



Universities UK

Evidence and Impact Exchange

NEON Working Group Meeting

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- » Context – Social Mobility Advisory Group
- » Proposal for the Evidence & Impact Exchange
- » Discussion – getting the most out of the Evidence & Impact Exchange.
- » We want your feedback!

**WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP:
ENABLING SOCIAL MOBILITY
IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

The final report of the
Social Mobility Advisory Group



- Report sent to HE and Science Minister, Jo Johnson
- 15 recommendations aimed at institutions, schools, third sector, employers, and government

Evidence: what did the group find?

- No one solution works - wide range of interventions are required
- Socio-economic disadvantage is most significant driver of inequality in access and outcomes from HE
- Age poses different challenges, including the importance of the availability of opportunities to study flexibly and for entrants to be able to hold different qualifications or to use prior experience as an entrant qualification
- Place matters – growth of regionalism

Evidence: what did the group find?

- Access is only part of the challenge, need to consider entire student lifecycle
- Access major issue for white working class, however not the key issue for BME
- More work needed to raising standards across all schools and addressing the attainment gap
- Collaboration at all levels is key
- Employers open to engaging

Recommendations - themes

1. Smarter and better use of data
2. Information, advice and guidance and communications
3. Role of league tables
4. Institutional practice
5. Graduate outcomes
6. **Evaluation and understanding what works**

Changing political context

- » Social mobility is a top priority for the Education Secretary
 - » Policies emerging from DfE being viewed through a social mobility lens
 - » Improved evidence base crucial to informing future policy

- » Higher Education also increasingly under the spot light

- » Rt Hon Justine Greening at Sutton Trust Social Mobility Summit:
 - » Strong emphasis being given to place based approaches, opportunity areas and raising attainment in schools
 - » Evidence a critical part of this

- » Establishment of OfS under HE & Research Act

How are we moving this forward?

- » 4 main strands of work:
- » Exploring how we can address challenges of graduate outcomes.
 - » Regional focus, with an emphasis on careers advice.
 - » What are universities doing, how are they working with other actors and employers in a region?
 - » What interventions work and how can we support these?
- » How does the relationship with schools needs to develop and evolve
 - » Address concerns over Green Paper and conservative Manifesto
 - » What is the 'bandwidth' of these relationships and how can they be supported
 - » More to it than school sponsorship
- » Proactive efforts to promote what the sector is doing
- » **Evidence and data: how do we know what works?**
 - » **Develop the proposal for an evidence and impact exchange - what works model**
 - » Explore developing a broader basket of indicators to understand disadvantage
 - » Work with league table compilers to examine disincentives

The recommendation:

- » Systematically evaluate, develop and promote the evidence on HE activities and interventions to encourage social mobility
- » Support more effective sharing, integration and utilisation of data from schools, universities and employers

Rationale

- » Work of Social Mobility Advisory Group revealed that use of evidence to inform policy and support decision-making in this area was underdeveloped
- » Currently no systematic approach to understanding and synthesising the evidence
- » Growing evidence base on social mobility from outside HE – bring together
- » Evaluation culture – often linked to requirement of funding interventions

What will it do?

- » Collate and review existing evidence and identify gaps
- » Commission new evidence
- » Promote and share evidence – accessible and usable for decision-makers and practitioners
- » Build capacity for using evidence on social mobility

Who is it for?

- » Decision-makers in universities
- » Practitioners
- » Policy makers
- » Employers
- » Third sector

Questions for discussion groups

Discussion A: scope, functions and priorities

- » What should be the core functions of the EIX?
- » What activities should the EIX prioritise?
- » What are the key issues the EIX should explore (eg. across access, retention and graduate outcomes), and where are the evidence gaps?

Discussion B: realising opportunities for the use of data

- » What role can the EIX play in driving more effective use of data?
- » What are the main opportunities? Are there lessons from other sectors/initiatives?
- » Challenges and barriers the EIX might face in this area?
- » How can the EIX play a role in driving new and innovative approaches?