What’s on OFFA: understanding our new OFFA targets

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## Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>OFFA</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aims and expectation</td>
<td>Aims and expectation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cycle</strong></td>
<td><strong>Financial package</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Production of the Access Agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agreement</strong></td>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New(ish) targets</strong></td>
<td><strong>Five</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Questions</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conception of OFFA

• **Browne Review** launched 9/11/09, published 12/10/10

• **Members group**: Lord Browne, Sir Michael Barber, Diane Coyle, David Eastwood, Julia King, Rayay Naik, Peter Sands

• **Recommended** wide-ranging changes to the system of *university funding*, including removing the cap on the level of fees that universities can charge, and *increasing the income level* at which graduates must begin to pay back their loans to £21,000
Birth of OFFA…

Browne review recommendation:

- To address concerns that a variable fee system might increase inequality in access to the most selective institutions, the reforms included the creation of the **Office for Fair Access (OFFA)**, with the remit to ensure that higher fees did not inhibit equity of access. If an institution intended to charge a fee above the previous level, it had to draw up an Access Agreement, signed off by OFFA, demonstrating how it would safeguard fair access.
(The grown-up) OFFA

- **Independent** public body that regulates fair access to higher education in **England**
- All publicly funded universities and colleges in England must have an AA approved by OFFA to charge higher tuition fees
- Approve and monitor AA in which universities and colleges set out their tuition fees and how they plan to improve / sustain access
- HEI that break the AA OFFA can fine or limit the level of fee charged
- Share evidence base about what methods are known to work best
- Advocate for access and how HE contributes to social mobility
Aims

• Increase the proportion of learners from under-represented and disadvantaged groups who enter, succeed in and are well prepared to progress from higher education to employment or postgraduate study.

• Make faster progress in improving access to the most selective higher education institutions by students from under-represented and disadvantaged groups.
### Numerical targets…

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<th><strong>To increase participation rate of HE entrants from under-represented and disadvantaged groups, and narrow the participation gap between people from the most and least advantaged backgrounds.</strong></th>
<th><strong>Target is for participation rate from quintile 1 entering HE to increase from 20.4 per cent in 2011-12 to 36.0 per cent by 2019-20 and participation rate for quintile 2 to increase from 29.2 per cent in 2011-12 to 46.0 per cent by 2019-20. To reduce the gap in participation, our target is for the quintile 5: quintile 1 ratio to decrease from 2.9 in 2011-12 to 2.0 by 2019-20.</strong></th>
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<td>Faster progress to increase the entry rate of students from under-represented and disadvantaged groups entering more selective HEIs, and narrow the participation gap between people from the most and least advantaged backgrounds</td>
<td><strong>Target is for the entry rate from quintile 1 to increase from 3.2 per cent in 2014-15 to 5 per cent by 2019-20, and from 5.1 per cent in 2014-15 to 7 per cent by 2019-20 for quintile 2. Reduce the gap in participation, the target is for the quintile 5: quintile 1 ratio to decrease from 6.8 in 2014-15 to 5.0 by 2019-20</strong></td>
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<td>Improve continuation rates for students from under-represented and disadvantaged groups and narrow the gap in non-continuation rates between advantaged and disadvantaged students</td>
<td>Faster progress in this area, but do not currently hold data over a long enough timescale to set a target</td>
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<td>Improve progression into graduate-level employment/further study from under-represented and disadvantaged groups and narrow the gap in outcomes between advantaged and disadvantaged</td>
<td>Faster progress in this area, but do not currently hold data over a long enough timescale to set a target</td>
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Expectations

Evidence-based focus on targets and outcomes

Emphasis on better targeted use of expenditure

Higher expectations of those with furthest to go on access, particularly in terms of outcomes

Focus on student lifecycle approach

Focus on outreach, including collaborative working
Meet the boys...

BIS

OFFA

Don’t forget.....HEFCE
Madeleine Atkins
Cycle

It is painful…

- MT – Sept to Nov cost of outreach survey
- MT – Oct Financial package to JFSSAG
- MT – Jan submit monitoring returns OFFA / HEFCE
- HT – Jan AA guidance from OFFA
- April – submit AA to OFFA
- July – hear back from OFFA

….2 months later start again…
Agreement

• Typical Oxford style …very well written and the longest AA from any HEI in England…

• OFFA commends our prose

• Has changed to address new requirements

• Oxford spends approximately 50% of HFI on access
# New(ish) targets 2017-19

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<th>Target 1:</th>
<th>increase the percentage of undergraduate students entering Oxford from schools and colleges that historically have had limited progression to Oxford to at least 14.5% in 2019-20.</th>
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<td>Target 2:</td>
<td>increase the percentage of undergraduate students entering Oxford from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds (ACORN postcodes 4 and 5) to at least 9.5% in 2019-20.</td>
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<td>Target 3:</td>
<td>increase the percentage of undergraduates entering Oxford from neighbourhoods with low participation in higher education (POLAR3 postcodes 1 and 2) to at least 13.0% in 2019-20.</td>
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<td>Target 4:</td>
<td>ensure that the proportion of undergraduate students with declared disabilities or specific learning difficulties (regardless of whether they receive the DSA) at the University does not drop below the current level of 8.8%.</td>
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<td>Target 5:</td>
<td>ensure that at least 55% of students working with the Oxford South-East IntoUniversity centre progress to higher education in 2019-20.</td>
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Implementation

- Communication of the targets
- Outreach from colleges, departments / faculties, UAO
- Admissions
- On-course
- Progression
QUESTIONS?