

May 2009

**Guidance**

Completed planning templates should be e-mailed to HEFCE by Friday 3 July 2009

This guidance provides information about the national phase of the Aimhigher Associates scheme, 2009-11, and invites Aimhigher partnerships to submit plans against which allocated funds may be drawn down.

# Aimhigher Associates scheme

**Guidance and planning for the national  
phase, 2009-2011**

The logo for Aimhigher... features a stylized blue triangle to the left of the text 'aimhigher...' in a blue, lowercase, sans-serif font.

The logo for HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England) features the text 'HEFCE' in a blue, lowercase, serif font, with 'HIGHER EDUCATION' and 'FUNDING COUNCIL FOR ENGLAND' in a smaller, blue, uppercase, sans-serif font above and below it, respectively.

# Foreword

**By David Lammy, Minister of State for Higher Education and Intellectual Property**



Every so often, an idea is launched and it succeeds beyond the wildest dreams. This is what has happened with Aimhigher Associates.

Last year, John Denham, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, announced a new Aimhigher Associates scheme and launched a pathfinder phase. This has proved to be a huge success.

Through the pilots 17 projects have been launched, and already by the end of February 77 HEIs, 7,227 learners and 1,380 Associates had become involved. When one university advertised for 50 Associates, it had 900 people applying.

There are many reasons for the success of Aimhigher Associates. Undergraduates from disadvantaged backgrounds are discovering that they can succeed in higher education, and are doing so. They find that they are gaining skills and abilities which will stand them in good stead in the labour market, and that they are capable of achieving far more than they previously imagined. And they want to share their experiences with young people from similar backgrounds who, like them when they were younger, were nervous and lacking in good, first-hand, information about what university is really like.

Associates help pupils from Key Stage 4 through educational transitions and with the UCAS university application process, offering personal experience that can encourage young people to make the most of their talents.

Our efforts to raise the aspirations of young people towards university are working. Over 50 per cent of young people from all social backgrounds now aspire to university and applications for entry in 2009 are at record levels. In the current economic climate it is vital that we keep up this momentum so that young people have the skills and qualifications to take advantage of the opportunities that will open up as world economies recover.

This document marks the next phase of plans to extend Aimhigher Associates nationally. We have already announced funding of £21 million over three years to support this programme, including the £3 million set aside last year for the pathfinder phase. I expect us to be able to progress quickly to achieve our aim of 5,500 Associates working with 21,000 young people.

This document invites all Aimhigher partnerships to put forward proposals for projects in their areas. Your continued support is vital if we are to build on the progress we have already made and ensure that all young people have the opportunity to realise their potential, whatever their background.

# **Aimhigher Associates scheme: guidance and planning for the national phase, 2009-2011**

Of interest to	Chairs and managers of Aimhigher partnerships
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## **Executive summary**

### **Purpose of this guidance**

1. This guidance provides information about the national phase of the Aimhigher Associates scheme, 2009-11, and invites Aimhigher partnerships to submit plans against which allocated funds may be drawn down.
2. The scheme has funding of £21 million spread over a period of three academic years, 2008-2011. In 2008-09, we funded 21 area partnerships as a pathfinder phase. This guidance explains the key elements of the scheme, drawing on the experience of the pathfinder year, and includes an application form for funding.

### **Background and rationale for the Aimhigher Associates scheme**

3. Experience to date from Aimhigher and other widening participation activity shows that there is much to be gained from interventions where undergraduates work intensively with learners at Key Stage 4 and post-16. Young learners who have spent time in exchanges with undergraduates have reported that they have benefited from the experience in terms of their personal development and general confidence about their current studies and future learning pathways. Undergraduates involved in these schemes are often perceived as good and impartial role models by learners and as an important additional resource by the school, academy or college. However, until now, sustained links between undergraduates and individual learners in schools, academies or colleges over a period of time or across educational phases have been less common. The Aimhigher Associates scheme will provide both a sustained approach to this area of partnership, and a national model on which Aimhigher partnerships, Associates and learners may draw.

### **Key points**

4. The Aimhigher Associates scheme is designed to help ensure that learners who come from widening participation backgrounds have the opportunity to progress to the full range of higher education provision available. To facilitate this the scheme will:
  - promote progression by learners from communities under-represented in higher education to the full range of higher education provision on offer
  - focus on those learners who meet the guidelines set out in our publication 'Higher education outreach: targeting disadvantaged learners' (HEFCE 2007/12)

- recruit undergraduates from a state school background and, as far as possible, from the same backgrounds as those identified as the Aimhigher target group, to be Aimhigher Associates
  - provide, through Associates, support and encouragement to learners as they encounter the various transition milestones between Year 9 and Year 13
  - provide training to Associates to help them in this role
  - use the wider resources of Aimhigher partnerships to help schools, colleges and academies to improve the quality, quantity and timing of impartial higher education-related information advice and guidance available to learners.
5. Targets will be agreed with Aimhigher partnerships for outputs and outcomes from the scheme and these will be reflected in the monitoring procedures and evaluation plans of partnerships.
6. The Aimhigher Associates scheme will operate within the existing arrangements for governance and management in the mainstream Aimhigher programme.
7. Links will be encouraged between the scheme and other initiatives such as: the City Challenge; 14-19 consortia; the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics programme and the Young Gifted and Talented programme.
8. During 2008-09, 17 pathfinder projects, involving 21 Aimhigher partnerships, were funded and a national co-ordination team (NCT) was established to work with them to begin to identify good practice. Early lessons have emerged from the pathfinders and these will be shared with all partnerships by the NCT, which will publish a Manual of Guidance, an Associates' Handbook, the National Training Standard and a training programme. These documents and materials will be published during Aimhigher Week, from 8 June 2009, and will be distributed to all Aimhigher partnerships by the NCT.

### **Action required**

9. Partnerships should complete the electronic form at Annex D, which is available as a separate download alongside this document at [www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk) under Widening participation/Aimhigher, and return it by e-mail to [aimhigher@hefce.ac.uk](mailto:aimhigher@hefce.ac.uk) by **Friday 3 July 2009**.

## Guidance to Aimhigher partnerships

10. This guidance sets out our expectations of the national scheme and the roles and responsibilities of those involved in its delivery.

### Aimhigher Associates – planning process

11. Aimhigher partnerships should complete the plan template at Annex D and return it to aimhigher@hefce.ac.uk by **Friday 3 July 2009**. Those Aimhigher partnerships partaking in the pathfinder phase of the scheme should also submit a plan, using this template, to demonstrate any change in activity, or scale of activity, following the pathfinder phase. Plans should demonstrate how partnerships would utilise the funds indicated to meet the learner targets set out in Annex A.

12. We expect individual Aimhigher partnerships to be able to demonstrate that schools, colleges, academies, higher education (HE) providers and local authorities are prepared to commit fully to this development. We would also expect partnerships to demonstrate how Aimhigher Associates will add value to what is already provided by the partnership, especially where similar provision is already on offer. Following submission of the plans, final funding figures will be confirmed with partnerships.

13. Successful plans will be confirmed by HEFCE by 14 July 2009. Where plans are identified to need improvement, the national co-ordination team (NCT) will work closely with such partnerships to ensure that an adequate plan is re-submitted.

14. Subject to paragraph 19 below, funding will remain at the same levels in 2010-11 as for 2009-10.

### The cost and scale of the national Aimhigher Associates scheme

15. Table 1 provides indicative figures for the cost and scale of the scheme. There is an assumption that the number of Aimhigher Associates, learners and HE providers engaged in the scheme will vary between areas in line with the current Aimhigher targeting and funding methodology.

**Table 1: Total cost and scale of the Aimhigher Associates scheme**

Phase	Number of partnerships	Target number of learners	Indicative number of Associates	Target number of HE providers	Funds allocated
Phase 1 (pathfinder) 2008-9	18	7,500	1,875	50	<b>£3,140,210</b>
Phase 2 2009-10	42	21,600	5,500	100	<b>£8,429,895</b>
Phase 3 2010-11	42	21,600	5,500	100	<b>£8,429,895</b>
Central costs over all years (including NCT, evaluation, publications etc)					<b>£1,000,000</b>
<b>Total</b>					<b>£21,000,000</b>

## **Funding**

16. Indicative funding allocations for partnerships are given at Annex A together with indicative targets for the delivery of learners. Indicative allocations and targets are given to enable planning, but the final allocation will be subject to the submission of a satisfactory plan.
17. The indicative funding allocations are based on the following principles:
  - a. Allocations are based on the current Aimhigher funding method, and Aimhigher allocations made, in 2009-10.
  - b. To aid planning and avoid perturbation the allocations will be made in two equal tranches for 2009-10 and 2010-11.
  - c. No partnership will normally receive less for 2009-10 or 2010-11 than they received in the pathfinder stage.
  - d. A minimum funding level has been set so that no partnership will receive less than £50,000 in any one year.
18. We decided to use the current Aimhigher funding allocation method as a base because it offers a necessary measure of potential volume and because it mirrors the basis on which Aimhigher, Aimhigher Healthcare and Aimhigher Summer School funding has been allocated.
19. Allocations may change in 2009-10 if some partnerships have been unable to deliver to target in the pathfinder phase. Similarly, adjustments may be made to allocations in 2010-11 when unspent funding may be redistributed among partnerships. As additional funding will mean commensurately higher targets for learners, any additional allocation proposed will be agreed with each partnership in advance.
20. Funding allocations are accompanied with a minimum target number of learners to be achieved by each partnership. We cannot give a precise target number for Associates because this number will be flexible depending on the number of learners with whom each Associate engages. Each Associate is expected to engage with between four and six learners.
21. We are aware that many of the costs of the Aimhigher Associates scheme are non-negotiable and for this reason the ratio of target output to funding is relatively fixed. We would be interested to hear from partnerships who feel that the target number of learners expected from them is too high to be manageable. In these circumstances we may, following negotiation and agreement with both giving and receiving partnerships, shift funds and target expectations to other partnerships.
22. Conversely, we would be interested to hear from partnerships who feel that, were funding available, they could deliver further numbers of Associates and learners in line with the programme. We cannot guarantee that further funding will be available, however, as this will depend on some partnerships agreeing to relinquish.

## **Costing and pricing**

23. The following table gives indicative prices for elements of the scheme:

**Table 2: Indicative prices for key elements in the Aimhigher Associates scheme**

<b>Description of item</b>	<b>Cost per unit £</b>
Training costs (per Associate, based on a two-day session)	£150
Payment to Aimhigher Associates per session to a maximum number of 20 sessions per year	£50
Maximum payment to schools, academies or colleges for co-ordination of the scheme (based on 10 Associates working in the school)	£2,500
Payment to meet the cost of Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks and registration with the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA)	£64

24. We have estimated a training cost of £150 per Associate, encompassing a two-day training session. This is based on experience gained through the pathfinder phase. During the pathfinder phase Aimhigher partnerships worked together to produce an agreed national standard and training programme. Aimhigher partnerships should provide or commission training to meet the national standard.

25. Effective implementation of the scheme will require the co-ordination of staff in schools, academies, colleges and higher education institutions (HEIs). Some Aimhigher partnerships already set aside funding for a co-ordination role in schools, colleges and local authorities. The Aimhigher Associates scheme assumes that additional resources will be required for this purpose, proportionate to the number of Associates engaged at a school. A price of £250 per Associate, to a maximum of £2,500 per school, has been notionally allocated to cover this cost. However, if partnerships can negotiate with schools about payments then they may do so (the price suggested above is indicative).

26. The indicative funding given at Annex A includes the funding amounts that will be paid to schools and academies. Payments to schools and academies will be made utilising the normal channels for the Aimhigher programme. We will collect information in October from Aimhigher partnerships about the funds due to these establishments and payments will be made in December.

27. Partnerships should note that the lead indicator for monitoring will be the number of learners engaged in the programme; target numbers for learners are set alongside funding in Annex A.

28. Aimhigher partnerships, and HEIs currently providing mentoring activity in schools and colleges, have used electronic systems to enhance the exchanges between learners and undergraduate mentors. Partnerships wishing to use such systems will need to build costs (for example of licences) into their planning return.

### **Sessions and engagements**

29. Guidelines for typical engagements between Associates and learners, based on good practice from the pathfinder phase of the scheme, suggest that 15-20 sessions per learner, per academic year should be held at the school, college or academy. The sessions should involve four to six learners and should be two to three hours in duration. The exchanges would normally be a mix of one-to-one and group sessions, with one-to-one sessions typically lasting half an hour.

30. Where suitable, electronic systems may be substituted for engagement in person, but we expect a substantial proportion of engagement to be face-to-face.

## **Timelines**

31. The tables at Annex B give notional, best-case planning timelines based on the findings of the pathfinder projects, and are provided by the NCT. These are ambitious, but they offer a useful schedule and checklist to partnerships and the HEIs, schools, colleges and academies with which they will work.

## **Roles and responsibilities**

### **The role of the national co-ordination team**

32. HEFCE has appointed an NCT to undertake the overall co-ordination of the Aimhigher Associates scheme to 2011. To aid in this co-ordination the NCT will provide:

- a Manual of Guidance – to include separate (colour-coded) sections for Aimhigher partnerships, HEIs and schools/colleges
- a national standard and training programme – to provide a coherent and consistent standard of training for Aimhigher Associates and to highlight the competencies required to be an Associate
- an Associates' Handbook – for all Associates to be used alongside the training
- a national communications network for the scheme including:
  - a web-site, [www.cardiff.ac.uk/aimhigherassociates/index.html](http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/aimhigherassociates/index.html), providing information on the service, contact details for all partnership areas, events, news and links to other relevant web-sites
  - electronic forums, which will offer a secure environment to share good practice
- documentation, including guidance and scheme materials
- written reports from the national progress review meetings, seminars and any working groups.

33. In addition, the NCT will provide the following support, working with the National Communications Resource Team and Action on Access, where appropriate:

- hold an annual conference for representatives from Aimhigher partnerships to report on key developments and to share best practice and know-how in running effective local schemes
- offer support to partnerships in developing area and regional networks
- co-ordinate national progress review meetings of all Aimhigher partnerships involved in the programme, to provide the opportunity to share valuable feedback and lessons learned
- organise seminars on good practice in all the key components and processes of the programme
- offer special training support and consultancy for Aimhigher partnerships as required
- maintain a national communications network for the scheme.

34. The NCT will also undertake monitoring of the scheme where its role will be to:

- receive progress reports from Aimhigher partnerships and produce national reports for the Aimhigher National Advisory Group
- collect and monitor dates of Associate training to promote early implementation of the scheme
- collect and monitor the number of Associates trained, deployed and engaged by the end of the first term of each year of the national scheme
- collect and monitor monthly data on the number Associates, learners and exchanges.

## **Role and responsibility of Aimhigher partnerships**

### Governance and management

35. The scheme forms part of the wider Aimhigher programme, governance and management arrangements for which were outlined in Aimhigher guidelines published in February 2008, 'Guidance for Aimhigher Partnerships: updated for the 2008-2011 programme' (HEFCE 2008/05)<sup>1</sup>. The Aimhigher Partnership Committee will have oversight of the partnership's engagement with the Associates programme and will have responsibility for the effective implementation of the scheme at area level with financial responsibility taken by the area lead HEI.

36. The Aimhigher partnership is expected to work closely with partner local authorities in the area which have a statutory responsibility for information and guidance (IAG) in schools, colleges and academies within each authority<sup>2</sup>.

### Targeting learners

37. The scheme has the twofold aim of increasing participation in HE among those from disadvantaged backgrounds, and helping those young people to gain entry to the full range of higher education institutions. We expect Aimhigher partnerships to undertake the three-stage targeting process recommended in 'Higher education outreach: targeting disadvantaged learners' (HEFCE 2007/12).

38. However, for the purposes of this scheme, Aimhigher partnerships should modify their area-level targeting to include schools, academies, and departments in colleges, where examination performance would indicate the potential for progression to HE but where the number and nature of successful applications to HE would seem to indicate that this potential is not being fully realised.

39. At the learner level, resources should be targeted at learners with the potential to benefit from higher education who come from under-represented communities, as set out in HEFCE 2007/12. Overwhelmingly these are:

- learners from lower socio-economic groups (that is, groups 4-8 in the National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification, NS-SEC)
- learners from disadvantaged socio-economic groups who live in areas of relative deprivation where participation in HE is low
- 'looked-after' children in the care system
- disabled learners, including learners with a specific learning difference (SpLD).

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<sup>1</sup> All HEFCE publications are available from [www.hefce.ac.uk](http://www.hefce.ac.uk) under Publications.

<sup>2</sup> 'Quality Standards for Young People's Information, Advice and Guidance' (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2007) may be obtained from [www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/iag](http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/iag)

40. In considering targeting, partnerships should ensure that there are sufficient outreach activities – through Aimhigher or otherwise – available for targeted learners so that the Aimhigher Associates scheme aligns with their use of the Higher Education Progression Framework<sup>3</sup> and so that there is a basis for dialogue with the Associate.

41. Further examples of initiatives and agencies that bear relevance to the Aimhigher Associates scheme are given in Annex C.

#### Recruiting and rewarding Aimhigher Associates

42. It is important that those engaged as Aimhigher Associates should be aware of the particular challenges that face young people from lower socio-economic groups when making the transition to HE. We encourage Aimhigher partnerships to develop a register of ‘Aimhigher alumni’ – undergraduates who have a personal experience of the mainstream Aimhigher programme that can be shared with young learners in schools, colleges or academies. However, this does not exclude undergraduates who have not experienced Aimhigher where there is a shortage of Aimhigher alumni.

43. Associates may be recruited from further education colleges provided that their educational experience enables them to convey information about the full range of HE to the learner.

44. Aimhigher partnerships, in conjunction with HEIs and having due regard to other widening participation programmes involving undergraduates or postgraduates, may wish to consider a range of methods when deciding how to reward Associates. The pathfinder phase has delivered examples of: an hourly rate of pay; a fee for each session; or a stipend of £1,000 to be paid in two or three appropriate payments across the academic year.

#### Training

45. Training arrangements should ideally contain an element of joint activity involving school, college or academy staff and Aimhigher Associates. Good practice from the pathfinder phase of the scheme indicates that schools or college staff should also be provided with induction training or briefing.

#### Safeguarding learners

46. The safeguarding of learners participating in the scheme will be of paramount importance. As a condition of membership of the scheme, all Aimhigher partnerships will need to ensure that young people will be safeguarded. In particular partnerships should:

- obtain parental or carer consent and support for the scheme for each beneficiary
- consult the Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills’ comprehensive guidance ‘Safeguarding Children: Guidance for English Higher Education Institutions’<sup>4</sup>
- ensure that all Associates involved in the scheme have been the subject of the CRB enhanced disclosure process<sup>5</sup> and from November 2010 that new

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<sup>3</sup> For more information see ‘The Higher Education Progression Framework Guide’ (Action on Access, 2008). For further details see [www.actiononaccess.org](http://www.actiononaccess.org)

<sup>4</sup> ‘Safeguarding Children: Guidance for English Higher Education Institutions’ (Department for Innovation, Universities and Skills, 2007) may be read at [http://dius.ecgroup.net/files/D16\(7236\)\\_1207.pdf](http://dius.ecgroup.net/files/D16(7236)_1207.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Further details of the Criminal Records Board process may be obtained from [www.crb.gov.uk](http://www.crb.gov.uk)

Associates are also registered with the ISA<sup>6</sup>. Registration with the ISA includes the CRB check and we have included a costing in the planning template for both

- establish relationships with organisations such as the local authority or the local Safeguarding Children Board who may be able to help HE providers to establish best practice. Further information about the statutory requirements of local authorities can be found in the Department for Education and Skills' publication 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education'<sup>7</sup>.

## **Additional considerations**

### **Linking with best practice and other initiatives**

47. We would be interested to see Aimhigher partnerships, especially from partnerships in City Challenge areas, submitting plans that include the use of Associates with gifted and talented young people eligible for free school meals. These plans might indicate a desire to explore how the Associates initiative fits with the wider planning for the gifted and talented strand of the relevant City Challenge, especially the provision of support for all gifted and talented, free school meals-eligible learners in Years 10-13.

### **Evaluating the Aimhigher Associates scheme**

48. We will shortly be inviting tenders for the evaluation of the national Aimhigher Associates scheme. We will expect the successful researchers both to draw upon statistical analysis of national data (together with Aimhigher Associates data returns) and to work with selected Aimhigher partnerships using methods that will effectively assess reasons for behavioural change. We will keep partnerships informed of developments regarding this evaluation, which will be closely aligned with the evaluative research that the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) is undertaking into the contribution that the broader Aimhigher programme is making to learner attainment and progression.

49. We will expect partnerships to include plans to review how the Associates scheme is being delivered within their partnership. Such reviews should aim to assess and improve the various strands in the programme, including the way in which it is managed between HEIs, schools, colleges, academies and local authority partners, in order to ensure the programme can deliver maximum impact. Partnerships should pay due regard to good practice developed by other partnerships when reviewing their delivery of the scheme.

50. In 2008, we commissioned NFER to undertake evaluative research into the contribution that Aimhigher is making to learner attainment and progression. NFER is currently working with partnerships, Action on Access and HEFCE to develop the national evaluation of the Aimhigher programme, including the collection and collation of data. Further details are available at [www.aimhigher.ac.uk/practitioner](http://www.aimhigher.ac.uk/practitioner) under Programme Information/Evaluation and Monitoring/National evaluation and research.

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<sup>6</sup> Further details of this process and the work of the Independent Safeguarding Authority can be obtained from [www.isa.gov.org.uk](http://www.isa.gov.org.uk)

<sup>7</sup> 'Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education' (Department for Education and Skills, 2006) can be obtained from [publications.teachernet.gov.uk](http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk)

## Monitoring the Aimhigher Associates scheme

51. As stated in paragraph 34, the NCT will be responsible for identifying good practice in the scheme. This will require information to be collected about the numbers of Associates and learners on a monthly basis as part of a standardised return.

52. Additionally, we will collect further learner-level data for administrative purposes. As with the HEFCE-funded summer school programme, partnerships will be responsible for requesting parental or carer consent and support for the scheme for each beneficiary and, as part of this process, should seek permission for this learner-level data to be gathered for administrative purposes. We will also ask partnerships to collect certain pieces of information from Associates. Further details of both returns will be issued shortly.

53. We will also collect an annual financial return from each partnership detailing expenditure against plan and an explanation of any underspend. From 2009-10 we will align the collection of this return with the standard Aimhigher monitoring statement. As stated in paragraph 19, we may redistribute unspent funding from previous years between partnerships. Because additional funding would be accompanied by higher targets for the number of learners to be engaged, we will not redistribute funding without prior consultation with partnerships.

## Role and responsibility of the Aimhigher Associates

54. Aimhigher Associates will work across the 14-19 age range in schools, colleges and academies. The principal aim of an Associate's work is to support targeted learners as they progress through their school, college or academy and through the transition process to university. This will be achieved through a dialogue between the learner and the Associate which will involve sharing, planning and reflecting on experiences of both the learner and the Aimhigher Associate but **should not** involve guidance or counselling. Young people in need of guidance or counselling should be referred to the appropriate sources of help such as teachers or IAG staff who have been trained for this work. Aimhigher Associates will act as facilitators, encouraging learners to analyse their transition experiences or learning in an informal and safe environment. Associates will be expected to be able to signpost relevant Aimhigher and other outreach activities that may benefit the learner.

55. The Associate will be required to undertake initial training and 'top-up' sessions. It is expected that the Associate will commit to the programme throughout their HE career and potentially beyond. Above all we would expect that the Associate has a desire to support young learners through the transition process and is prepared to commit to the scheme for a sustained period of time, which may be longer than a year. In return for this commitment, the Associate will receive a payment for a minimum of 15-20 exchanges, involving both one-to-one and group interactions, with learners over the duration of an academic year. A session is defined as a visit/e-exchange as often as once a week, with exchanges totalling two to three hours and offering one-to-one contact and group exchanges for four to six learners.

56. Associates will be encouraged to work with target learners to jointly log experiences, reflections and intentions so that over a period of time there will be evidence of learner outcomes and movement toward the intended goal of progression to HE.

## **The benefits to, and responsibilities of, learners**

57. Learners who receive support from an Aimhigher Associate can expect to benefit from 15-20 sessions per year. This may require the learner to spend some time out of school hours and it is important that learners and schools, colleges and academies are aware that this commitment is a necessary part of engaging with the scheme. The learner will be encouraged to work with the Associate to maintain the log (see paragraph 56).

58. Engagement with an Aimhigher Associate will provide the learner with:

- an undergraduate role model
- encouragement and support to improve the educational performance of learners
- support from an undergraduate who has recent experience of the transition from a school, college or academy to an HE learning environment, in particular focusing on how to adapt and succeed at independent learning
- opportunities to develop a confident and competent approach to the UCAS application process
- opportunities to sample a range of Aimhigher or other widening participation activities and experiences where appropriate
- opportunities to signpost HE-related IAG material.

## **The benefits to, and responsibilities of, schools, colleges and academies**

59. A critical success factor will be the degree of commitment among schools, colleges and academies to the aims of the scheme. Schools, colleges and academies will be asked to:

- give clear commitment at the head or principal level
- commit to the sustained nature of the programme and allow learners to follow it over a span of years until they have left the establishment. It is vital that schools and colleges understand and permit learners to engage with an Associate for the full length of time necessary and do not insist upon short-term contacts
- nominate staff at an operational level to undertake a co-ordination role
- negotiate the effective placement and facilitation of Aimhigher Associates
- allocate time to nominated staff to attend induction training
- identify learners to be linked with Associates
- contact parents and carers of targeted learners to provide them with information about the scheme.

60. Schools, academies and colleges will be provided with:

- funding (but see paragraph 25) and training for co-ordination of Associates and their activities, as well as links with the HE provider
- increased motivation for learners, leading to improved attainment and progression rates
- access to the wider resources of the Aimhigher partnership for the provision of HE-related IAG materials and support (for example, once a term the Aimhigher practitioner bulletin will have a school and college focus which will, from time to time, contain reference to HE-related IAG materials)

- support for learners engaged in the UCAS application process for both summer school and mainstream HE provision.

## Annex A: indicative funding for partnerships

Aimhigher Partnership	Indicative funding allocation per year for 2009-10 and 2010-11	Indicative target for number of learners per year
ASPIRE London South East	253,682	650
Bedfordshire & Luton	216,661	555
Berkshire	50,992	131
Birmingham & Solihull	353,465	906
Cambridgeshire	92,964	238
Cheshire and Warrington	100,194	257
County Durham	101,594	260
Coventry & Warwickshire	135,795	348
Cumbria	73,428	188
Derbyshire	167,955	430
Essex	243,402	624
Greater Manchester	538,899	1,381
Greater Merseyside	478,555	1,226
Hampshire & Isle of Wight	239,336	613
Hereford & Worcestershire	91,806	235
Hertfordshire	72,989	187
Humberside	204,531	524
Kent and Medway	229,277	587
Lancashire	234,314	600
Leicestershire	126,773	325
LIFE	81,217	208
Lincolnshire and Rutland	73,337	188
London- LETGP	260,775	668
London South	94,455	242
MKOB	176,076	451
Norfolk	125,357	321
North Yorkshire	138,934	356
Northamptonshire	102,423	262
Nottinghamshire	243,509	624
Peninsula	184,269	472
Shropshire	72,131	185
South Yorkshire	372,754	955
Staffordshire & Stoke-on-Trent	190,410	488
Suffolk	74,958	192
Surrey	50,859	130
Sussex	164,242	421
SW- Aimhigher West	314,005	805
Tees Valley	203,440	521
The Black Country	250,077	641
Tyne & Wear & Northumberland	362,567	929
West Yorkshire	498,411	1,277
West, North and Central London	389,075	997
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,429,895</b>	<b>21,600</b>

All funding allocations are conditional upon funding being made available to the programme by DIUS.

## Annex B: Indicative timescales for the Aimhigher Associates scheme

Action for Aimhigher Area	Date
Launch of prospectus for Aimhigher Areas – 2009-2011 Aimhigher Associates scheme	11 May 2009
Prepare plan	May/June 2009
Support and guidance available from national co-ordination team (NCT)	May/June 2009
Promotion of Aimhigher Associates scheme as part of Aimhigher Week	9 June 2009
Submission of plans and initial preparatory work on staffing	3 July 2009
Establish Aimhigher Partnership Associates team	July 2009
Contact and line up partnership higher education institutions (HEIs) and schools, colleges and academies	Not later than end of summer term 2009
Aimhigher partnerships informed of success of bid	14 July 2009
Establish Aimhigher Associates scheme implementation team for area (secondments, posts, job descriptions)	July/August 2009
Establish communication with all HEIs and schools/colleges/academies	July/August 2009
Agree proposed working partnerships/service-level agreements with all partners and submit a list of schools/colleges to HEFCE	Not later than end of July 2009
Training of HEI and school/college/academy co-ordinators (including all monitoring and evaluation requirements)	First/second week September 2009
Inform NCT of the dates of Associate training	11 September 2009
Full Aimhigher partnerships Associates scheme team in place	14 September 2009
Recruitment of Associates (advertise interview dates) within the first three weeks of HEI term	September/October
Interview and select Associates	Second/third week of term
Inform successful applicants and complete Criminal Records Bureau check paperwork	From second week October onwards
Inform NCT of the date exchanges will begin	By 16 October 2009
Train Associates	Last two weeks October
Deploy Associates to schools, academies and colleges	First week after half term
Submit a monitoring return indicating scheme data to be returned to NCT	14 December 2009
First submission of Associate/learner exchange data – submission thereafter on second Monday of each month	14 December 2009
Mid-scheme reviews with Associates	Throughout exchanges

<b>Action for Aimhigher Area</b>	<b>Date</b>
Update and assess monitoring information	Throughout exchanges
Provision of data for evaluation purposes	Prior to and end of exchanges
Aimhigher area evaluation report to HEFCE	30 September 2010

#### **Indicative timescales for schools taking part in the Aimhigher Associates scheme**

<b>Action for school/college/academy</b>	<b>Date</b>
Identify potential Aimhigher Associates scheme co-ordinator	June 2009
Agreement by head/principal to join scheme and accept in writing the commitments involved to the Aimhigher area partnership	End of June 2009
Co-ordinator to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• inform/gain support from senior management team and teaching staff</li> <li>• attend training for the role of co-ordinator</li> <li>• inform/gain support from support/administration staff</li> <li>• agree appropriate room for exchanges</li> <li>• inform all staff whose lessons will be affected</li> </ul>	June/July 2009 First /second week September 2009 September 2009 September 2009 September 2009
Identify potential learners	September 2009
Engage potential learners	September 2009
Gain parental permission	September 2009
Agree proposed working partnerships/service-level agreements with HEI/Aimhigher	End of July 2009
Obtain learner profiles	Not later than end of September 2009
Obtain baseline data	End of September 2009
Matching meeting with HEI Aimhigher co-ordinator/area pathway co-ordinator	End October 2009
Prepare documents for introduction of Associate to school/college/academy (curriculum arrangement, equal opportunities statement, inclusion statement, pastoral system etc)	End October 2009
Introduce Associates to school/college/academy	End October/Early November 2009
Organise at least four exchanges before Christmas break	Mid-December 2009
Mid-scheme review	Throughout exchanges

<b>Action for school/college/academy</b>	<b>Date</b>
Update monitoring information	Throughout exchanges
Provision of data for evaluation purposes	Prior to and end of exchanges
Celebrate success of scheme in school/college/academy	End of year

## Annex C: Examples of other schemes

### Examples of intensive one-to-one undergraduate and non-higher education learner interventions

1. **Student mentors:** a number of higher education institutions (HEIs) and Aimhigher partnerships have set up student mentor schemes where undergraduates undertake one-to-one sessions with Key Stage 4 learners. This is usually in Year 10 over 15-20 sessions from October to May. The objective of the work is to raise aspiration and motivation with a view to progression to further and higher education. This usually involves work on the development of study skills and support alongside aspiration and awareness raising activity.
2. **Student Associates Scheme:** funded by the Training and Development Agency for Schools, this scheme aims to provide experiences in schools for undergraduates who wish to explore the possibility of a future career in teaching. The scheme encourages providers to negotiate placements in schools in areas of high deprivation. This has the added benefit of providing learners in schools with undergraduate role models.
3. **Student tutors in schools:** similar to Student Associates, but generic in nature and not necessarily designed to promote recruitment to the teaching profession. This intervention is provided by a number of HEIs as part of the widening participation offering.
4. **Student ambassadors:** HEIs engage a number of undergraduates to undertake short term or one-off activities with learners from schools and colleges at careers events, Aimhigher roadshows, campus visits and summer schools. In some cases the ambassador role is further developed to provide mentoring opportunities to targeted learners.
5. **Aimhigher national mentoring project:** funding for the national Aimhigher mentoring project came to an end in 2006-07. At this time the numbers involved in the three elements of the project were as follows:
  - a. HE MentorNet: provided network facilities for 156 projects in 94 HEIs, comprising 79 e-mentoring projects and 77 face-to-face projects. HE Mentornet facilities are currently suspended.
  - b. Brightside Trust – Bright Journals Health e-mentoring project: 45 schemes with over 2,500 people mentored. The Brightside Trust continues to operate in a number of contexts.
  - c. National Mentoring Scheme: 30 HEIs deploying 1,590 mentors for 3,500 mentored people. The National Mentoring Scheme is currently suspended.

### Examples of other initiatives or agencies of relevance to the Aimhigher Associates scheme

6. The **Higher Education Progression Framework (HEPF)** is composed of HE-related knowledge, skills and experiences designed to support learners through the various transition milestones that occur during the 13-19 phase. The framework helps Aimhigher partnerships to develop a planned, integrated, sequential and progressive approach to raising aspirations. It suggests an introductory phase of aspiration-raising activities at Key Stages 2 and 3, through a developmental phase at Key Stages 3 and 4, and finishes with a consolidation phase in post-compulsory education. The HEPF provides learning outcomes and a framework for the dialogue between Aimhigher Associates and young people at a school, college or attending an academy.

7. **The Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM)**

**programme<sup>8</sup>:** The STEM programme is a series of initiatives to increase the supply of mathematicians, scientists and technologists in the future. Aimhigher partnerships, especially those considering involvement in the pathfinder phase of the Aimhigher Associates scheme, may wish to develop a STEM element in their applications.

8. **City Challenge:** City Challenge is a targeted initiative designed to address the under-achievement of young people in areas of high deprivation in London, the Black Country and Greater Manchester. Aimhigher partnerships in these areas are likely to be participating in City Challenge and may wish to discuss ways in which the scheme and City Challenges can work together for mutual benefit<sup>9</sup>.

9. **Young Gifted and Talented:** Some of the learners will be identified as gifted and talented. Aimhigher partnerships will wish to see how existing provision for gifted and talented learners and Aimhigher Associates can reinforce each other. 'Young Gifted and Talented' is the government programme designed to respond to the needs of gifted and talented learners<sup>10</sup>.

10. **14-19 consortia and partnerships:** Many Aimhigher partnerships will already be involved in the work of 14-19 consortia delivering the new diplomas. A key feature of developments will be progression within and from the diplomas and it is likely that 14-19 consortia will be interested in the Aimhigher Associates scheme and what it has to offer their learners.

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<sup>8</sup> Further details about the STEM programme can be obtained from [www.qca.org.uk/qca\\_14054.aspx](http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_14054.aspx)

<sup>9</sup> Further information about 'City Challenge' can be obtained from [www.dcsf.gov.uk/citychallenge](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/citychallenge)

<sup>10</sup> Further information on 'Young Gifted and Talented' can be obtained from <http://ygt.dcsf.gov.uk>

## **List of abbreviations**

<b>CRB</b>	Criminal Records Bureau
<b>HE</b>	Higher education
<b>HEFCE</b>	Higher Education Funding Council for England
<b>HEI</b>	Higher education institution
<b>HEPF</b>	Higher Education Progression Framework
<b>IAG</b>	Information, advice and guidance
<b>ISA</b>	Independent Safeguarding Authority
<b>NCT</b>	National co-ordination team
<b>NFER</b>	National Foundation for Educational Research