

AMHEC institutions increase support for future students

The Office of Fair Access has announced that English universities and colleges charging above £6,000 for their courses plan to boost their spending on access measures to £602 million a year by 2015-16.

After negotiation, OFFA has approved 2012-2013 Access Agreements for 139 institutions – 123 higher education institutions and 16 further education colleges.

Access measure cover a broad range of activities including outreach activities to raise aspirations and attainment, financial support such as fee waivers, bursaries and scholarships and measure to improve retention.

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AMHEC Website goes live!

This summer has seen the launch of our brand new website, developed by AMHEC with the help of Hull-based design company, Arrival. This new user-friendly website offers members easy access to a full range of AMHEC information, including conferences and workshops as well as the latest HE issues.

The website has come about as a direct result of discussions at last year's AGM where the Executive Committee were asked to investigate and enhance AMHEC's web presence. Web development was deemed a key factor in the future strategy for the association which aims to support the exchange of information and knowledge within the membership and encourage networking opportunities to improve working practices and services.

"By bringing together a wide range of expertise, AMHEC hopes member institutions will be able to collectively consider the actions HE leaders and managers need to take to respond rapidly to the current challenges within Higher Education," explained Colin Parkin, Vice Chair of AMHEC.

"We hope the new website, designed with Web 2 and 3 in mind, will give all member institutions an effective source for information, advice and comment on management matters in higher education in the UK."

Check it out on www.amhec.org.uk



Leading honours for AMHEC

Congratulations go to the following AMHEC members who reached the shortlist for this year's *Times Higher Education Leadership and Management Awards*:

Outstanding University Fundraising Team - University of the Creative Arts

Outstanding Departmental Administration Team – University of Chester

Outstanding Marketing/Communications Team – Newman University College, University of the Creative Arts

Outstanding Student Services Team – University of Chester

Outstanding Registry Team – St Mary's University College, University of the Creative Arts

Outstanding Human Resources Team – Edge Hill University, University

College Plymouth St Mark & St John, University of the Creative Arts, York St John University

Outstanding Leadership and Management Team – University of Cumbria

And for the September Awards...

University of the Year – Edge Hill University

Excellence and Innovation in the Arts – University for the Creative Arts

Outstanding Contribution to the Local Community – University for the Creative Arts

"Our annual awards always serve as a reminder of the extraordinary dedication of those working in our universities and colleges," commented Ann Morz, editor of *THE*. "This year is no exception. Our sector, like

every other, has already gone through some tough times and is facing more turbulence as the new funding regime beds in. But a glance at the shortlist for our Leadership and Management Awards is enough to instil confidence that we have the right people in place to continue to prosper and deliver the world-class higher education for which the country is rightly renowned."



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"These Agreements represent a considerable commitment by universities and colleges to improving access for students who are under-represented in higher education and where appropriate, improving retention and student success," announced Sir Graeme Davies, Director of Fair Access.

"I am particularly pleased by the planned additional annual investment of £50 million in outreach activities to raise aspirations and attainment among potential applicants from under-represented groups.

"We consider that long-term, targeted outreach is key to widening participation and fair access and in our guidance we asked institutions to increase their efforts in this area."

The University of Cumbria was one of the first AMHEC institutions to respond to OFFA's announcement. Whilst Cumbria already has a proven track record for offering excellent financial and other support to students, its new Access Agreement, like many other AMHEC members, contains a wide range of fresh initiatives including an additional 295 Cumbria bursaries of £1,500 a year.

"We are delighted that our Access Agreement has been given the go ahead," said Professor Graham Upton, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Cumbria. "This reaffirms our ongoing commitment to widening participation for our students and ensures that everybody has the opportunity to study with us."

OFFA Analysis of Tuition Fee Levels

- the estimated sector fee average is £8,393
- this reduces to £8,161 when fee waivers are included
- when all financial support from universities and colleges (including National Scholarship Programmes) is taken into account, the estimated average fee cost to students is £7,793
- only seven per cent of HEIs will charge an average fee of £9,000 (i.e. their fee will not be reduced by fee waivers)
- significantly fewer than half of students in universities and colleges are expected to be charged a net fee of £9,000, once fee waivers and other support is taken into account.

Employee engagement: trade secrets

Members came together for a lively and informative Annual Conference in Chester recently to explore and discuss the important role that managers and leaders must play to create a fully committed and dedicated workforce.

'Engaging with Excellence' provided a number of different themes focussing how best to develop and deliver employee engagement and communication, at the same time as healthy and productive working environments.

An inspirational keynote speech entitled 'An Unfolding Future' was given by Professor Ruth Farwell, Vice-Chancellor of Buckinghamshire New University who is also Chair of Guild HE and a Board Member of Universities and Colleges Employers Association (UCEA).

Andy Westwood, Chief Executive Guild HE and Aidan Grills, Chief Executive of Leeds University Students' Union provided an excellent back drop to

the expectations that we must fulfil for students in the future.

Kim Shutler-Jones from Wellbeing, David Evans of Capita and Ben Cork from Work all skilfully made presentations on motivation, communication and being an employer of choice.

Other topics up for discussion included 'The Next Generation Teaching & Learning Environments', taking us through ideas about our environs in terms of teaching and learning. Christine Sexton from the University of Sheffield also delivered an entertaining and informative over view of IT and Communications.

Ian Lewis, Head of Finance at HEFCE and Jocelyn Prudence UCEA provided strategic financial perspectives on the 'More for Less' climate and Pay and Pensions respectively.

Finally, Emma Wilkins, Chair of AMHEC rounded up another successful conference, praising the merits of

hearing current thinking from so many leaders in their fields about how to motivate staff in such an uncertain and changing political and economic climate.

"Knowledge sharing is one of the most important aspects of AMHEC," added Emma. "The speakers have given AMHEC members invaluable insight and advice on engagement. Hopefully we can all go back and make a real difference in our own institutions."



National Student Survey: what's new this year?

The majority of UK students are happy with the quality of their university course, an annual survey suggests.

The National Student Survey (NSS) of 265,000 final-year students found 83% were satisfied, up from 82% in 2010. But 9% of undergraduates were unsatisfied, the same percentage as last year, while a further 8% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

The survey results were published a day before students in England, Wales and Northern Ireland received their A level results.

Vital Information

HEFCE Chief Executive Sir Alan

Langlands said the results were excellent, but stressed there was "no room for complacency".

Demanding more

Universities UK's Chief Executive Nicola Dandridge said: "Increasingly, and quite rightly, students are demanding more and more from their university courses.

"Inevitably this will become even more of an issue when fees increase in 2012".

In the past, institutions that catered for certain groups or subjects argued they were disadvantaged in the league table of "overall satisfaction" because of their type of student or subject. This year,

for the first time, the National Student Survey (NSS) takes those and other factors into account as it publishes the overall satisfaction rates for most of the UK's HEI's: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/news/hefce/2011/nss.htm>

Hefce has introduced this additional information after research into the results of previous student surveys.

It means new benchmarks have been published that indicate the overall satisfaction rating you would expect an institution to get, taking into account the types of students and the subjects identified as influencing its satisfaction rate.

Guardian Professional



Canterbury Christ Church University

The first teacher training college built by the Church of England in the 20th Century is now the number one choice for people in Kent looking to study in the region.

In 2012, Canterbury Christ Church University will celebrate its Golden Jubilee. It has grown significantly over the past 50 years and is now looking forward to continued student, campus and partnership success. Our strategic goals over the next four years include providing an accessible, innovative and flexible curriculum; becoming a centre of excellence for public service education; accelerating our research and knowledge exchange; building transformative partnerships, and promoting a sustainable future.

In 1962, Christ Church welcomed 70 Primary Education students to its main campus in Canterbury, a World Heritage site. Granted University status in 2005, it now has 20,000 students over five campuses across Kent and Medway, studying a wide range of undergraduate and postgraduate courses in the arts and humanities, business and management, health and social care and social and applied sciences, as well as education.

It is recognised as one of the country's top centres for teacher training, graded "outstanding" by Ofsted in 2010 and in the Complete University Guide's top 10 universities for Education. Beyond its roots in teacher training it also provides the largest number of public service related courses in the South East (excluding London) and has a strong reputation for influencing regional and

national policy and practice through its innovative research and teaching.

An accessible, innovative and flexible curriculum

Providing students with the best opportunities to fulfil their academic and career ambitions is at the heart of the Christ Church experience. The University has invested extensively in state-of-the-art facilities and in providing programmes that are flexible and quick to respond to change and demand.

All of its programmes are supported by excellent facilities across its five campuses in Broadstairs, Canterbury, Medway, Folkestone and Tunbridge Wells. These include fully equipped operating theatres and hospital wards, sports labs, a business and enterprise centre, commercial music and television studios and a city centre art gallery. More recently the University has invested in a multi-million pound city centre library and student services centre, a new sports centre and is due to open new Canterbury city centre accommodation in 2012.

As a University built on strong partnerships and communities, its strengths and future ambitions lie in responding effectively to the needs of its future students, as well as public services, the private sector and the emerging developments in schools and further education colleges.

One example of its responsive academic portfolio is the recent development of a Postgraduate Certificate in Shared Services (PCSS). It is the first in the UK and



is in direct response to the changing economic climate creating the need for organisations to share resources. The six month postgraduate programme is open to public sector managers with a first degree, or similar qualification, and combines classroom and online learning. It explores how shared services can be developed through a common vision and culture of trust.

A centre of excellence for public service education

Canterbury Christ Church is one of the largest centres of higher education for the public services in the South East and aims to be recognised nationally and internationally as a centre of excellence for public service professional education, training and development.

As set out in the University's 2011 – 2015 Strategic Plan, it intends to expand upon its already diverse range of routes into teaching to include new employment based and higher education and school partnership routes. It will also be exploring new areas of public service provision, including postgraduate medical programmes and looking at ways to enhance professional practice through increased research and knowledge exchange.

Research and knowledge exchange

The University was recently awarded research degree awarding powers, and is looking to build on its 2008 Research Assessment Exercise successes in Education, History and Music, as it approaches the 2013 Research Excellence Framework.

Areas of specialisms include Olympic legacy research, the benefits of arts on health, to dementia care and improving the lives of children, families and communities, all of which are adding to the development of national policy and practice.

It also has five research centres, covering sports science, health and education, providing important links



to and across individuals, groups and communities in the South East.

Building transformative partnerships

Canterbury Christ Church is significant in the global partnership of Anglican higher education institutions, as well as a national leader in school and college-based education.

It has a reputation for responding to new ideas for collaborative work across many different sectors, whether it is education, public services, commercial enterprises or cultural partners, with whom it can build lasting relationships to benefit society.

The need to continue this work for the greater good of society has never been greater. As the economic, cultural and social landscape shifts, there will be a stronger imperative to create new partnerships in order to share knowledge, skills, resource and vision.

"We are entering an exciting phase in our development and a vital area of this will be the partnerships we form," David Smith, Pro Vice-Chancellor External Relations, explains.



"We will be looking at new ways of working with Education partners, particularly in schools, academies and further education, locally, regionally, nationally and internationally as well as strengthening our association with arts, sports and cultural partners."

Beyond its well established regional partnerships, it is forming national and international links motivated for humanitarian reasons in South India, and major collaborative teaching programmes and research partnerships in Malaysia, France, Holland, USA, Mexico, Spain, Norway, Palestine and Australia.

The University is also a strong supporter of regional arts and culture. In 2010 it signed a five year partnership as Partner and Principal Sponsor of the Canterbury Festival, and has developed partnerships with national music organisations ahead of its opening of the new St Gregory's Centre for Music in 2012.

Promoting a sustainable future

Universities, like most other large organisations, have an important responsibility to protect and enhance the environment. For Christ Church this sense of stewardship is even greater, with its location in a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

In 2011, the University was awarded a First Class Award in the People and Planet League Table, up from a 2.2, and is now in the top group of UK universities and colleges. And it has made a commitment to reducing its carbon emissions by 35% by 2016.

With the creation of 'Christ Church College' in 1962 there was a clear and declared commitment to the pursuit of education, learning and research to the benefit of the public. In 2012, after 50 years of growth and improvement, the commitment of Canterbury Christ Church University to public benefit remains strong and vital as ever.

Perspectives on Tuition Fees: Money Saving Expert?

Is choosing between £6,000 and £9,000 course fees an irrelevant decision? Martin Lewis thinks so. New analysis by the Head of the Independent Taskforce on Student Finance Information and MoneySavingExpert.com founder has caused a stir in the media recently by highlighting that all but high earners will pay back the same regardless of fee.

His comments came in the wake of every English University announcing 2012 fee levels and are based on the fact that monthly repayments are identical, regardless of course fees.

“It would be a tragedy if young people were put off going to university because of misplaced concerns about the true cost,” said Martin Lewis. “Our analysis has revealed that only the top graduate

earners will pay back their fees in full.

“This is because graduates’ monthly repayments are purely based on 9% of everything they earn above £21,000 a year, irrelevant of course fees. This is a higher level than for today’s graduates, who repay 9% of everything above £15,000 – so as they’ll repay far less each month, future graduates will actually have much more disposable income than current ones.

“Yet the flip side of lower repayments, coupled with bigger fees and higher interest, is it takes much longer to repay the full amount. In fact, over the thirty years until the debt wipes, many graduates won’t clear the combined tuition fee and living loans, even at the £6,000 level, so, in reality, there is no additional cost for picking a £9,000/year course.”

If you want to see the analysis and facts behind his statements see www.moneysavingexpert.com/students2012

Plans are currently underway for a Student Finance 2012 Day on 14 November 2011 as outlined at a presentation held at Universities UK’s offices over the summer.

Student Finance 2012 Day will be used to promote the aims of the Independent Taskforce on Student Finance Information, namely communicating the student finance package in England from 2012. Universities, schools, colleges and other education organisations have been asked to host events up and down the country using taskforce resources.

AMHEC Workshop 2011 The Key to Institutional Sustainability?

**Thursday 20th and Friday 21st
October, Warwick University**

Higher Education is facing an uncertain and challenging financial future; public funding is reducing and there is pressure on institutions to seek or enhance their alternative income sources to ensure sustainability. Equally, given that income diversification will not by itself be sufficient to sustain Higher Education as it is today, there is acceptance that this approach must be matched with a concerted effort to identify efficiencies and reduce costs.

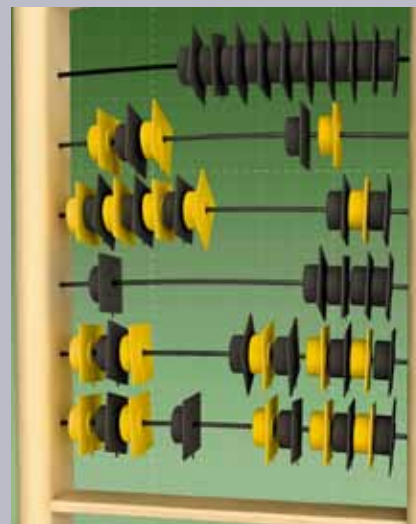
Whilst undoubtedly there is no single model that will deliver success for the whole sector, this AMHEC workshop will provide an opportunity to discuss with fellow sector professionals the

future of higher education funding (including the White Paper) and explore how HEIs are diversifying their income streams and identifying efficiencies, and the success or otherwise of such ventures.

Speakers will include:
Gordon McKenzie, Deputy Director Higher Education Policy, BIS; Ian Lewis, Head of Finance, Hefce; Andy Westwood, Chief Executive, GuildHE; Jon Baldwin, Registrar, Warwick University; Alan Cooke, Pro Vice Chancellor (Corporate Resources), University for the Creative Arts and Peter Burditt, Provelo Ltd.

Early Bird Discount: Book before 31 August and you pay £210. Bookings from 1 September will be charged at £225.

To reserve your place, please complete the booking form available on the AMHEC website. For further information please contact amhec@yorks.ac.uk or phone Louise on 01904 876565.





The University of Winchester awarded a first for excellence

The University of Winchester is the first university in the UK to be awarded the highest possible five-star accreditation rating by the British Quality Foundation under its Recognised for Excellence scheme which uses the EFQM Excellence Model.

“This is a great achievement for the University and it’s wonderful to be the first university in the country to achieve this recognition for the whole institution rather than individual areas,” stated Professor Joy Carter, Vice-Chancellor of the University of Winchester. “The achievement

reflects the University’s commitment to delivering the highest level of excellence and experience for our students and other stakeholders.”

The EFQM Excellence Model is used by thousands of private and public sector organisations in the UK and Europe that are well on their way to organisational excellence, recognising successful efforts to implement excellence and good practice. It also offers the benefits of a structured approach to identifying organisational strengths and areas for improvement as well as an independent and expert external accreditation of what

has been achieved. The assessors particularly identified leadership, at all levels of the University, as an area for praise.

For the assessment the University provided evidence of its sustainable excellence in a submission document dealing with 32 criterion parts of the EFQM Excellence Model. This was reviewed by EFQM assessors who visited the University and used the document as a basis for discussions with some 70 members of staff from across the University, covering all aspects of the organisation.

New Vice-Chancellor for Bath Spa

Professor Christina Slade, Dean of the Schools of Arts and Social Sciences at City University London, has been appointed Vice-Chancellor of Bath Spa University. Professor Slade will take up the post from January 2012. The current Vice-Chancellor Professor Frank Morgan had announced previously that he will retire at the end of this year.

Prior to joining City University London in 2009, Professor Slade was Dean of Humanities at Macquarie University, Australia and Professor of Media Theory at the University of Utrecht, Netherlands.

“Professor Slade has impressive experience both internationally and in the UK,” said Stella Pirie OBE, Chair of Bath Spa University’s Board of Governors. “I am sure that this experience will be invaluable for the University’s development including its student-centred approach and research and estates strategies. Professor Slade will be able to build on the significant achievements made by Professor Morgan and I have every confidence that she will lead the University well through what will certainly be the greatest changes for a generation in the way UK universities are financed.”



MBE for Former AMHEC Chair

Colin Parkin, Director of Facilities at York St John University, has been awarded an MBE in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2011 for his outstanding services to higher education.

Colin who is currently the Vice-Chair of AMHEC and Chair for four years previously, has worked at York St John for 33 years. He began his career in higher education 41 years ago at the then St Martin's College, Lancaster before moving on to Scraftoft Teaching Training College in Leicester three years later.

His commitment to higher education is unquestionable and his achievements, numerous. Under Colin's leadership, the Facilities team at York St John have facilitated an £80 million strategic transformation programme of the University estate, winning a number of high profile awards for architectural innovation and design.

In his role on the Strategic Leadership Team at York St John, Colin has contributed to the development of many business and University partnerships within the city of York, working closely with NHS Trust, North Yorkshire Police and the City of York Council's strategic planning team. He is also a director



of the York Arc Light Facility for the homeless and also a director at York Theatre Royal.

At a national level, as well as his years of enthusiastic and successful leadership of the AMHEC network, Colin has made significant contributions to national projects such as HEFCE benchmarking, shared service and strategic change initiatives.

"To say I'm absolutely delighted would be an understatement. I'm thrilled, honoured and totally overwhelmed to receive this award," said Colin. "I consider myself extremely lucky to work with such fantastic colleagues and to have the support of my team and family.

"Throughout my career I have been fortunate to lead teams of professionals, wholly committed to improving the student and staff experience. Every day

presents us with new challenges and also great rewards. In particular, the pleasure of witnessing students young and not so young, develop during their time with us, are great motivators."

The investiture of the honour of the MBE will take place later this year at Buckingham Palace on 12 October.

New chair



Emma Wilkins, Director of Human Resources at York St John University, has recently taken over from Colin Parkin as Chair of AMHEC. She was elected Vice Chair of AMHEC in 2010, following two years on the Executive Committee and is a member of the GuildHE HR Network Steering Group as well as a member of the JNCHEs Equalities Working Group.

Contact Details

Chair: Emma Wilkins

York St John University,
Lord Mayors Walk,
York, YO31 7EX
Tel: 01904 876618
Fax: 01904 876873
Email: e.wilkins@yorksja.ac.uk

Vice-Chair: Colin Parkin

York St John University,
Lord Mayors Walk,
York, YO31 7EX
Tel: 01904 876629
Fax: 01904 876873
Email: c.parkin@yorksja.ac.uk

Treasurer: Diane Oldaker

Newman University College,
Bartley Green,
Birmingham, B32 3NT
Tel: 0121 476 1181
Fax: 0121 483 2298
Email: d.oldaker@newman.ac.uk

Current Members

Bath Spa University, Arts University
College at Bournemouth, Bishop
Grosseteste University College Lincoln,
Canterbury Christ Church University,
University of Chester,

University of Chichester, Edge Hill
University, Liverpool Hope University,
Newman University College, Norwich
University College of the Arts, University
of Cumbria, St Mary's University
College, Belfast, St Mary's University
College, Twickenham, Stranmillis
University College, Belfast, Leeds
Trinity University College, Trinity
College Carmarthen, Trinity Laban
Conservatoire of Music and Dance,
University for the Creative Arts,
University of Winchester, York St John
University.