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Recruitment and Outreach Department

Summary report on Access Agreement and Widening Participation Strategic Assessment annual monitoring return to OFFA/HEFCE for 2012/13

In January 2015 the University submitted its joint Access Agreement and Widening Participation Strategic Assessment (WPSA) monitoring return for the academic year 2013-14 to OFFA and HEFCE. The return covered both the University and its franchise partners: City College Norwich and Easton and Otley College.

Monitoring return key figures

- ✦ Additional fee income £19,754,234
- ✦ 7698 current system students paying a higher fee
- ✦ 2896 (37.6%) students in receipt of an OFFA countable financial support
- ✦ OFFA-countable bursaries and scholarships expenditure: £3,739,600 (18.9%)
- ✦ Outreach expenditure £1,162,505
- ✦ Student success and progression expenditure £171,548
- ✦ Total OFFA countable expenditure £5,073,653 (25.7%)
- ✦ Overall widening participation expenditure (incl. OFFA countable) £7,591,102

Commentary

In terms of Access Agreement milestones and targets, the University reported that we have made positive progress to achieve our overarching aim of meeting HESA WP benchmarks. In addition we have met or exceeded other milestones and targets relating to outreach activity, both in terms of volume of activity and targeting of students from low participation neighbourhoods. Our aim of increasing the proportion of mature, first degree entrants from low participation neighbourhoods has not been met, however this is a national trend and we continue to perform well against our benchmark and the national average.

Within the 2016/17 Access Agreement, OFFA have requested renewed, stretching targets with the new OFFA strategy focusing on the promotion of faster progress in relation to access and retention of WP groups.

Equality and diversity is increasingly becoming more prominent in terms of Access Agreement requirements with particular focus on the evaluation of the impact of activity and programmes. Positive progress to align and embed work on widening participation with equality and diversity at the University was reported. The Assistant Head of Outreach works closely with the Head of Equality and Diversity with further strategic work planned to strengthen linkages.

Moving forward, data to ensure an evidenced based approach remains key. To support our monitoring and evaluation focus, the Outreach Evaluation Coordinator will work with both the newly appointed Monitoring and Evaluation Coordinator (Student Success) in the Business Intelligence Unit and the Systems Officer in Careers to contribute to Widening Participation data requirements across the whole student lifecycle.

Kristina Garner
Academic Outreach Officer 08/06/2015