2013/14 Access Agreement with the Office for Fair Access
# Glossary of Terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Full Form</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BME</td>
<td>Black and Minority Ethnic</td>
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<tr>
<td>FE</td>
<td>Further Education</td>
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<td>FEC</td>
<td>Further Education College</td>
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<td>HE</td>
<td>Higher Education</td>
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<td>HEAT</td>
<td>Higher Education Access Tracker</td>
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<td>HELOA</td>
<td>Higher Education Liaison Officers Association</td>
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<td>IAG</td>
<td>Information, Advice and Guidance</td>
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<td>IMD</td>
<td>Index of Multiple Deprivation</td>
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<td>ITT</td>
<td>Initial Teacher Training</td>
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<td>LPN</td>
<td>Low Participation Neighbourhood</td>
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<td>MFL</td>
<td>Modern Foreign Languages</td>
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<td>NS-SEC</td>
<td>National Statistics - Socio-Economic Classification</td>
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<td>OFFA</td>
<td>Office for Fair Access</td>
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<td>PG</td>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
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<td>POLAR</td>
<td>Participation Of Local Areas</td>
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<td>RUSU</td>
<td>Reading University Students’ Union</td>
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<td>SLC</td>
<td>Student Loans Company</td>
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<td>STEM</td>
<td>Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics</td>
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<td>TA</td>
<td>Teaching Agency</td>
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<td>UCAS</td>
<td>Universities and Colleges Admissions Service</td>
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<td>UG</td>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
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<td>WP</td>
<td>Widening Participation</td>
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1. **Introduction**

The University of Reading is a research-intensive university that enjoys a world-class reputation for teaching, research and enterprise, and regularly appears in the top 200 in world university league tables. Reading enjoys strong application rates and is consistently one of the most popular higher education choices in the UK. Our broad portfolio of full- and part-time degree programmes covers the arts, humanities, business, sciences and social sciences. We regularly update and improve our programmes as new ideas emerge, and industry and student needs change. Our on-going investment in staff, and teaching and learning facilities of the highest quality ensures that our students are challenged to achieve their full potential while at University, and are well prepared for the wider world when they leave. Our aim is to maintain and increase the high academic quality of our intake in the future, irrespective of background and personal circumstance.

The University of Reading remains strongly committed to the widening participation agenda, and we continue to draw students from a wide diversity of backgrounds in the UK and beyond. We believe that widening access to students regardless of personal circumstance allows us to recruit and retain the highest quality students and to maintain our reputation for academic excellence. The three strands of our widening participation strategy are student recruitment, retention and success; our activities to promote success in each of these areas are summarised later in this agreement.

Since the submission of our 2012/13 Access Agreement, there have been further changes in the higher education funding landscape. Not least of these changes has been the move to an open market for students achieving AAB or better for 2012/13 entry, and for students achieving ABB in subsequent years. Changes have been made to our Access Agreement, partly as a result of these changes.

2. **Tuition Fees for Students Entering in 2013/14**

For **full-time undergraduate students**, we intend to charge tuition fees of £9000 p.a. for 2013/14 entrants.

For **part-time undergraduate students**, we intend to charge tuition fees from 2012/13 at the maximum rate on a pro rata basis plus 10%; e.g. a half-time student entering in 2012/13 and 2013/14 would be charged £4950 p.a.

For undergraduate students on a **placement year**, we intend to charge 15% of the maximum allowable fee.

For **postgraduate courses for initial teacher training (ITT)**, we intend to charge tuition fees of £9000 p.a. for 2013/14.

Students who are continuing studies started before 1 September 2012 will be charged at the rate appropriate for their year of entry, as defined in previous Access Agreements.

From 2014-15 entry and onwards, we expect to charge the maximum allowable fee for full-time undergraduate students and postgraduate ITT students.

3. **Expenditure on Access and Retention Measures**
3.1 Expenditure

In our approved 2012/13 Agreement — which excluded students on part-time courses and initial teacher training (ITT) — we planned, at steady state (2014/15 onwards), to use 26.1 % of our additional fee income for widening participation measures. For 2012/13 and 2013/14, our commitment was to spend 30.9 % and 27.2 %, respectively, of additional fee income for widening participation.

For postgraduate ITT students, we will spend 10 % of our fee income above the basic £6000 p.a. fee on access measures which amounts to £300 per full-time student.

Taking the ITT PG students into account, we expect to spend 30.1 %, 26.7 % and 25.9 % of our additional fee income on widening participation for the years 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15, respectively. In total, we expect to spend £5.92 M, £6.17 M and £6.4 M on widening participation in the years 2012/13, 2013/14 and 2014/15, respectively. We have carefully examined the relevant paragraphs in the How to Produce an Access Agreement for 2013-14 and can confirm that this spend is countable as spend on access and retention measures.

3.2 Balance of Expenditure

Our Access Agreement for 2012/13 included a generous package of financial support for students. While we were required to match the National Scholarship Programme (NSP) funding of £330 k, we committed more than five times this amount to the NSP as well as an additional £2.5 M to our own Reading Bursaries Scheme.

Having put this package in place, we now plan to develop other activities related to outreach, retention and success. Existing student bursary/waiver commitments for 2013/14 mean that 77 % of our spend must be focussed on student financial support, with the remaining 23 % being used to support student outreach, retention and success in other ways. By 2014-15, the balance will be closer to 72 % for student financial support, with the remaining 28 % being used for other activities. In subsequent years, we plan to spend at least 30 % of our access fund on outreach, retention and success. The exact fraction we spend will be determined by a careful consideration of the impact of increased fees on student attitudes towards higher education and an analysis of what methods prove most successful in attracting and retaining WP students.

3.3 Access Record

Table 1 summarises the University’s access record for students admitted from state schools, National Statistics Socio-economic Classification (NS-SEC) groups 4-7 and low participation neighbourhoods (LPNs), along with appropriate benchmarks.

On average over the last five years, we are within 2 % of our benchmark for state school entrants and 8 % of our benchmark for admission of students within NS-SEC groups 4-7. We do less well in encouraging entrants from low participation neighbourhoods. Of particular

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concern, is the fact that while our benchmark in this category has increased, our percentage of entrants has dropped. As described elsewhere, we will specifically target students from these areas as a priority.

Our retention record is strong with levels between 96 and 98% for all groups of students. We also note that success — as measured by the percentage of first class and upper second degrees — is fairly uniform across the different groups. However, it is clear that the percentage of first and upper second class degrees obtained by non-white students is significantly lower (58%) than that for our home/EU student body as a whole (72%). This clearly is of concern and is an area that we are actively investigating in terms of the extent to which our numbers are a true reflection of the situation and how they compare with national benchmarks. We will be paying particular attention to the performance of this group and targeting them under our student success measures.

### Table 1. Reading’s Widening Participation Performance 2006 to 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>School (State School)</th>
<th>National Statistics Socio-Economic Class (NS-SEC 4, 5, 6, 7)</th>
<th>Low Participation neighbourhoods POLAR</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Actual (%)&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Benchmark (%)&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt; Actual (%)&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
<td>Benchmark (%)&lt;sup&gt;2&lt;/sup&gt;</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>81.8</td>
<td>84.1</td>
<td>24.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009/10</td>
<td>83.8</td>
<td>84.8</td>
<td>23.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2008/9</td>
<td>81.9</td>
<td>85.1</td>
<td>26.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007/8</td>
<td>83.9</td>
<td>83.2</td>
<td>23.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>2006/7</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>82.3</td>
<td>23.9</td>
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<sup>1</sup> Percentage of young entrants in each category

<sup>2</sup> Locally adjusted HESA Benchmark for % of entrants from each category

On the basis of these figures, it seems clear that the main thrust of our activity should be to improve recruitment of WP students, while recognising that retention and success must be maintained (or indeed improved in the case of non-white students).

#### 3.4 Investment

As described within Section 4, we plan a wide variety of activities that will help to widen access for under-represented students at the University of Reading. The main expenditure will be on providing financial support for students from households with low incomes. We already invest significantly in other access activities through our Student Recruitment and Outreach Department, and Student Learning and Support Services. For 2013/14, we have identified ca. £750 k that we will use to invest in access activity over and above that spent in 2012/13. The bulk of this investment will be in new posts and we expect the balance to be in favour of outreach over retention and support roughly in the ratio of two to one, on the basis of our analysis in the previous section. Approximately one third of the investment will be in academic departments, in order to fully include our academic staff in the widening
participation agenda. In terms of support and retention, we intend to appoint to posts in counselling and disability support. In outreach, we will appoint to posts in Student Recruitment and Outreach and academic areas of the University, with an emphasis on developing a fully integrated approach to outreach that encompasses academic and non-academic staff.

4. Continuing and Additional Access Measures

Access measures will include:

- financial support for students through the National Scholarship Programme and the Reading Bursary Scheme;
- additional pre-entry activity (including the on-going addressing of perceived participation barriers and extended, newly targeted outreach activity);
- enhancement of our retention provision;
- first steps towards developing a springboard into careers, as part of our longer-term strategy to drive student success beyond the University.

The evidence summarised in Section 3.3 indicates that our retention and success rates are generally good, while there is clearly scope for improvement of our recruitment of widening participation students, particularly from low participation neighbourhoods. For this reason, efforts for our 2013/14 agreement — other than in the area of student financial support — are focussed more on outreach and recruitment than on retention and success.

In the sections that follow, we provide a broad outline, with examples, of our approach to student outreach, retention and success.

4.1 Financial Support for Students

4.1.1 Students entering in 2013/14

Eligible students can apply for generous financial awards under the National Scholarship Programme and the Reading Bursary Scheme, as detailed below. Eligible students are those from England and from households with annual incomes of less than £25k.

National Scholarship Programme (NSP): Eligible students can apply for an award worth £3000 in their first year. The University will provide a maximum of 500 of these awards. Awards will be distributed on the basis of lowest household income.

Reading Bursary Scheme (RBS): Eligible students who do not receive an NSP award can apply for an award of £1000 for their first year. A maximum of 200 of these awards will be made, and it is our normal expectation that all eligible students will receive either an NSP award or an RBS award in their first year.

2 Students from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are not eligible for NSP bursaries or fee waivers, or for the Reading Bursaries; non-UK EU students are eligible for fee waivers only.
Eligible students can apply for awards worth £1000 in their second, third and fourth years. We will offer a maximum of 700 of these for each of the second and third years, and 150 for the fourth year; it is our normal expectation that all eligible students will receive these awards.\(^3\)

**Postgraduate ITT students:** Eligible students from households with annual incomes of less than £16 k will receive an award worth £500; and students from households with annual incomes between £16 k and £25 k will receive an award worth £250. Teaching Agency funding will be taken into account in the calculation of household income.

**Foundation Degree Fee Waivers:** Students entering our Foundation Degree in Early Years Learning or our BA Children’s Development and Learning programme will receive a 50% fee waiver; this waiver applies to both years of the Foundation Degree.\(^4\)

We are particularly keen to support these students because *ca.* 90% are mature students, *ca.* 95% are female (many with families) and when qualified they have a very strong impact on the local community.

**Care Leavers:** As part of our on-going commitment to care-leaver students under our application for the Buttle UK Quality Mark\(^5\) (to be submitted 2012/13) and in recognition of their specific needs, we intend to supplement the standard provision made for this group under the NSP by offering some additional financial support. In addition to the awards listed above, these students will be eligible for bursaries of £1,000 in their first year of study and £500 in both the second and third years of study. Support for these additional bursaries has come from the University’s Development and Alumni Relations Office.

**Part-time students:** Part-time students will be eligible for financial support on a *pro-rata* basis, noting that NSP awards are restricted to fee waivers.

One of the important outcomes of our recent discussions with Reading University Students’ Union has been the need for bursary/waiver schemes to meet students’ immediate practical needs, and to enable them to fully participate in the University’s academic and social activities. For this reason — and operating within the rules of the National Scholarship Programme — we will deliver financial awards in a way that will permit students to expend them as flexibly as possible, with options to use them for fee waivers, accommodation, childcare, books, field trip and/or work placement costs, sport, etc.

### 4.1.2 Students entering before 2013/14

Students who commenced their studies prior to 2012/13 from households with annual incomes of less than £45,000 will continue to receive support under the University’s Access

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\(^3\) Eligibility for these awards will be assessed in the year they are applied for.

\(^4\) Note that recipients of these fee waivers are not eligible for other financial awards.

\(^5\) The Buttle UK Quality Mark is awarded to further and higher education providers who demonstrate their commitment to young people in and leaving care (see http://www.buttleuk.org/pages/quality-mark-for-care-leavers.html)
Bursary scheme.⁶ Bursaries of up to £1,400 will be provided to eligible students as financial awards.

Students who commenced their studies in the 2012/13 academic year from households with annual incomes of less than £42,000 will continue to receive support under the Reading Bursary scheme. Eligible students will receive support worth up to £2,500.

4.2 Pre-entry Outreach Activity

The effectiveness of the delivery and organisation of outreach at Reading for WP purposes has been monitored and evaluated since the submission of the last Access Agreement (2012/13). Our approach to outreach is now underpinned by the following principles:

- Outreach will be integrated across the University so that it is a central pillar of what we do, involving a joined up approach between academic, administrative and service unit staff;
- Outreach will be properly targeted (at school/college and individual level) and will be focussed on the development of long-term relationships with schools, teachers and pupils;
- Outreach will be focussed on more campus-based ‘in-reach’ activities;
- Outreach will be fully supported by a web-based Information, Advice and Guidance system;
- Outreach activity will be monitored and its success measured and reported.

We believe that this approach will significantly extend our reach to partner schools/colleges for purposes of both aspiration-raising and increasing participation levels in HE at Reading and the sector more widely. It should also broaden the age groups/stakeholder groups we work with and facilitate the development of new partnerships. We will move away from the standard model of central delivery of outreach, to a more integrated approach that enables us to maximise and measure collective impact and reach. By 2013/14, we plan to have a fully operational Community of Practice in place to support staff involved in outreach for WP purposes. This should help deliver the greatest possible impact for prospective WP students and their teachers, supporters and advisors. It is our intention that all of the new work will be monitored and reported through the HEAT database, where possible. As part of our commitment, we will use some of the new staffing resource outlined in the previous Access Agreement to develop these processes.

4.2.1 Target groups⁷

It is clear from Section 3.3 that we still have particular work to do in increasing the proportion of students from low participation neighbourhoods (LPNs). As the OFFA guidelines recognise, disabled and black and minority ethnic people are over-represented

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⁶ Students from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are not eligible for NSP bursaries or fee waivers, or for the Reading Bursaries; non-UK EU students are eligible for fee waivers only.

⁷ Other HEFCE WP indicator groups will be supported in line with our WP strategy but, while some may be given financial support, not all are directly targetable for purposes of outreach activity.
statistically within these areas. Similarly, pupils in these areas are more likely to attend state schools. Targeting pupils from LPNs is therefore important for us as an institution as we recognise the significant added value of these students, and this will be the main focus of our widening participation activity. We have defined a list of target schools and colleges by using a combination of Reading feeder schools/colleges data, plus POLAR, IMD and NS-SEC data. We will continue to refine our targeting year on year dependent upon success.

As stated in our Access Agreement 2012/13, we also will extend our support for care leavers. We aim to achieve the Buttle UK Quality Mark in the 2012/13 session and will implement the measures outlined in our Commitment to Care Leavers Plan. Finally, where possible we will support locally-based part-time and mature students in FE, through supporting the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) provision made in their colleges.

In our 2012/13 Access Agreement, we identified Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and Modern Foreign Languages (MFL) as priority subject areas for outreach provision. Activity in these areas will continue in 2013/14, but we anticipate expanding our strategic outreach to also include provision across the University’s strong subject base in the Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences.

4.2.2 Planned Outreach Activities

Pre-entry Bursary Provision

We will make specific bursary provision available to those target groups outlined in our recruitment and outreach statistical targets: all students from LPNs (young and mature; full time and part time); disabled students; and care leavers.

**Students from LPNs:** We will continue to offer our very successful Pre-entry Travel Bursaries for all students from LPNs (POLAR 2). These bursaries will enable prospective students to engage fully in applicant Visit Days and interviews by contributing to travel costs. The bursaries are also available for care leavers.

**Disabled students:** Additionally, we will make support available for students with disabilities throughout the enquiry, application and admissions process right up to, and including, an Orientation Day just prior to enrolment. The bursaries will contribute to costs incurred for support such as sign language interpreters, any other disability-related needs, and travel.

**Building on existing and emerging activity**

We will continue to develop our ‘standard’ outreach provision of campus visits, master classes, mentoring and IAG through stronger internal collaboration. A central theme of this activity is that we will continue to ensure that, wherever possible, subject-specific provision

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8 The Buttle UK Quality Mark is awarded to further and higher education providers who demonstrate their commitment to young people in and leaving care (see http://www.buttleuk.org/pages/quality-mark-for-care-leavers.html)

9 More than 40% of all students who have received such a bursary have enrolled at Reading since it was introduced in our first Access Agreement (2006/7). The equivalent figure is 50% for students with disabilities.

10 These are students who have indicated that they have a disability on their UCAS form, though they may not be in receipt of DSA at that time.
enhances or enriches the students’ own learning at school/college. We will also continue to deliver activities for teachers and advisors, as outlined on our new bespoke Teachers and Advisors website (http://www.reading.ac.uk/teachers-and-advisors/). In addition to these activities, a number of new initiatives are being implemented, as outlined below.

**Reading Scholars Scheme:** These schemes for selected Year 12 students (identified using contextual and academic data) deliver an intensive outreach package of subject-specific support and associated IAG and mentoring over the course of a year. In 2012/13, we will be launching three schemes (covering STEM and MFL) with a target cohort of 25 students on each. In 2013/14, we anticipate expanding this to four schemes (total 100 students), and aim to increase the number of schemes going forward by one per year. In our 2012/13 Access Agreement, we described what we called the ASPIRE Scheme. After careful consideration, we have concluded that having this scheme alongside the Reading Scholars Scheme might be confusing; consequently, we have decided to merge ASPIRE into the Reading Scholars Scheme. A key component of the ASPIRE Scheme was the use of contextual data. Therefore, we will continue to use such data; in particular, it is valuable in making decisions about students who have narrowly missed their offer in subjects where places are available.

**Student Shadowing:** To be introduced in 2012/13 as a component of the Scholars Scheme, Student Shadowing enables school and college pupils to experience a day in HE attending lectures, seminars and other academic and social aspects of University life in their particular subject of interest. Our intention is to make this more widely available to students from WP backgrounds outside the Scholars Schemes, offering shadowing in six subject areas by 2013/14.

**E-mentoring:** An IAG component of the Scholars Scheme; we intend to expand our e-mentoring provision to pilot support for care leavers in 2013/14.

**Reading Feedback:** Current Reading students from schools/colleges identified as having low progression rates to HE arrange a series of visits to illustrate HE possibilities to students from similar backgrounds. This scheme will be piloted in 2012/13 and we aim to have 15 students working with their schools/colleges in 2013/14, expanding the scheme by five additional school-alumni hosts per year.

**Teachers’ Centres:** Building on very successful outreach work in our Chemistry Department, we aim to extend the number of Teachers’ Centres at the University and to drive further relationships with subject teachers in target schools/colleges, through the provision of continuing professional development. Aside from the sharing of academic expertise with staff in our partner institutions, such activity will also underpin our IAG provision.

**ITT Outreach:** The South East BME Project is a regional collaboration of providers of Initial Teacher Training (involving nine universities) that was funded by pooling BME recruitment and retention budgets held within the individual institutions. The resulting project created a 0.8 FTE Grade 6 Project Leader post hosted at Reading from June 2010. Priorities for the project were agreed in consultation with all partners,
monitored by a management committee representing the institutions and aimed to create jointly owned outreach resources, conduct research informing partners’ work and increase the impact permitted by disparate, smaller budgets. Activities have focussed on how teaching is communicated and perceived, the factors which may contribute to disproportionate rejection rates of BME applications and BME access to school experience.

**Care Leavers:** Currently, we are in discussion with Cornwall Council care-leavers team and anticipate working in partnership with them in encouraging Cornwall-based care leavers to access HE further afield, particularly at Reading. We hope to have the first entrants from this cohort in 2013/14. Final details are still to be finalised at time of writing.

**IAG and ‘Virtual’ Outreach:** In recognition of the fact that many students from WP cohorts experience physical barriers to accessing outreach provision, we aim to expand our virtual online support and outreach provision for students, teachers and advisors. The University will offer a programme of virtual IAG sessions in 2013/14 using Chatlive software to include topics such as ‘student life’, ‘admissions’ and subject-based curriculum support, that will include professionals from the subject areas where appropriate.

**Collaborative Outreach**

The University engages in a range of collaborative outreach provision. To date, much of the activity has been grown through the initiative of individuals or small groups of staff. For example, the Institution of Education hosts a regionally-funded staff member with responsibility for outreach and retention of BME individuals into education programmes. The Department of Chemistry has worked closely with the University of Southampton delivering outreach to chemistry students in the south east of England. Outreach staff are very active in the Higher Education Liaison Officers Association (HELOA) having worked on the National HELOA Partnerships Working Group to determine the organisation’s future direction, and will host the HELOA South East Teachers and Advisors Conference 2012. We hold the full STEMNET contract for Berkshire and Surrey, and the schools brokerage element of the STEMNET contract for West London, providing professional ambassadors and supporting local STEM teachers. We work on a consortium basis with Berkshire Connexions Service and the University of West London in the delivery of the Berkshire HE/UCAS Convention. We also work with professional organisations in the delivery of our MFL outreach on, for example, World of Work activities and we work with subject-based organisations such as the National Centre for Biotechnology Education in the delivery of some of our outreach such as the Science Summer School.

We intend to enhance our collaborative provision in future by building the role of partnerships development into the role of one of the core outreach staff. A key aim will be to ensure that activities are co-ordinated across the University and that good practice is captured and shared. It is likely that we will wish to fund a post in this area to facilitate this co-ordination.
4.3 **Student Retention and Success**

A central focus of our retention strategy is to deliver financial support to students as set out in Section 4.1. Our implementation of the National Scholarship Programme and the Reading Bursaries Scheme has been considerably more generous than required by government, and we believe that the flexible approach we take in the delivery of support provides the maximum benefit for students. We are also aware that students from WP backgrounds may face barriers to entering careers at the same level as students from more privileged backgrounds, and so we plan to develop schemes to promote the transition of WP students into the Professions and other high flying careers. These schemes are set out below.

4.3.1 **Student Success**

To fulfil our strategic aim of supporting students into career choices including the Professions, we intend to develop a number of subject-focussed events to demonstrate career progression and opportunities beyond university. The first steps will include:

**Professional Mentoring:** We intend to capitalise on existing links with external professionals and with our own colleague academic departments and existing strong links with STEM and Language professionals to facilitate careers-based IAG activity. We anticipate this to be in development stages in 2013/14 and will be looking at the viability of both face-to-face and e-mentoring. The University has a very active community of alumni, and we plan that this group will be influential in developing this activity. We also expect that these individuals will be able to support other activities that we have in mind, such as finding and supporting internships for WP students.

**Professions Events:** We have identified a number of areas for careers-focussed events with representation from individuals in these fields. In 2013/14, we expect to deliver activity demonstrating ‘alternatives to medicine’ and ‘language options’ for up to 120 students.

4.4 **Changes from the 2012/13 Access Agreement**

We have changed our approach to outreach, retention and success in a number of ways since our last Access Agreement. Some of the key changes are:

- A focus on student choice within our financial support packages;
- An emphasis on stronger collaboration on access between academic, administrative and service functions across the University;
- A merger of the Reading Scholars Scheme and the ASPIRE Scheme;
- A number of new outreach activities — Student shadowing, e-mentoring, Reading Feedback, Teachers’ Centres — are being developed;
- A number of new retention and success activities — financial support for University activities (field course costs, placement costs, etc.), Professional mentoring, Professions Events — are being developed;
- A stronger emphasis on co-ordinated collaborative outreach activity.
5. Targets and Milestones

In setting and achieving realistic milestones and targets for measuring the impacts of our outreach work for 2013/14 we have considered a number of factors. The first three relate to the national context, and the fourth reflects the local context.

- In our view, the significant increases in fees in the HE sector will have significant negative impacts on the participation in HE from disadvantaged groups, especially those from low participation areas and from low household income backgrounds.

- The little market research that has been done on the impact of higher fees\(^\text{11}\) suggests that there will be a “flight to quality”; the competition for the best universities will intensify.

- National outreach and aspiration raising projects such as Aimhigher and the Life-Long Learning Networks ceased to exist after summer 2011.

- Analysis of the work completed by Aimhigher Berkshire clearly shows that targeted outreach work was effective in raising participation levels in Berkshire but it has not benefited Reading in particular.

These considerations suggest that we need to be very cautious and realistic in setting milestones and targets. A brief summary of the impact of the work completed by Aimhigher Berkshire (a single county project) is very revealing.

- Over the three year period, Aimhigher Berkshire received ~£1.45 million in funding (averaging £0.48 million p.a.).

- Over this period, Aimhigher Berkshire ran outreach and aspiration raising activities which targeted ~ 2,875 pupils from 18 of the most poorly performing schools in Berkshire. The activities included visits to schools, visit days and master classes on the Reading campus, Easter and Summer schools on the Reading campus, mentoring from Reading and Thames Valley undergraduates, and various information, advice and guidance sessions.

- 46\% of all the students that Aimhigher Berkshire worked with in those three years entered an HEI and, moreover, there is clear evidence of increasing success over those three years being respectively: 260, 360, and 434 students.

- Of those students who entered HEIs in the years in question, the proportion entering research intensive universities\(^\text{12}\) increased significantly from 21.7\% in 2006/07; through 31.4\% in 2007/08; to 37.5\% in 2008/09.

- Of all the receiving research intensive institutions, Reading was the most popular, but nevertheless, of the 371 students who entered research intensive universities only 54 (~1 in 7) came to Reading despite their considerable exposure to the Reading campus and Reading staff and students.


\(^{12}\) For these purposes the research intensive universities are defined as the Russell Group and 94 Group HEIs.
Reading’s share of the students who have entered the research intensive universities fell over the three years from 17.8% (1 in 5.6) in 2006/07, to 16.8% (1 in 5.9) in 2007/08; and to just 6.7% (1 in 14.9) in 2008/09.

Therefore, the results of all Aimhigher Berkshire’s work, very successful though it was, indicates that an expenditure of £0.48 million p.a. most of which was focussed on activities associated with Reading yielded only ~18 Reading entrants p.a. (who may have chosen Reading anyway) and there is evidence that an increasing number who achieve the entrance standards for the best universities are choosing to go to a wider spread of HEIs.

The above brief summary of the impacts of the work of Aimhigher Berkshire indicates just how difficult is the task of targeting outreach work to a specific university. It shows also that effective outreach takes time and is based on relationships which arise from targeted work. This is why in our Access Agreement for 2012/13 we assumed that there would be a real drop in most categories of disadvantaged students entering Reading and that we would have to work hard to recover even the current picture. As this document is written, we do not know the initial consequences of the new fee regime. If it should be the case that there is not a dip in students from underrepresented groups in 2012/13, we will undertake to reset our target starting points accordingly, but retain the same trajectory.

Details of our targets and milestones are set out in Tables 6a and 6b of the Annexes.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

The University’s Sub-Group for Widening Participation is the body responsible for the preparation and implementation of this Access Agreement. This body reports to the University Senate through the Senior Management Board and, amongst its other duties, evaluates measures set out in the Access Agreement and progress against targets and milestones. This group will also play a critical role in the continuous development of the University’s Widening Participation Strategy. The President of Reading University Students’ Union sits on the Sub-Group for Widening Participation. A key aspect of monitoring and evaluation is to have a detailed level understanding of the relevant statistics. In our 2012/13 Access Agreement, we identified a senior administrative Planning Support Officer appointment who will be responsible for this aspect of monitoring. In addition, we have appointed an Access and Recruitment Officer who will be responsible for ensuring that we fully utilise and contribute to the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) service.

The Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) — Professor Gavin Brooks — will be the senior University officer responsible for delivery of our Access Agreement.

7. Provision of Information

The University of Reading is strongly committed to providing appropriate information, advice and guidance to prospective students, teachers and parents, as well as to key organisations such as the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and the Student Loans Company (SLC). We will provide information on fees, loans, fee waivers,
financial support, pre-entry bursaries, accommodation bursaries, support for course costs and placements, etc. We will use the usual mechanisms (websites, prospectuses, mailing lists, etc.) and will also work hard to build professional relationships with teachers to ensure that they are able to readily provide local students with relevant information. The University will also be part of the national implementation of the Key Information Set (KIS) and other information as laid out in the June 2011 Policy on the Provision of information about higher education. Outcomes and next steps.\textsuperscript{13}

8. Consulting with Students

Reading students were represented throughout by the President of Reading University Students’ Union (RUSU), Mr Karl Hobley. Mr Hobley was a full member of the Working Group convened to implement this Agreement and continues to work closely with the Outreach Team. RUSU and the University maintain a strong working relationship, although differences in opinion do exist relating to the extent to which contextual data should be used at the point of offer in addition to confirmation in the admissions process. RUSU was consulted closely on how the University might make optimum use of the NSP bursary to ensure that Reading’s low-income students could participate fully in life as a student at Reading. This advice has resulted in an intention to reconfigure some of our bursaries as a more flexible provision in the form of e.g. accommodation bursaries, childcare bursaries, sport bursaries etc.

9. Equality and Diversity

The University of Reading is committed to furthering equality and diversity amongst its staff and students, and believes that it fully executes its duty under the Equality Act 2010. As part of our Equality and Diversity Policy,\textsuperscript{14} we have set a number of objectives that aim to address the key elements of the Act: eliminating unlawful discrimination; advancing equality of opportunity; and fostering good relations. Regard for equality and diversity is a central component of our high-level decision making and it is our aim is to use and embed best practices in equality and diversity. We believe that this approach will allow us to recruit and retain the highest quality staff and students and to maintain our reputation for academic excellence.

\textsuperscript{13}http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce1/pubs/hefce/2011/1118/11_18_35454121.pdf
\textsuperscript{14}http://www.reading.ac.uk/web/FILES/humanresources/2012_03_27_-University_of_Reading’s_equality_objectives.pdf
### Table 6 - Milestones and targets

#### Notes:
- These tables have been pre-populated using the information you provided to us in your 2012-13 access agreement.
- You will, however, need to consider whether you wish to amend or add targets to reflect:
  - the inclusion of part-time and/or ITT courses within your access agreement
  - any significant changes to the nature and size of your cohort, for example in response to changing student number controls
  - more joint targets around collaborative outreach work
  - targets to improve equality and diversity in your access agreement

#### Validation checks:
10. A reason for changing any prefilled data must be recorded in column L for both tables 6a and 6b. Validation check passed.

#### Table 6a - Statistical milestones and targets relating to your applicants, entrants or student body (e.g. HESA, UCAS or internal targets)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Milestone Type</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Target</th>
<th>Baseline</th>
<th>Baseline data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State School (HESA Table T1a)</td>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ISS-SEC (HESA Table T1a)</td>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>24.2%</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>22.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LPN (HESA Table T1a)</td>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>5.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Care-leavers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disabled (HESA)</td>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>5.2%</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>6.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please give details in the next column)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity (non-white)</td>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>329 (12.9%)</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>318 (12.0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low-income backgrounds (£25K or less)</td>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>520 (19.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please give details in the next column)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mature</td>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>25 (0.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The above targets relate to our full-time undergraduate entrants.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Yearly milestones/targets (numeric where possible, however you may use text)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>State School (HESA Table T1a)</th>
<th>ISS-SEC (HESA Table T1a)</th>
<th>LPN (HESA Table T1a)</th>
<th>Care-leavers</th>
<th>Disabled (HESA)</th>
<th>Other (please give details in the next column)</th>
<th>Ethnicity (non-white)</th>
<th>Low-income backgrounds (£25K or less)</th>
<th>Other (please give details in the next column)</th>
<th>Mature</th>
<th>Other (please give details in the next column)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>2190 (82.6%)</td>
<td>800 (29.6%)</td>
<td>146 (5.3%)</td>
<td>10 (0.4%)</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>329 (12.9%)</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>2190 (82.6%)</td>
<td>800 (29.6%)</td>
<td>146 (5.3%)</td>
<td>10 (0.4%)</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>329 (12.9%)</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>2220 (83.8%)</td>
<td>800 (29.6%)</td>
<td>146 (5.3%)</td>
<td>10 (0.4%)</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>329 (12.9%)</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>2240 (84.5%)</td>
<td>800 (29.6%)</td>
<td>146 (5.3%)</td>
<td>10 (0.4%)</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>329 (12.9%)</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>2260 (85.2%)</td>
<td>800 (29.6%)</td>
<td>146 (5.3%)</td>
<td>10 (0.4%)</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>329 (12.9%)</td>
<td>562 (22.1%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td>20 (0.7%)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)

- Aim to gain Buttle UK Trust Quality Kite Mark in 2012 and deliver additional targeted outreach which we believe will see a gradual increase in numbers.
- These include students diagnosed with disabilities (mostly learning) after enrolling at Reading. Some may consequently apply for DSA.
- With the unknown impact of the higher fee plus the AAB policy, and the fact that we are currently in the process of retargeting our outreach, we anticipate an initial fall in these figures over the period 2012 - 2014.
- These targets are included in the baseline data.
| Other (please give details in the next column) | Male entrants onto the BA (Ed) | 2010/11 | 0.09 | 0.09 | 0.07 | 0.075 | 0.075 | 0.08 | 0.085 | 0.09 | 0.095 | 0.1 | 0.11 | 0.1175 | 0.12 | 0.125 | 0.13 | 0.135 | 0.14 | 0.145 | 0.15 |
| Other (please give details in the next column) | Male entrants onto the PGCE Primary | 2010/11 | 0.08 | 0.085 | 0.08 | 0.095 | 0.1 | 0.11 | 0.115 | 0.12 | 0.125 | 0.13 | 0.135 | 0.14 | 0.145 | 0.15 | 0.155 | 0.16 | 0.165 | 0.17 |
| Other (please give details in the next column) | Black and Minority Ethnic Groups on the BA (Ed) | 2010/11 | 0.05 | 0.055 | 0.06 | 0.07 | 0.075 | 0.08 | 0.085 | 0.09 | 0.095 | 0.1 | 0.11 | 0.1175 | 0.12 | 0.125 | 0.13 | 0.135 | 0.14 | 0.145 | 0.15 |
| Other (please give details in the next column) | Black and Minority Ethnic Groups on the PGCE Primary | 2010/11 | 0.05 | 0.055 | 0.06 | 0.07 | 0.075 | 0.08 | 0.085 | 0.09 | 0.095 | 0.1 | 0.11 | 0.1175 | 0.12 | 0.125 | 0.13 | 0.135 | 0.14 | 0.145 | 0.15 |
| Other (please give details in the next column) | Black and Minority Ethnic Groups on the PGCE Secondary | 2010/11 | 0.12 | 0.125 | 0.13 | 0.135 | 0.14 | 0.145 | 0.15 | 0.155 | 0.16 | 0.165 | 0.17 | 0.175 | 0.18 | 0.185 | 0.19 | 0.195 | 0.2 | 0.21 |

We offer subject specialisms options of the BA (Ed) in English, Art and Music; this mitigates improvement in recruitment against significantly increased proportions of men into primary teaching.

The University recognises this as one area in which improvement is desirable and has set aspirational targets for this reason.

These figures are based on the continuation of significant TA-funded work already done on improving BME recruitment.

Please note that all targets set in this table are subject to change as the sector settles into the new fee regime. We also do not yet know the effect the AAB policy and ABB policy will have on recruitment of widening participation students and targets may change as this effect becomes clear.
### Table 6b - Other milestones and targets

Alongside applicant and entrant targets, we encourage you to provide targets around your outreach work (including collaborative outreach work where appropriate) or other initiatives to illustrate your progress towards increasing access. These should be measurable outcomes, based on targets and should focus on the number of pupils reached by a particular activity/programme, or number of schools worked with, and what the outcomes were, rather than simply recording the nature/number of activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Please select milestone/target type from the drop down menu</th>
<th>Description (500 characters maximum)</th>
<th>Is this a collaborative target?</th>
<th>Baseline Year</th>
<th>Baseline Baseline</th>
<th>Yearly milestones/targets (numeric where possible, however you may use text)</th>
<th>Commentary on your milestones/targets or textual description where numerical description is not appropriate (500 characters maximum)</th>
<th>If you have made any changes to the prefilled data around your milestones/targets, or included additional milestones/targets, please indicate why here.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Operational targets</strong></td>
<td>Identify and work with specific target schools in Berkshire and beyond for intensive progression programmes.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Number of school partners involved in bespoke intensive outreach schemes eg Reading Scholars Scheme</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Student support services</td>
<td>Outlining roles of student councils, student union committees, and student reps to inform outreach activities</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Number of students attending</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach / WP activity (school visits)</td>
<td>Outreach / WP activity (school visits)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Target numbers of outreach events increasing in line with new collaborative approach outlined in narrative</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td>With the merger of Student Recruitment and Outreach the number of visits of staff to schools/HE events has increased</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)</td>
<td>School visits / Taster days at Reading</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Number of students attending</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outreach / WP activity (other - please give details in the next column)</td>
<td><strong>School Visits / Taster days at Reading</strong></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Number of Reading students involved in sessions/networks amongst and tutoring pupils in ~40 local primary and secondary schools</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contextual data</td>
<td>Reading Scholars (schemes including e-mentoring) and the Reading Aspire policy</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Participants enrolled/number entering HE/students entering research intensive HEIs/ students entering Reading</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management targets</td>
<td>Schools and other SE HEIs on tracking all school/college outreach interventions through the HEAT database</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Following on from Aimhigher work, on-going tracking work and refinement of data gathering/learning most effective practice from partner schools and HEIs</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lifelong learning</td>
<td>Building on progression arrangements established by Progress South Central</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Target partnership working with FE colleges initially through IAG provision. Develop new activity with a careers focus to support the 'student success' strand of our Access Agreement 2013/14.</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please give details in the next column)</td>
<td>Subject specific, in reaching Mastery classes for schools/colleges on the Reading campus</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Number of target students attending in-school activity including Masterclasses</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please give details in the next column)</td>
<td>Information, Advice and Guidance</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Number of pupils/FE students entering in-school activity including Masterclasses and Outreach the number of visits of staff to schools/HE events has increased</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please give details in the next column)</td>
<td>Thames Valley HE conference (UCAS fair)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>Maintain numbers of Year 12 students attending 2 day conference at maximum capacity</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (please give details in the next column)</td>
<td>Improving success students at graduation (non-white and students with disabilities)</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>2012-13 2013-14 2014-15 2015-16 2016-17</td>
<td>We aim to improve the degree outcomes for non-white students and students with disabilities following further research into potential factors leading to relatively low success rates.</td>
<td>Clarified description</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Additional commentary: Please note that all milestones set in this table are subject to change as the sector settles into the new fee regime. We also do not yet know how the effect the AAB policy and ASB policy will have on recruitment of widening participation students and milestones may change as this effect becomes clear.