

Improving student finance Information Advice and Guidance

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Social Mobility Advisory group report, 10 October 2016

'The quality of IAG in state schools is often patchy.'

'It will be crucial to ensure that IAG is broadly coherent and joined up between schools, colleges, universities, charities, and employers'.

Moments of choice – the Careers Enterprise Company, 25 August 2016:

Online careers advice is challenging to navigate. The information on the internet is dispersed across multiple sites, each offering different information in different ways. This contributes to some young people disengaging from the full range of available information.

Information is available, but not accessible. Despite young people saying that they have access to the information they want, we found their knowledge and awareness of careers was generally low, outdated, and in some cases, inaccurate.

Young people's aspirations don't align with the direction of the job market.



Context: the Widening participation challenge

Government targets for 2020: double the proportion of disadvantaged young people entering HE, compared with 2009 levels, and increase the proportion of BME entrants by 20%.



Slowing progress towards widening participation

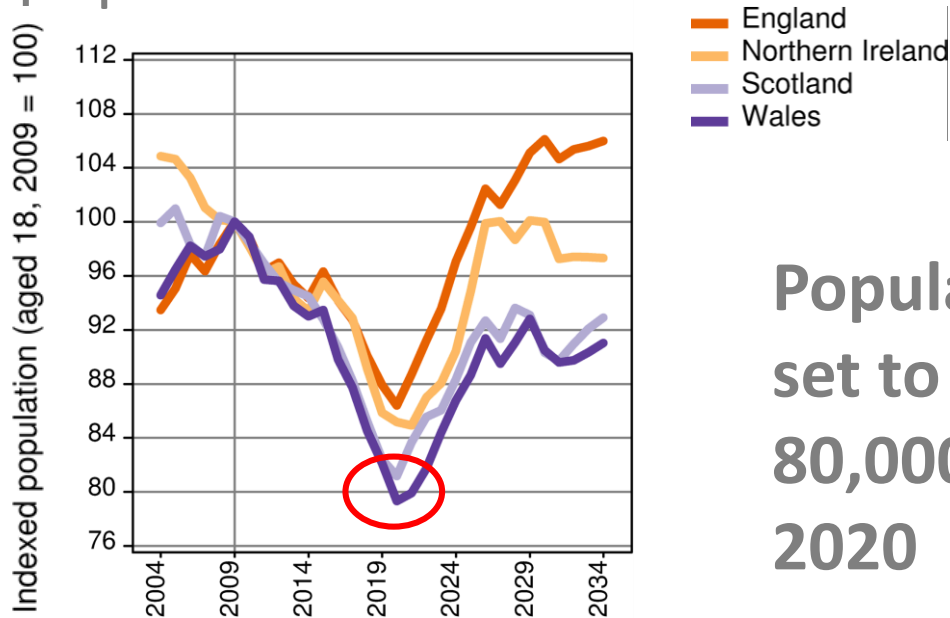
45.9% of
most
advantaged
population

Vs

18.6% of
least
advantaged
population

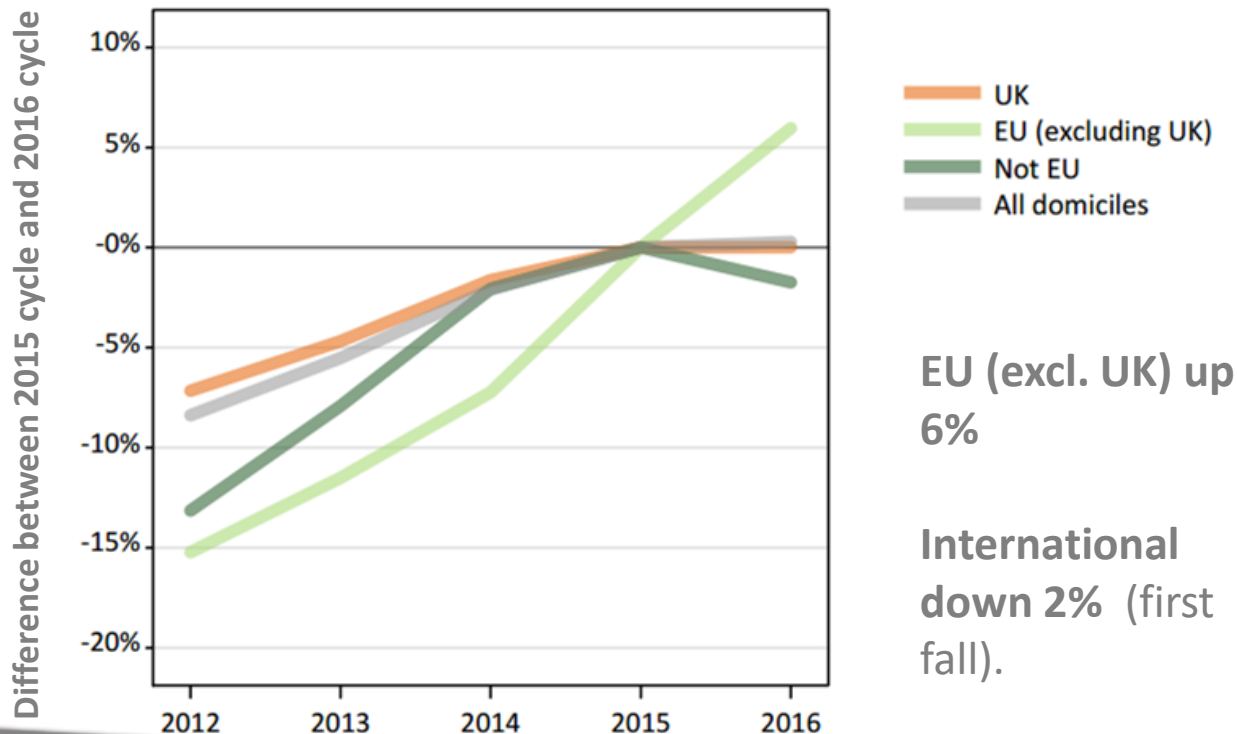


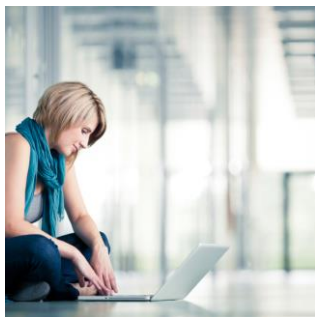
Wider context: Falling UK 18 year old population



**Population is
set to fall by
80,000 by
2020**

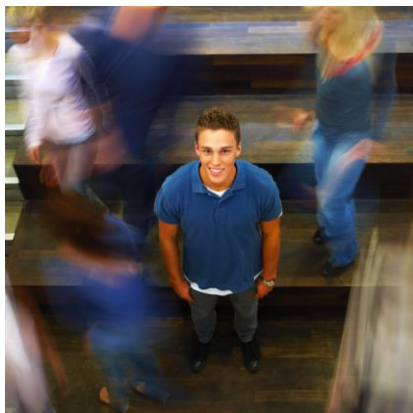
Flat UK demand, but an uplift from the EU





More than a third of UK graduates regret attending university. (The Guardian)

The degrees that are worth the most money (and those that get you the least). (Mirror)



Brexit: Almost a third of international students less likely to come to the UK to study, survey finds. (Independent)

Through the lens of students

How perceptions of higher education influence applicants' choices – published 21 July 2016.

- Exploring what motivates young people to progress to HE, and what barriers exist.
- Is it different for those applying to higher tariff universities, or depending on background?



Why did we publish this report?

- Make a contribution to the evidence base and public debate on motivations and barriers to progression to HE.
- Identify the kind of support and guidance young people find most useful.
- Throw some light on the kind of interventions that might be most effective in widening participation.



UCAS is uniquely placed to engage with applicants

- We emailed all (372,320) 18/19 yr old UK-domiciled applicants to the 2015 cycle.
- Over 16,000 responses.
- Followed up with telephone interviews.



What does the report show?

- Practical information on issues such as cost of living, travel, budgeting, and accommodation are foremost in their minds.
- Applicants are very career focussed when making their university selection.
- They place very high value on the aspects of HE most likely to secure them the career structure they want.



What does the report show?

- The generic advice and guidance that schools and colleges give is often directed at those who, arguably, need it least.
- Outreach/interventions provided by schools/third sector organisations tend to be targeted at a narrow group of young people already close to making the decision to progress to HE.



Key findings - headlines

- Those knowing by age 10 are 2.6x as likely to be placed in higher tariff universities.
- Those from disadvantaged backgrounds are most concerned about financial and academic practicalities.
- More 'advantaged' are most concerned about fitting in and growing a network.
- Open days are good, but cost and logistics are key barriers for access.



Recommendations - headlines

IAG must be clear and specific:

- cost of living/study at this university/in this city
- additional financial support available, and how to access it
- open days - timing/structure/funding
- explain the link between subjects and possible career paths
- links with employers
- start raising aspirations at an early age.



Questions?

