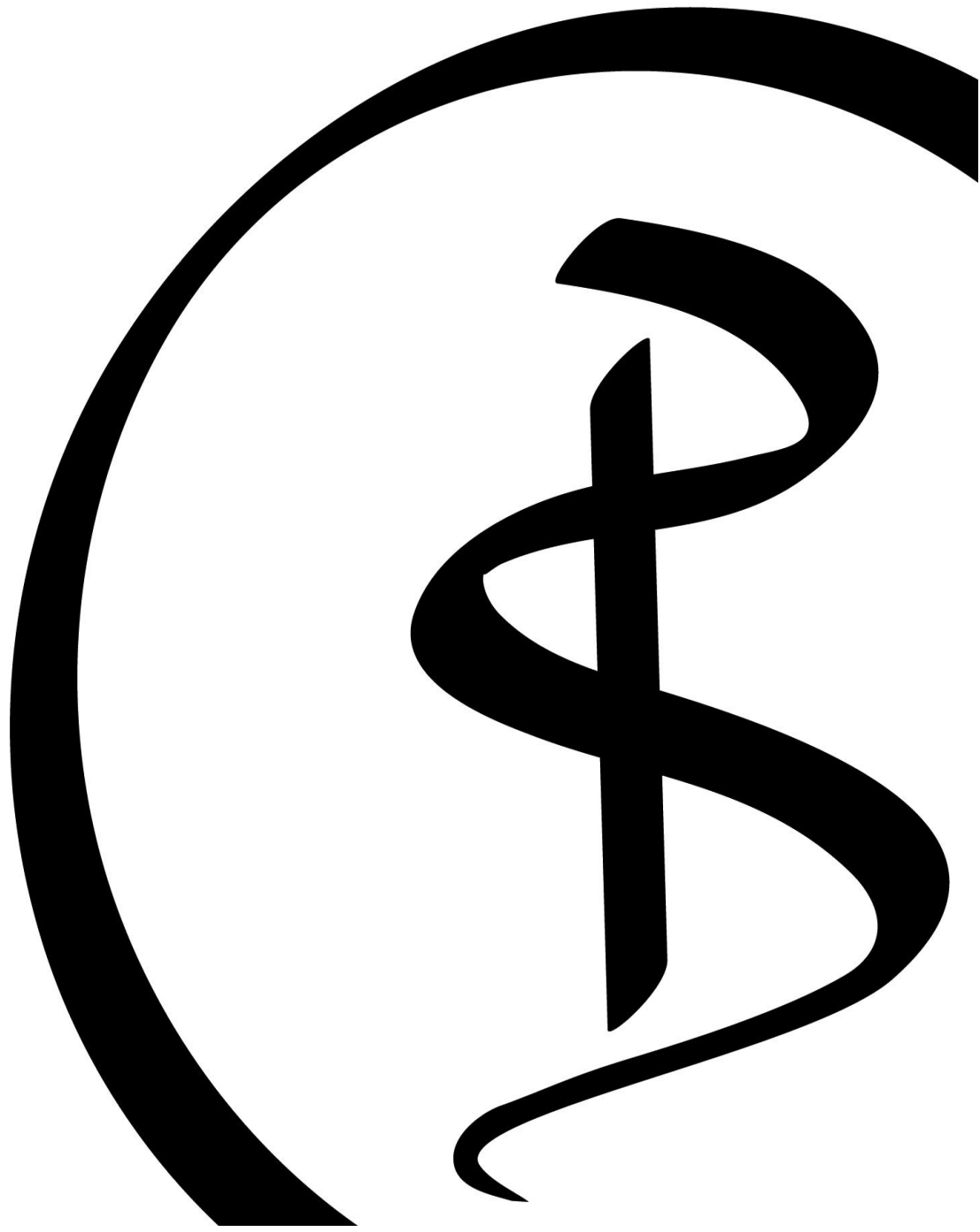


The British School of Osteopathy

Access Agreement

2017/18



## CONTENTS

1.	Introduction to the British School of Osteopathy .....	3
2.	The British School of Osteopathy’s Access Strategy .....	3
2.1	Strategy for widening participation .....	3
2.2	The British School of Osteopathy’s Strategic Plan 2015-17 .....	4
2.3	Fair Access.....	4
3.	Evidence and evaluation of our progress to date .....	5
4.	Targets for 2016/17 .....	8
5.	Financial commitments under this Access Agreement .....	8
5.1	Tuition fees.....	9
5.2	Student financial support.....	9
5.3	Access and Outreach Measures .....	10
5.4	Measures to promote Student Retention, Success and Progression .....	12
5.5	Measures to increase progression of our students to advanced study and employment.....	14
6.	Collaboration.....	15
7.	Institutional Monitoring .....	16
8.	Equality and diversity .....	16
9.	Consulting with students .....	16
10.	Provision of information to prospective students .....	17
11.	Conclusion .....	17

## 1. INTRODUCTION TO THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHY

1. The British School of Osteopathy is the largest and oldest osteopathic educational institution in the UK. It was founded in 1917 by John Martin Littlejohn, a student of Andrew Taylor Still, the founder of osteopathy. For a large part of its life the BSO was based in Westminster. In 1997 it relocated to Southwark, where it currently occupies two buildings: a 37,000 sqft teaching site and a purpose built clinical site of 11,000 sqft.
2. The BSO has a central role in delivering osteopathic education in the UK and has played a key part in expanding the impact of osteopathy; 42% of current UK osteopaths were educated at the BSO, and it has the largest student population of any of the UK osteopathic educational institutions. Its principal activity has been the delivery of programmes for students wishing to apply for registration with the General Osteopathic Council (GOsC) and become practising osteopaths.
3. The BSO's core course is an integrated Master of Osteopathy (M.Ost) qualification, which can be taken either full-time over four years or part-time over five years. It also delivers a full-time MSc Osteopathy (Pre-Registration) course to enable other appropriately skilled practitioners to be educated as osteopaths.
4. The BSO aims to promote life-long learning opportunities in osteopathy. It has developed a portfolio of courses that range from pre-entry courses, such as its own Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences course and a very successful Access to Higher Education course validated by Laser Learning Awards (LASER) which promotes diversity of enrolment on the pre-registration courses. It also offers postgraduate courses, including the first Professional Doctorate in Osteopathy in the world. Other postgraduate courses are the MSc Osteopathy, which is a course for qualified osteopaths, a Postgraduate Certificate in Academic and Clinical Education, a Postgraduate Certificate in Research Methods, and a new Postgraduate Certificate in Specialist Paediatric Osteopathy Practice. It is anticipated that the provision of postgraduate courses will further enhance the profile of the pre-registration programmes by developing the competences of the BSO's staff and by contributing to academic scholarship in this area and the wider body of osteopathic knowledge. The BSO also runs a variety of short courses for professionals wishing to undertake continuing professional development.
5. The BSO offers osteopathic health care to the local and wider community. It delivers more than 40,000 osteopathic appointments annually in its own clinic and in a range of off-site settings that promote access for patients. The BSO runs a number of specialist clinics many of which are free of charge to the patients, for example the 1st Place Surestart Parents and Children's Centre near Southwark's Aylesbury Estate, our clinic at the Manna Centre for people who are homeless and two clinics run in community settings for older patients. The BSO also hosts free specialist clinics to support people living with HIV infection, both within the Clinical Centre and at the Royal Free Hospital. We deliver approximately 4,500 free appointments within our community clinics each year. The BSO is projecting that it will have approximately 405 Higher education (HE) home students for the 2017/18 academic cycle.

## 2. THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHY'S ACCESS STRATEGY

### 2.1 STRATEGY FOR WIDENING PARTICIPATION

6. The BSO is committed by its mission and values to providing access to higher education for learners from backgrounds that are under-represented in higher education. It very much endorses the view that higher education should be made accessible to all, regardless of background or financial status, to promote social justice and economic competitiveness. Despite the fact that the BSO has never received any direct funding for the activities it undertakes in trying to widen participation, it has invested in this area and has been actively participating in outreach projects. The BSO is in the immediate vicinity of a surprisingly higher than expected participation rate for young participants (18 & 19 year olds) according to the HEFCE interactive maps. We are also encompassed by areas of very low participation rate for young participants. Therefore we are continuing to promote osteopathy and the BSO within our own boundaries. We aspire to increase the proportion admitted who are categorised, according to the algorithm used by HEFCE as coming from 'low participation neighbourhoods'. The lack of understanding of what osteopathy is and how it works and the fact that it is generally unavailable on the NHS presents particular challenges to the widening participation agenda of the BSO.

7. This Access Agreement sets out the commitment that the BSO makes to widening access and promoting student success.

## 2.2 THE BRITISH SCHOOL OF OSTEOPATHY'S STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-17

8. The BSO has a strategy for widening participation which is monitored by the Widening Participation and Admissions Strategy Group (WPASG) reporting directly to the Academic Council, the ultimate academic authority of the BSO. The strategy is reviewed and agreed by the Academic Council annually. Currently in this strategy, the BSO details three aims:

- To improve recruitment of students with the greatest potential to become osteopaths, especially from under-represented groups;
- To ensure that the BSO's education and other services are accessible to all, that barriers to entry are removed wherever the BSO identifies them;
- To promote a culture that recognises the benefits of an increasingly diverse student body.

The current strategic plan sets out the following commitments. This agreement is one of the key means by which the BSO seeks to fulfil these commitments;

## 2.3 FAIR ACCESS

9. The BSO is committed to offering affordable quality education, on equitable principles, to a diverse range of national, European Union and international students.

### Aims

- To provide fair access to our courses and our research, to encourage participation from all.
- To market our courses to emphasise the access and diversity priorities of the BSO.
- To commit to maximise student success, both in academic terms and in personal development.
- To tailor our provision to the learning strengths and needs of students so that they are given every opportunity to attain their full potential.
- To promote partnerships and networks with schools, colleges, partner institutions and employers.

- To offer education at fair prices to students whether full-time or part-time, at home or abroad.
- To develop specialist skills that enables all of our students to engage in rewarding careers.
- To attract a wide range of students through our offering of high quality, demand-led courses.
- To engage in research and scholarship to both inform the osteopathic profession and to further the delivery of evidence informed education.
- To foster a strong, independent Students' Union.
- To produce proud alumni, with useful lifelong skills, thereby furthering the BSO's reputation.

10. Key measures of success for this strategy require the development of the BSO's environment such that:-

- The career success of our graduates will position us above the sector average for graduate employability.
- Students at every stage of study will be directly and consistently engaged in our decision-making and development.

Our record for high level achievement will be sustained and increased across a diverse student body and the outcomes for those from under-represented groups will equal those of the overall student population.

11. The development and delivery of our access strategy is embedded across the whole institution. We work across the BSO, including with those departments responsible for student recruitment and academic and pastoral support, to optimise interaction with all of our applicants, students and graduates at each stage of the 'student journey' to establish an effective collaborative working relationship. This Access Agreement has been reviewed and developed by all staff concerned with student financial support, access and outreach, success and progression, teaching and learning, marketing and recruitment and the student experience.

### 3. EVIDENCE AND EVALUATION OF OUR PROGRESS TO DATE

12. The BSO places considerable emphasis on the importance of monitoring widening participation and assessing the impact and effectiveness of its initiatives. The BSO monitors on an annual basis the diversity of its intake as an evaluation of our access and student success work. Many targets (including those related to progression, completion, ethnicity, disability and age) are encompassed by the BSO's comprehensive datasets. The BSO has in place a student information system (QL) that is continually updated and allows for year on year comparison. Data are considered at a range of meetings, from Individual Course Teams and examination boards through to the Academic Council. The BSO also has in place an Equality Committee which ensures that potential equality and diversity impacts are considered during the development of projects.

Our monitoring and evaluation strategy consists of the following key elements;

- Evaluating participation in and perceived impact of our widening participation and access interventions.
- Tracking learners to determine their eventual participation in higher education.
- Tracking learners into and through the BSO and out into employment.

13. Historically we have targeted learners from the local areas with postcodes associated with income deprivation, educational deprivation and low participation in higher education. As we enter the funded sector we will be able to use material provided through HESA and UCAS to assist with this evidence and analysis.

14. Progress to Date:

Table 1

Target Statement	Target %	15/16	14/15	Related HESA Table / %
To increase the proportion of undergraduate full-time students in receipt of DSA at the BSO	8%	7.20%	6.7%	Table 7 HESA Average = 7%
To maintain the proportion of BME groups under-represented in higher education at the BSO (Undergraduate)	20%	FT = 21.25%  PT = 27.4%	FT = 23.3%  PT = 17.9%	Full Time - Table 6a (14.9%)  Part Time - Table 6b (22.7%)
To increase the proportion of undergraduate PT students at the BSO	25%	31.34%	22.30%	
To increase the proportion of undergraduate mature students	55%	PT = 87%  FT = 63.7%	PT = 95.7%  FT = 75.7%	Part Time - Table 2b (91.9%)  Full Time - Table 2a (20%)
To reduce our non-continuation rates for first year undergraduate students	7%	tbc	26%	Table 3a HESA Average = 7.2%
To increase the number of care leavers within the undergraduate population	By at least 1 student	1 student	0.00%	
To increase the number of young carers within the undergraduate population	By at least 1 student	None yet	0.00%	
To maintain the proportion of graduates in graduate level employment or further study based on DLHE data	100%	tbc	100.00%	Table E1a HESA Average = 92.1%
To Increase the percentage of young full- entrants from LPN quintile 1	13.80%	2.80%	0.00%	Table SP6 HESA Average = 11.4%

To maintain the percentage of <u>young</u> full-time undergraduate entrants from state schools	90.90%	75.00%	88.00%	Table 1a HESA Average = 89.8%
To increase the percentage of young full-time undergraduate entrants from NS-SEC classes 4-7	62.50%	8.11%	47.00%	Table 1a HESA Average = 33%
To increase percentage of full-time undergraduate students from low income backgrounds who have a household residual income of less than £25,000	55.80%	50.80%	53.10%	

15. The very small size of the School’s annual intake means that slight changes in demographics can cause large variances in statistical data. However, the data shows that the BSO performs well in terms of recruitment of BME students and the proportion of part-time undergraduate students at the School. The proportion of mature undergraduate students remains high on the full-time course but has fallen slightly on the part time course.

16. The proportion of undergraduate students in receipt of DSA exceeds the HESA average with 7.2% of students receiving this allowance.

17. From the data shown in table 1, there is still further work to be done on recruiting students from POLAR Quintile 1, although this has increased from 0% in 2014/15 to 2.8% in 2015/16. Work to improve this area can be challenging due to the low number of areas in Quintile 1 in London.

18. The recruitment of young, full-time undergraduate students from state schools also requires improvement to meet HESA averages, especially as this has fallen since 2014-15. Due to small numbers of entrants who fall into the “young” category, a minor change can lead to a large change in percentage. Outreach work will continue to target this area throughout 2016-17 and 2017-18

19. Although data is not yet available for 2015-16, the School is aware that continuation rates amongst first year students is an area that requires improvement and a number of projects are planned for 2016-17 and 2017-18.

20. The BSO recruited the first care-leaver to the Undergraduate population. It is hoped that this will be further increased with the introduction of the bursary available to care leavers from 2016-17. Further analysis of the effectiveness of this bursary will be undertaken from 2016-17.

21. Following submission of the BSO's first HESA return in 2016-17, it will be possible to undertake further scrutiny of data.

#### 4. TARGETS FOR 2017/18

- Progression rates for BME students
22. The BSO will also continue to increase the proportion of students in receipt of DSA, with an aim to increase it to 8% by 2019.
23. The BSO will continue to maintain the proportion of BME groups at the School and will add an additional target of monitoring the progression rates of these students.
24. The School will continue to increase the proportion of undergraduate part-time students, to 25% in 2017-18.
25. The School has already met its target for increasing the rates of mature undergraduate students and intends to maintain this figure.
26. The School recognises it still has further work to do on improving non-continuation rates and this continues to be a target with a goal of reducing non-continuation rates to 6.8% by 2020.
27. While the School recruited its first care-leaver in 2015-16, the target of having one care-leaver and one young carer remains for 2016-17.
28. The School also plans to maintain its proportion of graduates in graduate level employment based on DELHE data/
29. The BSO is also aiming to increase its percentage of entrants from Low Participation Network quintile 1, entrants from state schools and students who come from a low income background. The School will also investigate alternative methods of measuring disadvantage following the removal of the NS-SEC score from 2016.

#### 5. FINANCIAL COMMITMENTS UNDER THIS ACCESS AGREEMENT

30. This Access Agreement sets out the commitment we make to widening access and promoting student success. It describes an investment totalling £412,796 in four areas: 1) financial support for students, 2) outreach and access (activities to reach out to and engage learners who are under-represented in higher education), 3) student success (activities to raise the attainment and support the retention of our students) and 4) progression (to enhance the progression of our students to advanced study and employment).

31. Based on the BSO's performance to date across these areas, in 2017-18 the BSO will allocate approximately 20.9% of the higher fee income it receives to support access and measures to promote student success and progression. Based on estimated student numbers for 2017/18, the BSO forecasts the total OFFA accountable funding allocated to these measures will be £220,861:

- We will provide £52,000 on financial support for students.
- We will spend £69,696 on a range of outreach and access measures targeted at under-represented groups.



- We will spend £83,017 on measures to enhance student success and retention.
- We will spend £16,148 on measures to enhance the progression of our students to advanced study and employment.

## 5.1 TUITION FEES

32. From September 2017 the BSO will charge new full-time home-region undergraduate students £9,000 per annum for all eligible courses. Part-time students will be charged a pro-rate fee according to the amount of study undertaken. Part-time students will not be charged more than £6,750 on an academic year.

33. These fees will apply to students for the whole of their programme of study, provided there is not a break in registration longer than one calendar year and assuming no change to the national framework for tuition fees.

## 5.2 STUDENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT

34. In its 2016-17 Access Agreement and in line with sector research on the effectiveness of student bursaries and scholarships in promoting access and success, the BSO reviewed the financial support it offers to students. Under this Access Agreement planned expenditure for student financial support has been increased from the 2016-17 level of £48,000 to £52,000 in 2017-18. The BSO bursaries are targeted to help students meet the additional material and equipment costs associated with study as well as helping students to cover their living and accommodation costs. Accordingly we will offer the following bursaries;

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
a) New undergraduate students on household incomes under £25,000	£200	£200	£200	£200	£800
b) Students who are eligible for the bursary outlined in a) above and who progress to undergraduate courses from a relevant QAA recognised Access course.	£300	£300	£300	£300	£1,200
Total bursaries available to eligible students	£500	£500	£500	£500	£2,000

Table 2

35. Subject to satisfactory academic progression these bursaries will be available to the student in each year of their studies. The BSO has not received applications from care leavers before and in recognition of

this are proposing a new bursary. Students who are care leavers will be eligible to receive the bursaries outlined in table 2 above and an enhanced level of support as described in the table below:

Support for care leavers	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Total
	£2,500	£1,000	£1,000	£1,000	£5,500

36. The BSO will introduce its own Access to Learning Fund and will allocate £20,000 to this. To support this area one particular use of this fund will be to support students with disabilities in the wake of changes to DSA in addition to students who are struggling due to financial hardship.

## 5.3 ACCESS AND OUTREACH MEASURES

### 5.3.1 FOUNDATION COURSES FOR M.OST STUDY

37. The BSO recognises that it receives a large number of applications from students who have proven academic achievement but who lack a solid grounding in the sciences required to study osteopathy; these are often mature students. In response to this issue, the BSO has been running short entry courses for many years to enable students to gain this background in the basic sciences. The Introduction to Osteopathic Sciences (IOS) course is provided for applicants who already hold some form of qualifications but for whom the Access diploma is not appropriate. The IOS is a bridging course that is used to aid successful progression of applicants onto the M.Ost full time or part time pathways.

### 5.3.2 ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION DIPLOMA

38. In recognition of the need to widen participation, the BSO also designed, and had accredited by Laser Learning Awards (LASER), an Access to Higher Education Diploma course specifically for students who wish to study osteopathy. On successful completion of this course, students are guaranteed a place on the BSO's M.Ost course.

### 5.3.3 CURRENT OUTREACH WORK;

39. The BSO liaises with a range of organisations to promote osteopathy to secondary school pupils (11 – 17 year olds) within the local community (Lambeth and Southwark) as well as the Greater London area. The BSO has participated in a number of outreach activities, including career and education events organised by colleges, universities and academies. It has also worked with the company 'IntoUniversity' to meet with secondary school pupils from underprivileged backgrounds who have an interest in medicine but may be unaware of the wider variety of options available within the health care arena. Recently, the BSO has introduced osteopathy to over 5,000 students within the London area by attending a number of careers events. The BSO roadshows have been a highlight and are designed to disseminate information, promote

and support our vast alumni. We offer the local schools an opportunity to discover what osteopathy has to offer and promote it as a career to a variety of age groups particularly in year 9 and year 12/13. Free continued professional development and topics that affect not only the BSO but osteopathy as a whole are discussed at the roadshows and focussed on low participation areas in the UK.

#### 5.3.4 PLANNED PROJECTS;

- a) *Engagement Programme*; An engagement programme which aims to establish, at an early age, the aspiration to participate in higher education among learners from the target groups. These activities include those involving long-term outreach with younger age groups. We have focused predominately on year 9 and year 12/13 students and engaged with these individuals in an interactive setting, including quiz's and prizes for the younger ages and seminars and tutorials for the older age groups. Supported by HESA statistics it is imperative that we also continue to increase our recruitment numbers and engage with those considered BME students. As we are a small institution, a small increase in these numbers can have a great impact on our statistics.
- b) *Access Partnership Programme*: We are developing an engagement framework to target schools, colleges and other agencies. This programme reaches out in particular to those schools, colleges and agencies which are associated with measures of deprivation such as income deprivation, educational deprivation, child poverty and low higher education participation and those agencies involved with supporting those leaving care or young carers.
- c) *Summer Schools*: A summer school programme is to be delivered, including bespoke programmes aimed at mature students, Access Course students, part-time students and those leaving care.
- d) *Access Support*; A programme to support progression from level 3 programmes (including Access Courses) in target FE colleges to the BSO. We will work with further education colleges as providing one of the key opportunities for engagement with part-time and mature learners.
- e) *Enhanced information, advice and guidance*: Through the provision of conferences and events for teachers and advisers in schools, colleges and other agencies we seek to help to bridge the gap left by changes to the provision of information, advice and guidance about higher education. The BSO has been to Bristol and Manchester this year in form of the Roadshows. We are aiming to disseminate more of what osteopathy and the BSO has to offer by continuing the roadshows in Birmingham and Scotland.
- f) *Regional Open Days*; through the provision of open days in low participation areas the BSO will aim to increase awareness of osteopathy as a career and provide advice and guidance about higher education. We have focussed our efforts to some of the schools in the low participation areas as defined by HEFCE.

- g) BME Taster Days – the School are planning a number of ‘taster days’ targeting specifically schools with a high proportion of BME students.

## 5.4 MEASURES TO PROMOTE STUDENT RETENTION, SUCCESS AND PROGRESSION

### 5.4.1 STUDENT SUCCESS

33. The BSO has in place a number of support measures that enable students to progress through their course successfully should they encounter personal or academic challenges. One arm of support is a fully functioning Student Support Department which offers disability and welfare advice, counselling and academic support including a dedicated learning support page on our VLE. The Student Attendance and Retention Group formally and regularly monitor the attendance of pre-registration students and postgraduate students at practical and clinically relevant classes. This ensures that students who are struggling with their attendance are identified and provided with appropriate support and solutions that will enable them to improve their attendance and continue studying. In addition, an academic advisory service provided by the Academic Registry provides students with assistance should they wish to report Special Circumstances or suspend their studies.

### 5.4.2 PLANNED PROJECTS;

34. Support for students with disabilities in the wake of changes to DSA: The BSO’s approach to supporting students with disabilities is to enhance individual support for those students who require it whilst enhancing the accessibility of the curriculum for all. A programme of staff training regarding SpLDs’ and mental health is in the process of being implemented in order to ensure that our diverse student population is well supported and the accessibility of the curriculum is improved. The BSO anticipates that changes to the DSA might fall particularly hard on students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD); the majority of students at the BSO fall into this category.

35. We will ensure that the BSO continues to provide all students with one to one learning support, which will align with normal academic skills development, whilst providing referral pathways to needs assessors and SpLD tutors for those who require it. Following the Ministerial Statement recommending the modernisation of DSA’s; the Student Support Team has reviewed the BSOs electronic equipment, e.g. scanners/printers, to ensure that they are compatible with assistive technology software. Additionally new specialist software will be installed onto the majority of BSO computers to aid students with areas such as proof reading. This will ensure that students who are not awarded with specialist software through DSA will still have the same level of support.

The BSO will also provide;

- A specialist disability advisor.
- Ring fenced money in the Access to Learning fund to enable students to access diagnostic learning assessments.
- Specialist equipment, software and adaptations to facilities.
- A Counselling and CBT service.

36. The BSO is committed to improving the experience of students with disabilities and continues to maintain the staffing resources in the Student Support Team. Students presenting with long term health conditions, learning and mental health disabilities can all access specialist advice and support and there is a well-established process for agreeing and supporting reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning. In light of the increase in students with disabilities, the disability advisor is situated in our Clinic one day a week to improve access to this service for Part Time students in particular and to make the reasonable adjustment process more efficient. Additionally there has been an increase in students with mental health problems, impacting the demand for counselling services, and we have increased our Counsellors hours to reflect this. We continue to provide CBT in addition to psychodynamic talking therapy and both of these services are now available via Skype, in particular to support our Part Time students.

37. The BSO is aware of its duties and responsibilities under the Equality Act and allocates a proportion of additional fee income to specific measures designed to fulfil them. The Student Support Department has 'anticipatory funding' included within its budget to accommodate students with support needs not covered by DSA from 2016/17.

38. In recognition of this the Learning Support Advisor is training to become a specialist dyslexia tutor and from 2017 dyslexia support will be available through the BSO. In line with its duties under the Equality Act 2010, the BSO is currently in the process of producing its Equality Objectives & Action Plan for 2016- 2020. The proposed specific objectives will ensure all students have equality of opportunity and particularly focus on the diversity of the student population.

- a) *Student Induction:* The BSO recognises that the first few weeks of study are one of the highest risk points for students deciding to leave for a number of reasons. At the BSO we firmly believe that the best start to the academic cycle across all year groups is equally important and that our students are more likely to succeed given an induction session for each cohort at the start of every new start to the year. The Student Induction developed in partnership with the BSO Students' Union, provides a series of events both academic and recreational to enable them to participate fully in the student experience at the BSO. The events focus on student and staff integration across all year groups to ensure that, due to the small specialised nature of the courses, all are included.
- b) The investment in the student welcome will also include a 'refreshers' week. This will provide opportunity for students to further engage with support functions. This is aimed to provide further opportunities for students who may be at risk of withdrawing to further engage and enhance their chances of success whilst further enhancing and improving the student experience for the wider BSO community.
- c) *Peer-mentoring and peer assisted learning:* We will focus on students' preparedness for success, their ambition and recognition of their own potential, and the visibility and accessibility of academic support services. We are developing a peer mentoring scheme, working with fellow students to provide frequent contact and support for progression and success. We make a significant investment in the quality of the student experience by means of, for example, improved forms of academic tutoring, There will be a continued emphasis on student support from Unit Leaders and Course Leaders. This will include catch up sessions, on-line support and immediate feedback in practical classes. Unit Leader and Course Leaders hold one to one meetings with students who are identified as being at risk (i.e. they have failed an assessment or have missed classes without good cause).

- d) *Support for mature students and part time students:* We have developed a number of commitments designed better to support mature and part time students. These include a return to study package for the mature and part time learners covering, for example, specific academic skills sessions. We provide opportunities for socialising / networking with other students on the full time courses. There is also a designated role with the Academic Registry department to liaise and work exclusively with this group of students.
  
- e) Student Attendance and Retention group: The management and support of students' progression falls under the responsibility of the Student Attendance and Retention Group (SARG). This group formally monitors attendance to identify students at risk; experience has shown that when a student has difficulties, either academic or personal, it is attendance that is affected first. Supportive measures can then be put in place to support the student and enable them to complete their studies. This group will be tasked to report on the success of under-represented groups with a view to tailoring support if required to particular students/and or groups of students
  
- f) There will be a continued emphasis on student support from module leaders and course leaders. This will involve tutorials, catch-up sessions, on-line support, and immediate feedback following presentations.
  
- g) We will deliver additional support for students needing extra study help and continue to develop early formative 'screening' assignments at Level 4 to identify students with writing issues.
  
- h) We will continue our 'Open Door' policy of ad hoc tutorials and student support from lecturing staff.

## 5.5 MEASURES TO INCREASE PROGRESSION OF OUR STUDENTS TO ADVANCED STUDY AND EMPLOYMENT

39. The BSO prepares its students for employment in many ways: the study of osteopathy and the interactions that students have with patients, tutors and other students contributes to the broader experiences that students have while on their course. The BSO aims to ensure that the students are equipped to make a smooth transition to work, but equally give them the opportunity for intellectual and personal development and to be effective and adaptable within a rapidly changing economy and society. The BSO aims to do this by providing its students with skills to enable them to be successful both in setting up their own practices as self-employed osteopaths but also as employers of others. The BSO provides opportunities for students to attend seminars covering issues such as writing a CV, attending an interview and how to run a small business.

### 5.5.1 PLANNED PROJECTS;

- a) *Graduate Mentoring Scheme*: As an institution, we recognise that moving from a teaching clinic environment to autonomous work as a sole practitioner is a transition that some of our graduates find challenging. The BSO is developing a formal mentoring scheme for recent graduates to provide them with support after graduation with a designated tutor on hand to provide advice and support during this transitional period.
- b) *Graduate Associate Clinic*: In 2012 we established an Associate clinic that would allow new graduates the opportunity to begin work in practice within a supported environment. Associate Osteopaths are appointed to treat patients independently but with an experienced mentor available for guidance and support. More recently the opportunity to work in the Associate clinic has extended to Saturday mornings. A key focus of the project is to provide mentoring and support to graduates who may need help in developing confidence in working independently and autonomously. The role of the mentor adapts to the experience of the Associates – with structured induction and development sessions planned over the first four weeks of an Associate’s work and regular interaction each evening for the first six weeks. Contracts run for two years so that there are opportunities each year for graduating students.
- c) *One-to-one coaching for postgraduate career planning*; Students will be offered the opportunity to discuss their plans and aspirations with an experienced member of staff during the final stages of their course. This will be used to develop an action plan for the students and identify areas they need to work on to be successful in their chosen field.
- d) *Publication Bursary Scheme*; The BSO is finalizing its scheme to encourage students to publish a paper in a peer reviewed journal utilising the research they have undertaken as part of their dissertation. Tutors will be allocated to support this process.
- e) *Undergraduate Conference*; The BSO offers the opportunity for students to present their research work in a formal conference setting, therefore enhancing their ability to be considered for further study.

## 6. COLLABORATION

40. The BSO recognizes the benefits of collaboration and that further input into the projects identified in section 5:3 is essential. We intend to increase the amount of career fairs for school leavers we attend each academic year, re-engage with any schools all college we have previously collaborated with and create new links with other healthcare disciplines to target mature students. The BSO will work with other local Universities and with agencies in the local area to target and work with those leaving care and young care givers to enter the BSO.

41. There are various benefits to collaborating with several external entities including building on the contacts already made with schools, colleges and other agencies to shape collaborative activity to widen participation and raise aspirations.

## 7. INSTITUTIONAL MONITORING

42. Development, coordination and implementation of the Access Agreements is overseen by WPSAG. The VP(Education) will report on matters relating to the Access Agreement at the BSO's School Management Team. Registry will continue to monitor the student population against HESA benchmarks and in terms of relevant equality and diversity categories. Finance will continue to monitor the uptake of BSO bursaries. Outreach activities will be reported upon by relevant departments, including Admissions and Marketing.

## 8. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

43. The BSO's Equality Statement and Objectives sets out a number of key principles which are represented in this Access Agreement. These include the following.

- The BSO is committed to promoting equality of opportunity in all of its activities.
- The BSO recognises and appreciates the diversity of its student body and the community it serves, and works to develop a curriculum to meet the needs of a varied, contemporary society.
- The BSO seeks to foster an environment where diversity is valued and celebrated.
- The BSO is committed to ensuring that all BSO policies, procedures and practices reflect these principles.

As well as its responsibilities to its students and staff, the BSO is also mindful of the implications of its policies and practices as they affect all stakeholders and the wider community in which it works.

44. The BSO believes that this Access Agreement and the activities undertaken help to advance equality of opportunity for all by widening educational opportunity as a counter to disadvantage, by providing an educational environment where 'respect' and 'partnership' are valued.

45. Our equality impact assessment of our Access Agreement confirms that it supports the implementation of our equality and diversity policy and that it is designed to contribute positively to the educational opportunities and student experience of a diverse community, within and beyond the BSO. We are confident that this Agreement will help us to eliminate discrimination, advance equality and foster good relations between people from different groups

## 9. CONSULTING WITH STUDENTS

46. The Students' Union (SU) of the BSO has been key in the BSO's decision on the level of fees and bursary/scholarship support. The SU expects the Agreement to ensure fairness between different groups of students and give them the best chance of succeeding through good support while they are studying. The President of the BSO SU is a full member of the Academic Council which signs off the Agreement and confirms the targets in the overarching context of the BSO's Strategic Plan.



47. Students are formally represented on all committees which have responsibility for oversight of aspects of this Agreement.

## 10. PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

48. We are committed to ensuring that our information is clear, informative, relevant and understandable by our target groups. Beyond the material required by the Key Information Set, we will extend and focus information to assist our target groups - within our website, at our Open Days and through school liaison. The material in this Agreement will be publicised after approval in July 2015 and basic information will be provided on our website with appropriate caveats in the interim. . It is one of the Universities priorities to ensue prospective students and their parents and supporters are fully aware of the very latest information regarding our courses and finance options.

## 11. CONCLUSION

49. The BSO has benefitted from funding over the past decade via its relationship with the University of Bedfordshire. As an institution designated to receive public funding the BSO will continue to provide important public investment in vocational training.

50. Students entering osteopathic training do so because they have a true vocation as primary health care practitioners. The BSO believes that, in partnership with Government, it can continue to recruit students from all backgrounds and provide them with the intensive and challenging but supportive training to achieve their ambitions, including that of helping to improve the health of the nation.

