

STROBE

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UCAS and Widening Participation

- UCAS is heavily invested in supporting the WP agenda:
 - Collaboration, engagement, support for WP stakeholders and their initiatives
 - Promotion of good practice, information and advice
 - Progression pathways project
 - New tariff
- UCAS Analysis and Research supports this activity:
 - End of Cycle Report
 - Equalities Report
 - STROBE

STROBE Introduction

- Over £200M is spent on WP and outreach activities each year
- This is to say nothing of additional funds in relation to marketing
- Universities, charities, and other agencies must be able to see a return on this investment, and maximise the effectiveness of their efforts
- STROBE has been designed to evaluate the effectiveness of these activities by looking at the HE outcomes of those that have been subject to intervention

STROBE Benefits

- Reports aggregated information on named individuals' progress through the higher education admissions process
 - Application - Acceptance
 - University (Groups)
 - Defined Groups (e.g. A/B test)
- Allows the user to see where significant change has been achieved
 - Comparison with representative control groups
 - Reveals subtleties in behaviour

STROBE: Service

- Data supplied by third party (University/charity/agency) in the format:
firstname | surname | dob | postcode
- STROBE users must have permission to share this data
- Matching algorithm to link to the UCAS application and pre-application databases
- Reports in a non-disclosive way

STROBE: Service Cont.

- Create synthetic control groups that are similar demographically and academically
 - POLAR3
 - Exam Results
 - Other dimensions
- Achieved level of application, offer, acceptance mapped against at least 100 synthetic control groups
- Ranking of test group within these control groups underpins significance calculation

STROBE: Details

- Report can be delivered in two ways with two different price strategies:
 - Low Volume, High Resolution (priced at £5 per submitted record)
 - High Volume, Low Resolution (priced at £2000)
- Public benefit option exists for delivery at no charge if following criteria are met:
 - No commercial use
 - Cost of the paid service is prohibitive
 - Consent given to publish results
- Report can also be linked to EXACT. This will always be a paid service

STROBE: Example

	2016
Participants	323
Tracked participants (applicants)	271
Not tracked	52
<i>% tracked</i>	84%
Number of applicants with at least one offer	269
<i>% offered (applicants)</i>	99%
Number of accepts	240
<i>% accepted (of tracking group)</i>	74%
Number of main scheme applications	1326
Number of offers made	1065
<i>% offer rate</i>	80%

University Group A: 200 @ 90%

University Group B: 40 @ 50%

Intervention X: 150 @ 79%

Intervention Y: 90 @ 69%

STROBE: Example

Measure	Totals	% cohort	% applicants	Percentile	Significance
Initial cohort	145	-	-	-	
Applied	145	100%	-	99	very significantly high
Offered	145	100%	100%	99	significantly high
Accepted	135	93%	93%	97	mildly significantly high

STROBE and EMWPREP/Universities

- Database Reports
 - Series of WP or outreach events for each University
 - Analysis of participants
 - Which events were the most successful?
 - Which participants were the most engaged?
- Specific Evaluations
 - Relating to specific events, often using surveys
 - Did the event achieve significant success?
 - Can return on investment be demonstrated, to do it again?

Conclusion

- UCAS heavily invested in WP, and has developed STROBE to fill a gap in the market for evaluation
- STROBE imports data, matches to applications, and reports outcomes
- STROBE creates representative control groups and is able to report on significant changes that have been achieved
- UCAS would welcome the opportunity to collaborate with EMWPREP
- Questions and Comments