

Access Agreement for 2012 entry

Leeds College of Music is a progressive Conservatoire. This encourages the College to maintain the highest possible standards by recruiting students through a rigorous selection process. The highly selective nature of our work requires addressing access in creative ways. It is important to articulate that young people need experience of music from an early age. Early development is crucial for students to be competitive in a highly selective environment. This Access Agreement sets out how we will promote and safeguard fair access to our Higher Education provision. We are committed, through our financial support and outreach work, to ensure that, students electing to study at a conservatoire can be competitive at selection. We are renowned for the quality, distinctiveness and relevance of our provision and we aim to ensure that anyone with the potential is able to participate, develop and achieve. In the 2012 -2013 Academic year, we propose to spend over £400,000 on financial support for undergraduate students, and £125,000 on outreach activities to widen access to Higher Education Music. This will amount to approximately 31% of our additional tuition fee income.

This Access Agreement will apply to all those who start an undergraduate course in 2012/13. Those who enter before 2012- 2013 will receive the support described in the previous agreement, approved in 2010.

Tuition Fees

In accordance with the terms of the Higher Education Act 2004, the College will charge the maximum permitted tuition fee for publicly funded, full time Home and EU Undergraduate and Foundation Degree students. The fee may increase annually in line with any increases applied by the Government to the maximum permitted fee.

Financial Support for students

1. Applicants Bursary

The Leeds College of Music admissions process was revised for 2011 entry. Applicants meeting the minimum entry requirements are invited to submit a portfolio (normally in the form of a DVD, and any supporting weblink) and after initial screening, some candidates will be invited to an audition at the College. There will be a charge for this process as is the case at other similar specialist institutions. However, **the College will provide assistance to applicants from lower income families, to ensure that no applicant is deterred on the grounds of cost, from applying to the College.** This will consist of a refund of the portfolio screening/audition fee to all applicants (home students only) who have been in receipt of the full Education Maintenance Allowance, the full Adult Learning Grant, or who are from a household that is in receipt of income related benefits. Applicants in these categories who are invited to an audition at the College, will also be entitled to a refund of their reasonable travel costs, if they live outside West Yorkshire (UK only). Applicants will be informed of how to apply for this, when they are invited to submit their portfolio.

We anticipate expenditure on this measure to be at least £5,000 per year.

2. Leeds College of Music Bursary.

The College will provide an annual bursary to Home students, as follows:

Residual household income	Amount of annual bursary
£0 - £25,000	£2,000
£25,001 - £42,600	£1,500

The income information will be derived from the annual financial assessment used to determine the level of grants and loans payable by the Student Loan Company. Students will not be required to apply separately for this bursary. They will be notified automatically by the College, of their entitlement providing they have applied for full income assessed support from Student Finance England or other assessment body.

Students and their sponsors must also have give permission for the College to view and use their data. Applicants will be informed of their entitlement during the late Summer period or later if their financial assessment has not been completed. Based on our current intake profile, we expect at least 45% of students to be eligible for this bursary.

3. National Scholarship programme

The College will participate in the National Scholarship programme, match funding the annual allocation from the Government from its own funds. In year 1 we will provide 18 scholarships of £3,000 each. These will take the form of a £3,000 reduction in tuition fees for year 1 of study. The qualifying criteria will be:

- Home or EU students only.
- The student's Residual Household Income must be less than £18,000 per year. The income information will be derived from the annual financial assessment used to determine the level of grants and loans payable by the Student Loan Company. (EU students will need to specifically request an income assessment if they wish to be eligible for consideration.)
- In the likely event that there are more than 18 qualifying students, those with the highest score at audition/interview will be selected for the scholarship.
- Applicants for all undergraduate courses will be equally eligible.

Leeds College of Music also offers additional scholarships which are awarded on merit following an audition/interview.

Provision of information to applicants

The College will ensure that all applicants receive accurate and timely advice and information about the financial support available, and the costs involved in studying. We provide information on our website, at Open days, and in publications. Applicants and their parents/sponsors are able to receive personal advice and support on all student funding matters, through the Colleges Student Support Unit, by telephone or email, as well as in person.

Information will be provided to national bodies such as UCAS, for the benefit of potential applicants.

Retention of students

The College consistently has an in year retention rate of around 95% which is achieved through rigorous admissions processes, and effective support, both academic and pastoral. The provision of a generous bursary scheme is expected to mitigate against most potential withdrawals due to financial reasons and any withdrawals, or suspensions are closely scrutinised and reviewed.

Outreach work

The College aims to provide activities to encourage young people from lower income families to aspire to Higher Education. In the revised Access Agreement for 2011, we

undertook to do this in 2 ways (see A and B below.) These commitments will continue in 2012. It is acknowledged that the primary and secondary education systems do not always prepare potential applicants to be competitive at audition, and the College recognises that identifying students with potential must start at a young age. Therefore, from 2012, we will also provide Junior and senior scholarships (see C below) to enable young people from the College's partner schools and lower income households to reach the standard required in their chosen instrument, to apply for Higher Education in a music related subject.

A. Support progression amongst our Further Education students. - The College is unique amongst the specialist Music providers in that we provide both Further and Higher Education courses. With regard to this, the College aims to encourage as many students as possible, on our BTEC Extended Diploma courses, to progress to Higher Education, where they have the potential, regardless of their financial resources. The majority of Music courses require applicants to have reached certain Grades in performance examinations, (e.g. ABRSM) and Music Theory. One to one tuition for this is not funded as part of the Extended Diploma course. Therefore, many who aspire to an Undergraduate Music course will need to pay for Individual tuition in their instrument, or Music theory classes in order to reach the required entry standard, and the cost of this may potentially be a barrier to progression. With regard to this, the College will provide individual tuition, and/or Music theory classes free of charge, for Further Education students, who are from lower income households, and who have the potential to reach the required standard for Undergraduate entry on a Music course. We expect to spend in the region of £20,000 on this measure. Applicants for our FE programmes will be informed of this scheme at an early stage and the application process will be widely publicised, with information sent to targeted groups.

B. Support young people from lower income families by providing bursaries to enable them to attend the college's Saturday Music School. This is an established scheme, which offers a 2 year programme of musical training to talented musicians aged 9 to 18, many of whom aspire to Higher Education. Further information is available at <http://www.lcm.ac.uk/courses/young-musicians/saturday-music-school.htm>. By providing bursaries to lower income students to cover the cost of the programme, we aim to widen the participation in this scheme, which receives no external funding. We expect to spend in the region of £5,000 on this measure.

C. Junior Scholarships

Junior Scholarships are open to students aged 10 years by 1st January in the year the Scholarship commences, who have successfully passed a Grade 4 instrumental examination. On reaching age 13 by 1st January and on passing a Grade 6 instrumental examination, a Junior Scholarship concludes.

D. Senior Scholarships

Senior Scholarships are open students aged 13 years and above by 1st January in the year the Scholarship commences, who have successfully passed a Grade 6 instrumental exam. Each scholarship candidate must be a pupil/student of a Leeds College of Music partner/feeder school/college.

Curriculum and employability

All undergraduate students at Leeds College of Music have the option to elect to complete a Community Music course with an actual placement. This course is a 20-credit module taken in year three running over 10 weeks. Students learn, develop and practice skills, which help them to place their practice within a wider context. These placements continue to deliver long-term benefits to the community. In addition, the College does not underestimate the importance of equipping students with the skills to sustain a portfolio career. The College promotes work with creative practitioners to increase the opportunities for students. Students studying at a Conservatoire need a range of professional contacts to sustain careers. From 2012 the College is committed to spending £100,000 to provide additional activities such as workshops and masterclasses designed to increase the employability of our students.

Our current performance on widening participation

The College recognises that the biggest single barrier to participation in Music at Higher Education level is the unequal provision of music education from a young age and the varying levels of support available in different schools, to enable young people to develop their musical talents. Another barrier is the limited aspirations of some young musicians from disadvantaged backgrounds. The Saturday Music School and the Junior scholarships attempt to address this.

The number of young undergraduate students recruited from low participation neighbourhoods increased in 2009 from 8.3% to 9.9% (HESA) The percentage of young students recruited from social classes 4,5,6, and 7 increased from 23.4% to 24.9% in the same year. The percentage of students recruited from state schools also increased from 87.2% to 90.1%

The number of students recruited from households with incomes less than £25,000 has been consistently around 25% of all those who apply for student finance, for the last 3 years. We will monitor this closely to ensure it does not reduce.

Milestones and targets

1. In 2009 – 2010, 50% of students who completed a BTEC National Diploma at Leeds College of Music, entered Higher Education in 2010. We aim to increase this progression rate by at least 5% to 55% by 2012. This will be supported by the provision of individual tuition and music theory for lower income students, as detailed at A above. Students who benefit from this provision will be monitored to gauge the effect on progression.

2. For the Saturday Music School, we aim to support up to 10 students, at a cost of £500 per student, to participate in the 2 year programme. The potential benefits of this activity in terms of eventual entry to Higher Education may only be seen in the long term (5 to 10 years) due to the nature of the provision, but it is intended to assist in mitigating against the inequalities in music provision regionally at pre-16 level.

3. We aim to continue to increase the number of young undergraduate entrants recruited from low participation neighbourhoods (HESA PI polar 2 definitions). Progress over the last 5 year is as follows:

Milestone	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13
Percentage of students from low participation neighbourhoods	6.3% actual	8.3% actual	8.3% actual	9.9% actual	13% New target	14% New target	15% New target

4. We aim to continue working with young people from an early stage in order to allow them the opportunity to be competitive at selection stage.

Monitoring arrangements

The Senior person responsible for the implementation and progress of the Access Agreement is the Director of Curriculum and Research

The progress of the Access Agreement milestones will be monitored by the College's newly established Curriculum and Research Steering Group which will report to the Academic Council. This group will include student representation. This will then inform the final monitoring return, which will be submitted by Leeds City College*.

The following data will be collected and used to inform future planning and any amendments to the agreement to enable us to target our expenditure effectively.

1. Number of FE students successfully participating in free 1:1 tuition and music theory.
2. Progression of FE students at Leeds College of Music, into HE.
3. Average household income of new entrants (figure derived from SLC income assessment information.) and payments of bursaries.
4. HESA polar 2 – participation from low participation neighbourhoods
5. In year retention rates
6. Destinations of LCoM graduates into music related employment

*** Leeds College of Music will form a strategic alliance with Leeds City College, becoming a wholly owned subsidiary on 1st August 2011 subject to the approval of The Secretary of State.**

