

Office for
Students



Access and participation in the new HE environment

Chris Millward

Director for Fair Access and Participation, OfS

Children's University Conference
11 October 2019

Follow us on Twitter at
@officestudents

THE  TIMES

Finally, half of
young people at
university



UNI BOOST Number of young
adults going to university rises
above 50 per cent for first time



The symbolic target of
50% at university
reached

MailOnline

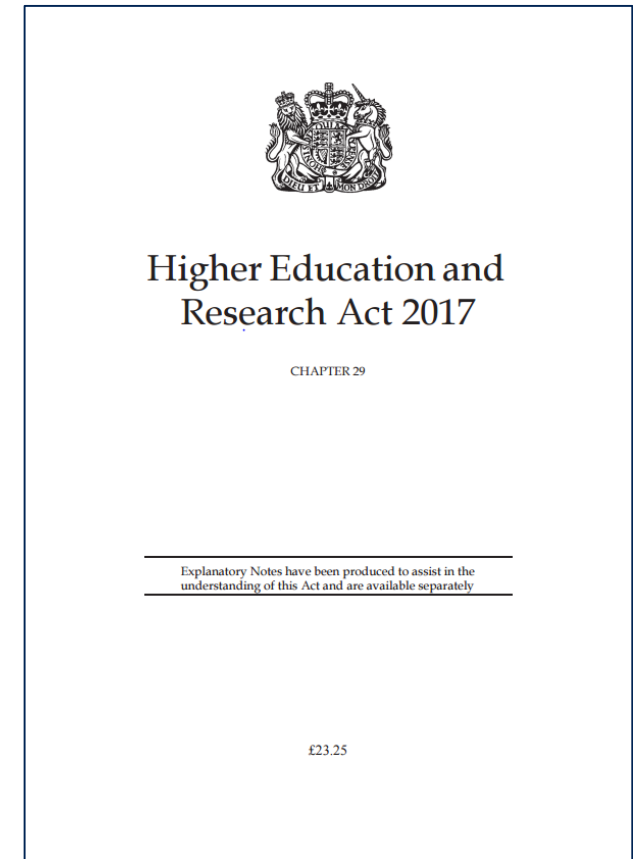
HALF of pupils now go to
university (20 years after
Tony Blair made his
controversial pledge)

‘A society that is open and genuinely based on merit and the equal worth of all....I want to achieve a **university participation rate of over 50 per cent among the under-30s**...There will be no lowering of entry standards. It is a strictly ***meritocratic*** programme. But its purpose is to say...your background shouldn't hold you back; if you have the ability, you can get the university place.’

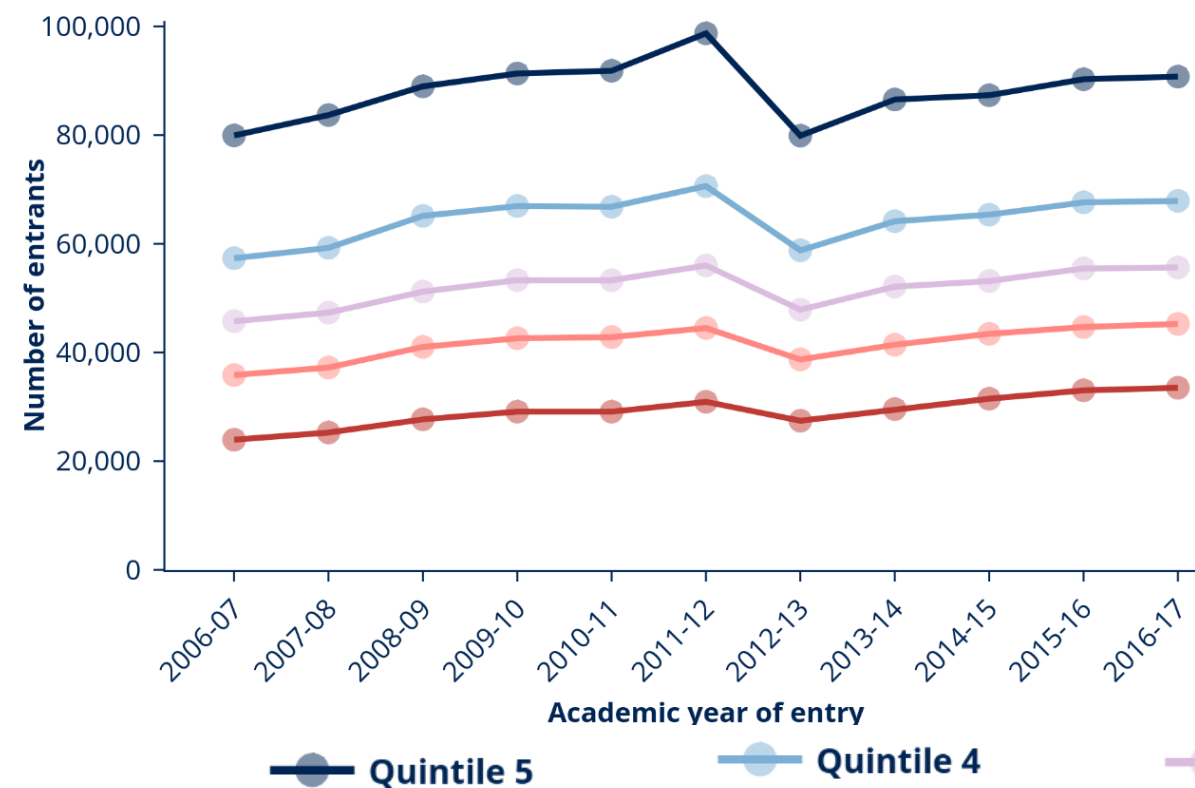
Source: <https://www.independent.co.uk/voices/commentators/i-want-a-meritocracy-not-survival-of-the-fittest-5365602.html>

Higher Education & Research Act 2017

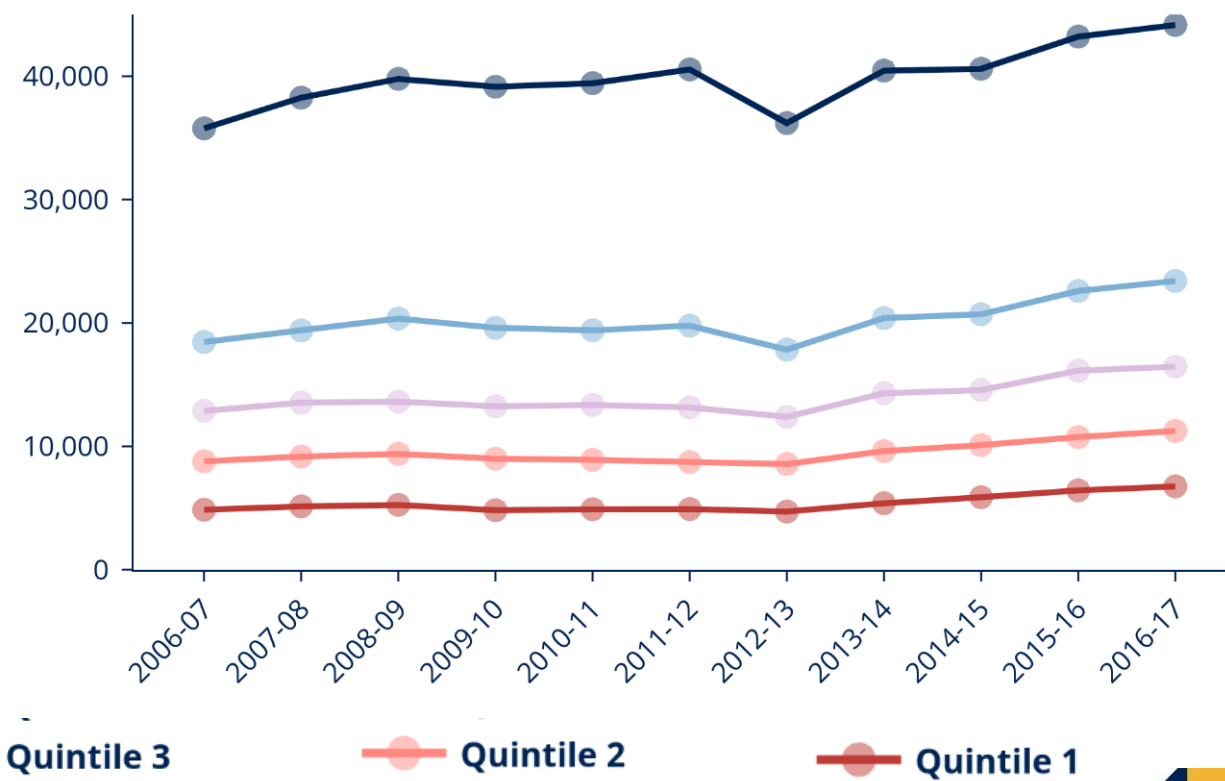
- (a) protect the institutional autonomy of English HE providers
- (b) promote quality, and greater choice and opportunities for students, in the provision of HE
- (c) encourage competition between English HE providers in connection with the provision of HE where that competition is in the interests of students and employers, while also having regard to the benefits for students and employers resulting from collaboration between such providers
- (d) promote value for money in the provision of HE
- (e) promote equality of opportunity in connection with access to and participation in HE**
- (f) use the OfS's resources in an efficient, effective and economic way
- (g) regulatory activities should be—
 - (i) transparent, accountable, proportionate and consistent, and
 - (ii) targeted only at cases in which action is needed.



Entrants from low participation neighbourhoods (POLAR4) overall and in high tariff providers since 2006-07



Source: HESA, English institutions (overall)



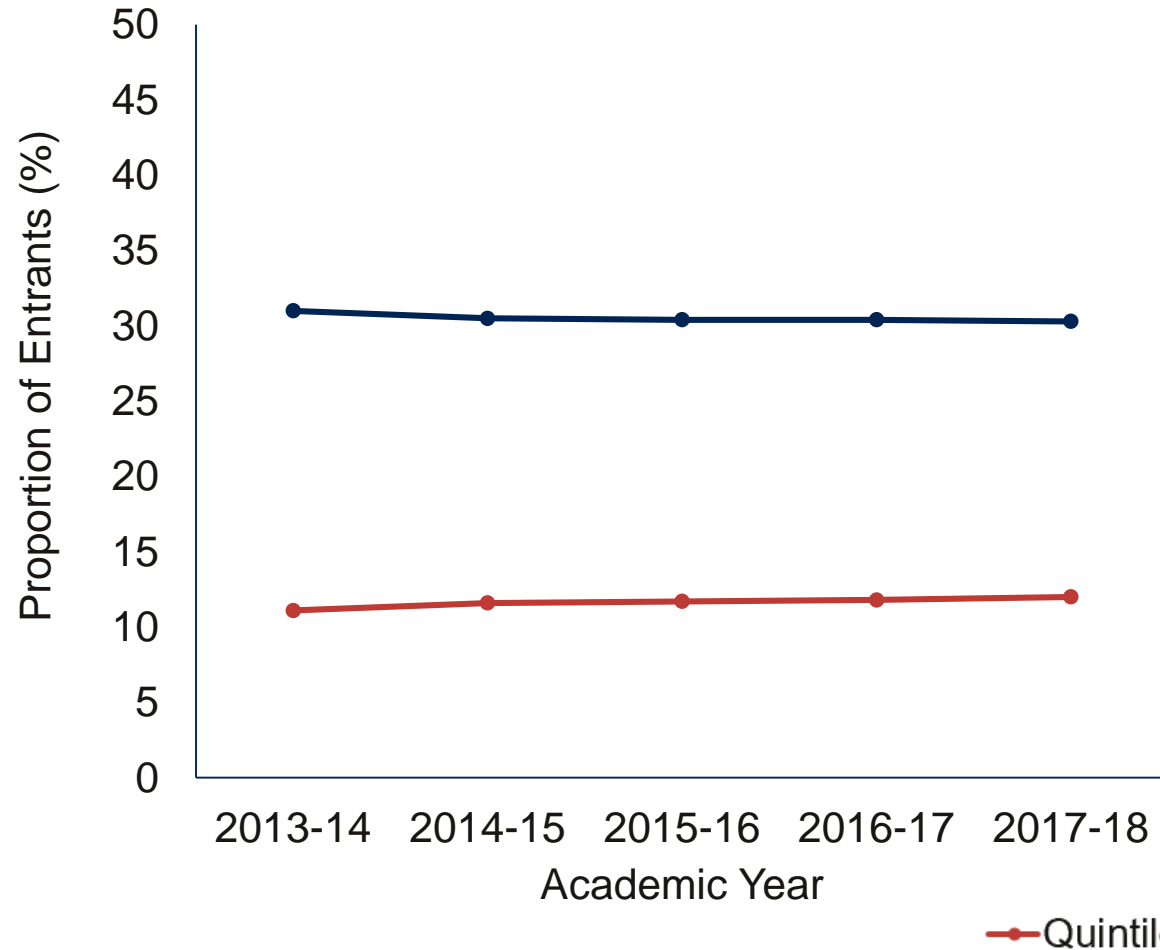
Source: HESA, English institutions (high tariff providers)

Office for
Students

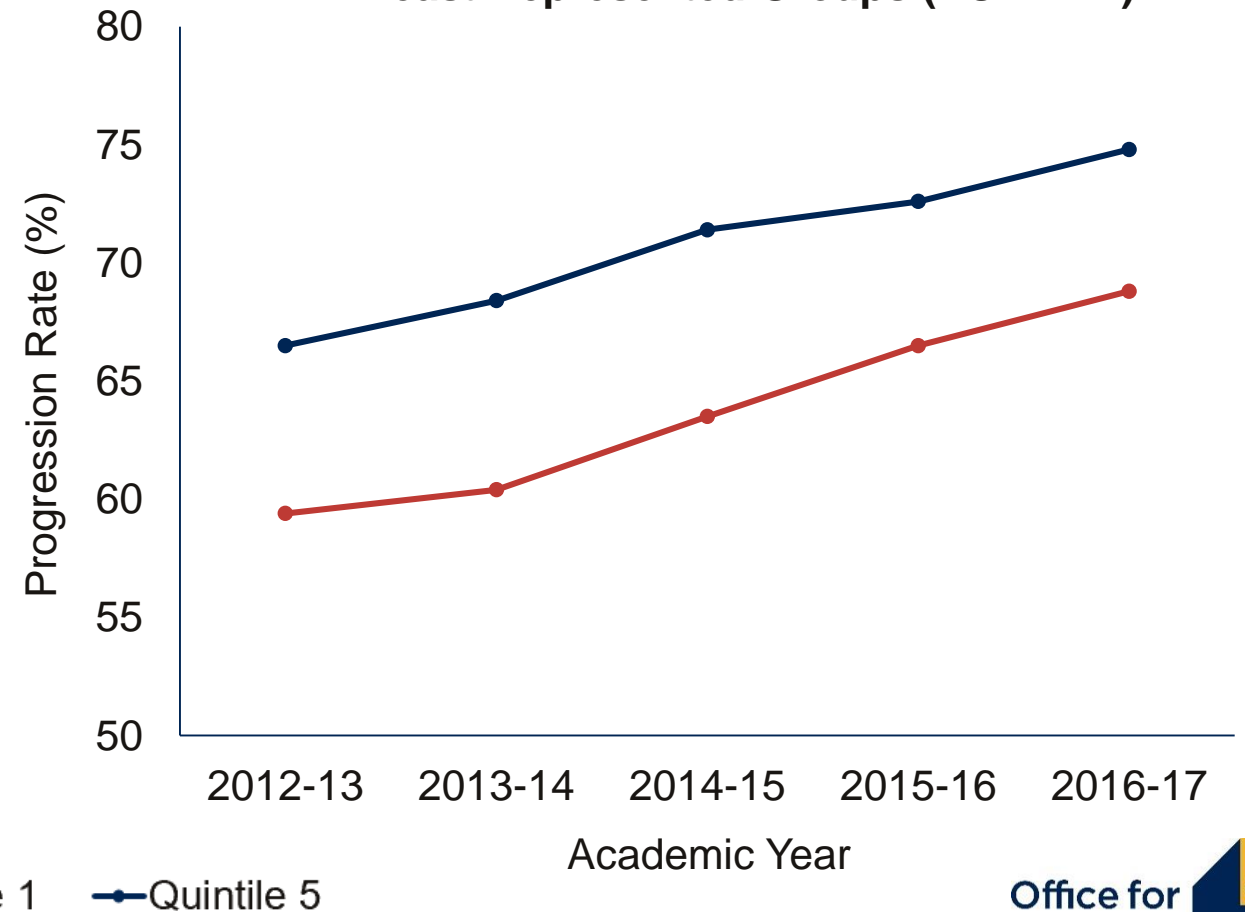


POLAR4

Access to Higher Education from the Most and Least Represented Groups (POLAR 4)



Progression to Highly Skilled Employment or Further Study at a Higher Level from Most and Least Represented Groups (POLAR 4)

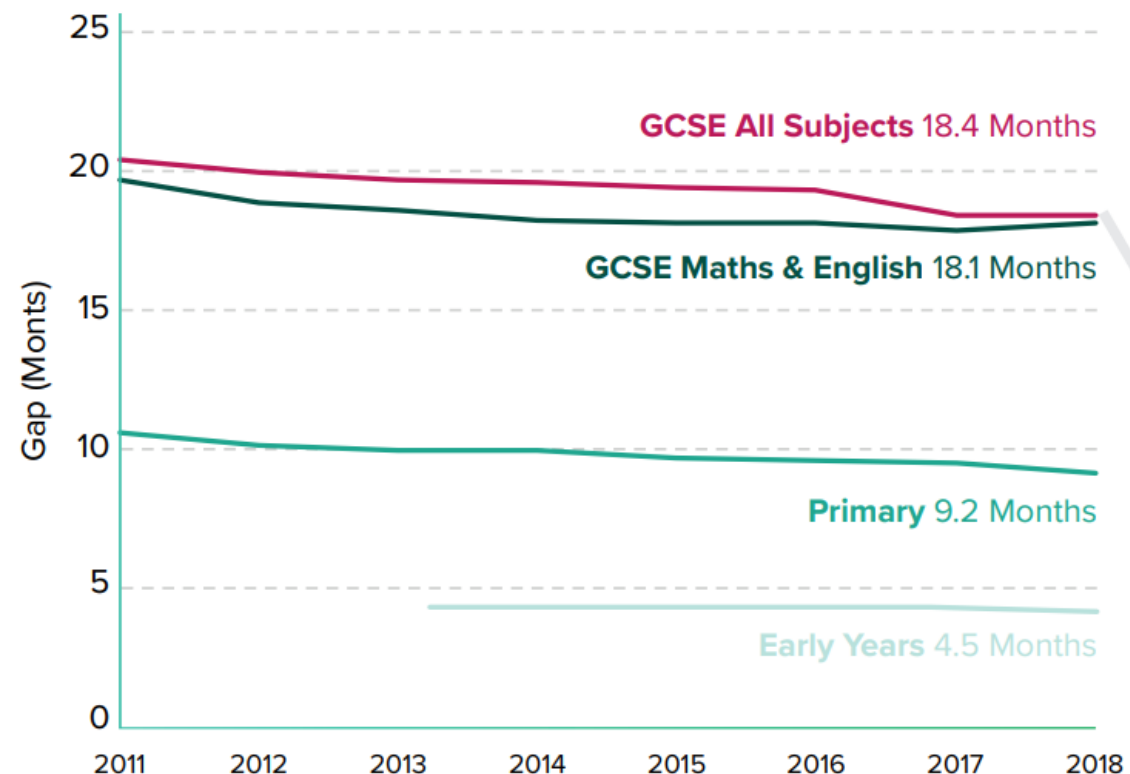


Prior attainment and university admissions

‘In England there is a closer link between prior attainment and university admission...it is clear that universities are more academically selective and students are admitted more on the basis of their prior achievement than on the basis of other factors, such as their social background...the socio-economic gap in prior achievement is very large in England...so social background matters more for university admission’.

Source: Crawford, Dearden, Micklewright and Vignoles (2017)
<https://www.ifs.org.uk/uploads/Presentations/Family%20Background%20and%20University%20Success.pdf>

What has happened to the disadvantage gap?



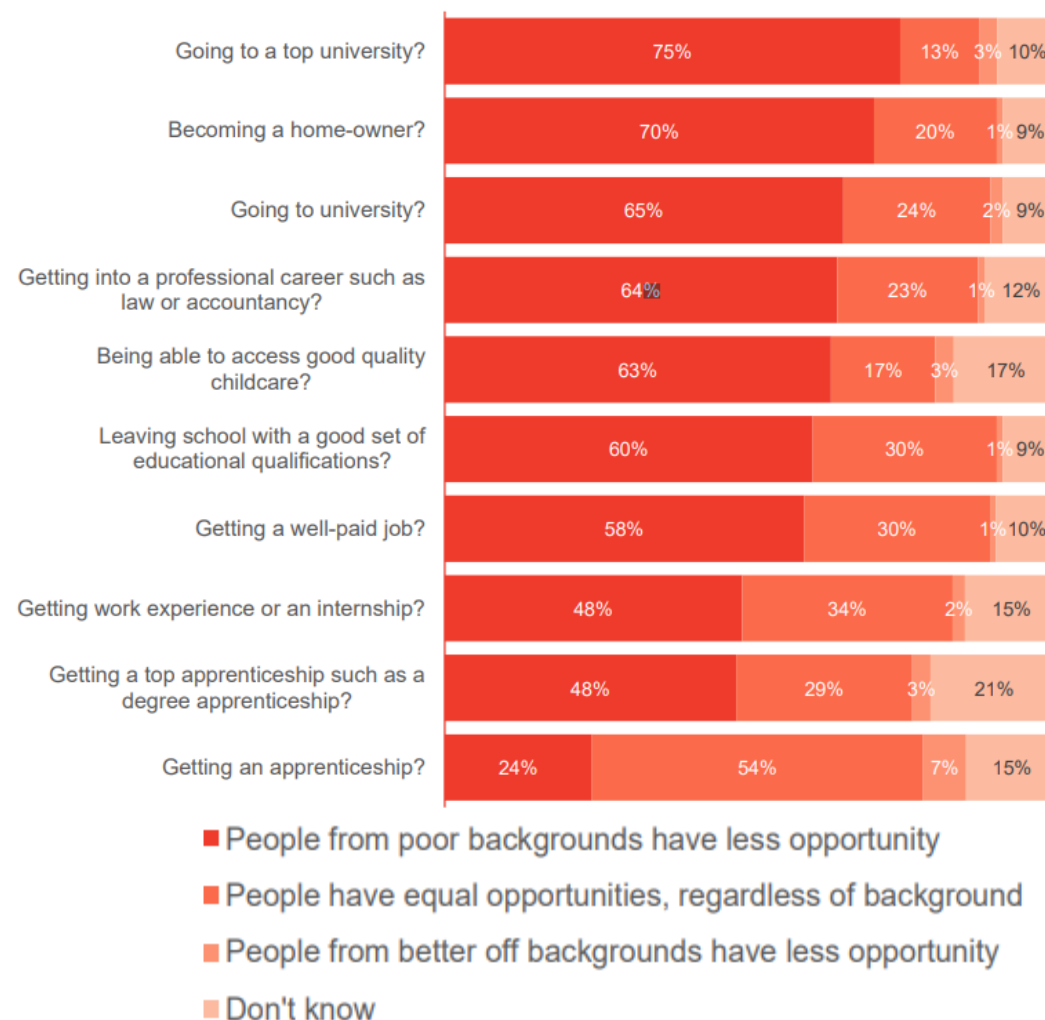
Source: <https://epi.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/EPI-Annual-Report-2019-infographic.pdf>

Student expectations

‘Expectations are substantively different to aspirations. They embody not just what a young person *wants to be*, but also a subjective assessment of challenges and constraints....We suggest...work to *realise* aspirations, shifting away conceptually from assuming that aspirations are low to acknowledging that young people may need help in meeting them...allowing them to explore what they might want to be and, crucially, how to get there.’

Source: Harrison and Waller (2019), *Aspirations, Expectations and Re-thinking Outreach*

How do you think the opportunities open to people from poor backgrounds compare to those open to people from better off backgrounds in the following areas?



Source: Social Mobility Commission, Social Mobility Barometer 2018 report

Access and Participation plans

- Honest, rigorous and public analysis of gaps across the student lifecycle
- New objectives towards reducing gaps and improving practice by 2024-25
- Credible plans to deliver the objectives
 - Theory of change
 - Evidence-based measures
 - Investment underpinning the measures
 - Evaluation and continuous improvement
- Impact reports
- Focused monitoring and intervention



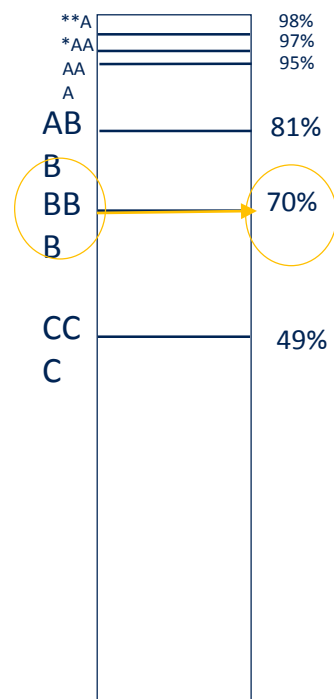
Underrepresented student groups

- Students from areas of lower higher education participation, lower household income and/or lower socioeconomic status groups
- Some black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) students
- Mature students
- Disabled students (those in receipt of disabled students allowance (DSA) and those who have declared a disability but are not in receipt of DSA)
- Care leavers

- Carers
- People estranged from their families
- People from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- Refugees
- Children of military families

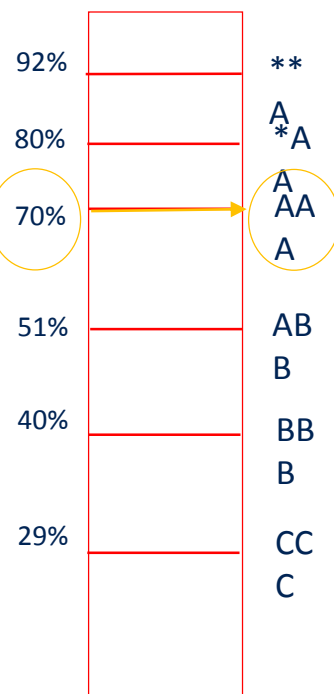
Modernised contextual offers

MEM group 1



MEM
group 1
BBB A level
AAA
Adjusted

All students



Office for
Students 

Associations between characteristics of students

How do outcomes differ when accounting
for multiple student characteristics?

Reference OfS 2019.34

Enquiries to Annalise Ruck at official_statistics@officeforstudents.org.uk

Publication date 26 September 2019

Outreach schemes



The LMH Foundation Year

Access to Bristol



The Liverpool Scholars Programme



Manchester Access Programme

National Collaborative Outreach Programme

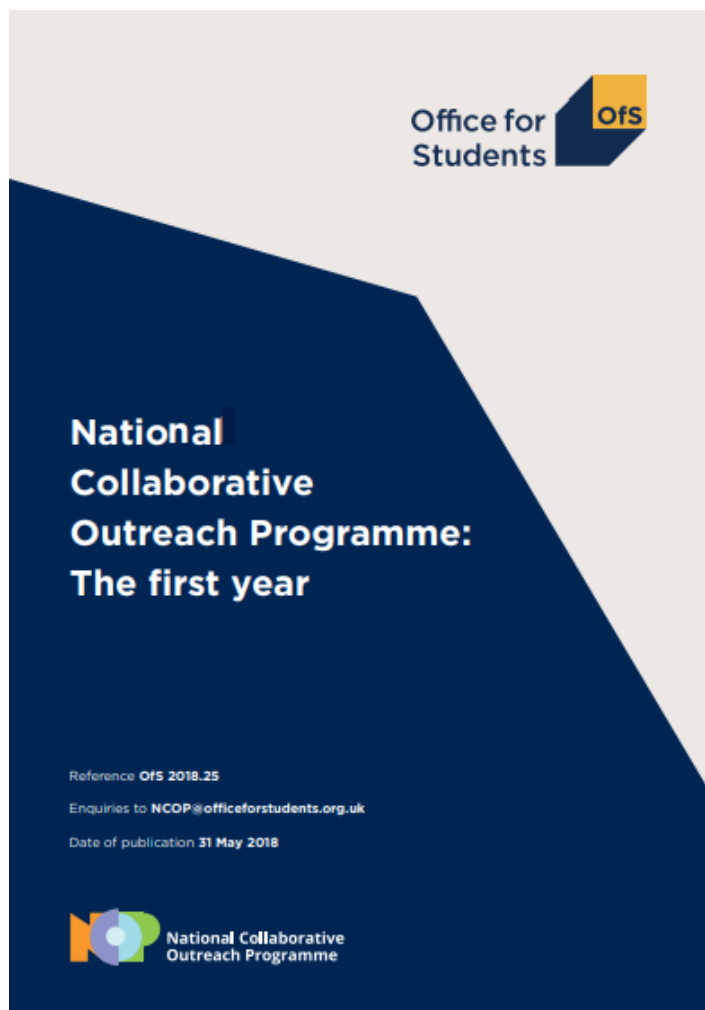
School and college engagement

- By December 2017: **1,234** engaged
- By December 2018: **1,599** engaged
- **1,169** in receipt of funding from partnerships
- **439** schools and colleges have an NCOP staff member employed or based there

NCOP learner engagement

- Between 1 August 2017 and 31 July 2018, **121,520** learners were engaged in sustained and progressive outreach
- Between August 2018 and 31 December 2018 **111,500** NCOP learners have engaged with the programme

Sustained and progressive outreach with multiple activities had a more positive impact on learners' HE knowledge and attitudes than single/ad-hoc outreach



Independent national formative evaluation found that NCOP partnerships have:

Supported collaborative outreach delivery and evaluation

Addressed outreach cold spots

Improved knowledge sharing and professional development

Minimised outreach engagement burden for schools and colleges

Made progress in engaging parents and carers

Built relationships with schools and colleges to gain commitment

Facilitated innovative new outreach approaches

Facilitated access to high-quality and impartial IAG for young people

Raised teachers' awareness of the routes to and opportunities in HE

Largely met local and national engagement targets

Expanded the size and diversity of partnership members

NCOP: Phase two

Targeted outreach

- Target learners who reside in Participation of Local Areas (POLAR3) quintile 1 and Gaps quintile 1 and 2 areas
- Support them to make well informed decisions about their future education through higher education outreach

Outreach hubs

- Provides flexibility and freedom to use NCOP funding and engage with schools in different local areas
- Provides opportunities to build and enhance regional collaborations
- Encourages & enables a sustainable infrastructure for future outreach provision and collaboration

Supporting ‘what works’ in HE access and participation

Purpose:

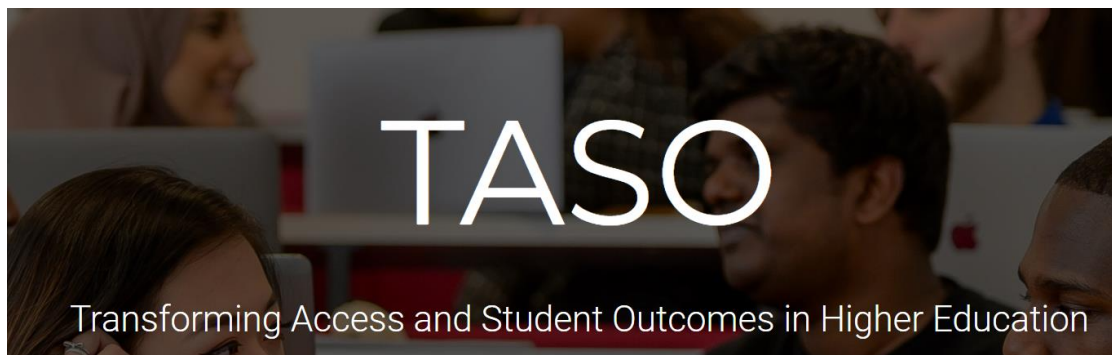
- to provide **evidence on the impact** of approaches to **enhance equality of opportunity** in HE
- to ensure that activity proven to be **most effective** and which delivers the greatest benefits to students is **recognised and shared**.

Aims:

- develop rigorous independent and high quality evidence
- improve efficacy of A&P policy, interventions and initiatives
- provide greater visibility, awareness and take-up of what works
- enhance skills and capability to develop and use evidence
- drive collective responsibility for the generation of evidence
- enhance positive outcomes for students, providers and society
- be an authoritative voice for research on A&P

Progress:

- Preparing to become an independent charity and appointing permanent staff
- Undertaken call for evidence and large review of current evidence
- Developing online toolkit to share evidence
- Set up theme working groups and academic and practitioner evaluation advisory groups



Fair access and participation

‘Fair equality of opportunity requires that social positions be formally open and meritocratically allocated but, in addition, each individual is to have a fair chance to reach those positions.

An individual has a fair chance when the prospects for success in the pursuit of social positions are not a function of social class and background’

Thank you for listening

Copyright ©

The copyright in this presentation is held either by the Office for Students (OfS) or by the originating authors. Please contact info@officeforstudents.org.uk for further information and re-use requests.