the partner school list; see note above.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Increase WP students’ UF to registration rate to at least equal that of non-WP applicants. (‘UF’ means applicants with a confirmed place.)</td>
<td>Since 2007, the WP students’ UF to registration rate has increased by nearly 11 percentage points. The gap in the UF to registration rate between WP and non-WP students has narrowed from six percentage points for 2007 entry to three percentage points for 2013 entry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff, processes and systems in place to ensure the efficient processing of student financial information and the provision of financial support.</td>
<td>A survey of first-year bursary holders in March 2014 indicated that our bursary arrangements influenced 36% of them to choose the University of Nottingham. For those with incomes up to £25,000, this rises to 47%. This continues the trend of positive results. A survey in spring 2009 indicated that: - 97% of students surveyed thought the length of time between submitting their details for assessment and receiving a decision was ‘very satisfactory’ (51%) or ‘satisfactory’ (46%). - 82% found the process of obtaining a bursary to be easy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Achieve a bursary take-up rate of at least 98% of eligible students.</td>
<td>In 2012–13, 99.4% of students known to be eligible for a bursary claimed it. This percentage has risen each year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintain and further develop current pro-active provision of financial information, including the Budget Management Advantage Award and Money Doctors.</td>
<td>Strong provision, commended by OFFA.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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2 ‘UF’ is the acronym of ‘unconditional firm’. This refers to an applicant who has achieved the examination grades necessary to meet the terms of his or her offer of a place on a course at the University of Nottingham.
Appendix 4: Advancing equality and diversity through outreach

The Widening Participation Team aims to advance equality of opportunity through its outreach:

- For all events, we follow recommended good practice, for example the Action on Access disability checklist.
- We stress the diversity of our participants to all contributors, and try to ensure all teaching material/tasks consider all characteristics.
- We make provision for people attending WP events during religious festivals to follow their traditions; for example events during Ramadan make alternative provision for meals and provide prayer rooms. We ensure there is culturally appropriate food for participants.
- All our application forms seek information about participants’ characteristics and requirements; we act on information accordingly.

**Outcome:** removing or minimising disadvantages experienced by people with these characteristics on our events.

- One of the eligibility criteria for attending WP programmes is having a disability affecting study.
- We use recommended font styles, sizes and accessible designs and layouts.
- Relevant event literature makes direct reference to our provision for people with protected characteristics; we advertise directly to these groups, for example via Special Needs coordinators in schools, BME officers in the University.
- We run specific activities for some groups, for example the Springboard programme for BME students (run in collaboration with the Students’ Union). We monitor participation and review actions on intensive programmes.
- We promote participation in non-traditional subjects: we encourage both genders to consider all subjects through multi-disciplinary events and where possible have Student Ambassadors of both genders for each subject.

**Outcome:** encouragement for disabled people, those from BME backgrounds and those with religious requirements to participate in our activities. Proactive action on perceived sex bias in subjects.

**The WP Team seeks to foster good relations** between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not:

- Our codes of conduct for event participants stress respect, tolerance and understanding of different lifestyles, viewpoints etc and we train staff and student ambassadors to reflect this.

**Outcome:** tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups.