

Feedback from Widening Participation intervention targeted on teachers

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Sutton Trust Framework 2014-16

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Evaluation of WP programmes

- Aimed mainly for students - one for teachers
- Short term and longer term interventions
- Secondary schools and sixth forms

Teacher intervention would be cost-efficient and reach entire school populations for several cohorts

How do teachers impact HE choice?

- Teachers' advice reflects wider school culture and students' own values (Hartley, 2010) I've got to go there and prove my
- Teachers are biased towards selective HEIs (6%) and discourage their pupils (Hartley, 2010) Which university
- Teachers guide future plans by framing the choices (Hartley, 2015) What do you want to do after school? I think they have to try to get the place that they are going to be happiest.
- Independent schools push to selective HEIs; State schools present HEIs neutrally (Dunne et al., 2014)

What is Teacher Summer School?

- Teachers invited to visit the campus
- Accommodation was provided for 1-3 days
- Completely free to attend
- Funding for some cover costs

Objectives of the TSS intervention

- 1) Break down misconceptions about leading universities
- 2) Give teachers information and resources to offer guidance to their students to apply to leading universities
- 3) Provide subject-specific enrichment

Targeting at Teacher Summer Schools

- State maintained schools in the UK
- Schools with lower than average progression to HE
- Schools with lower than average A level attainment

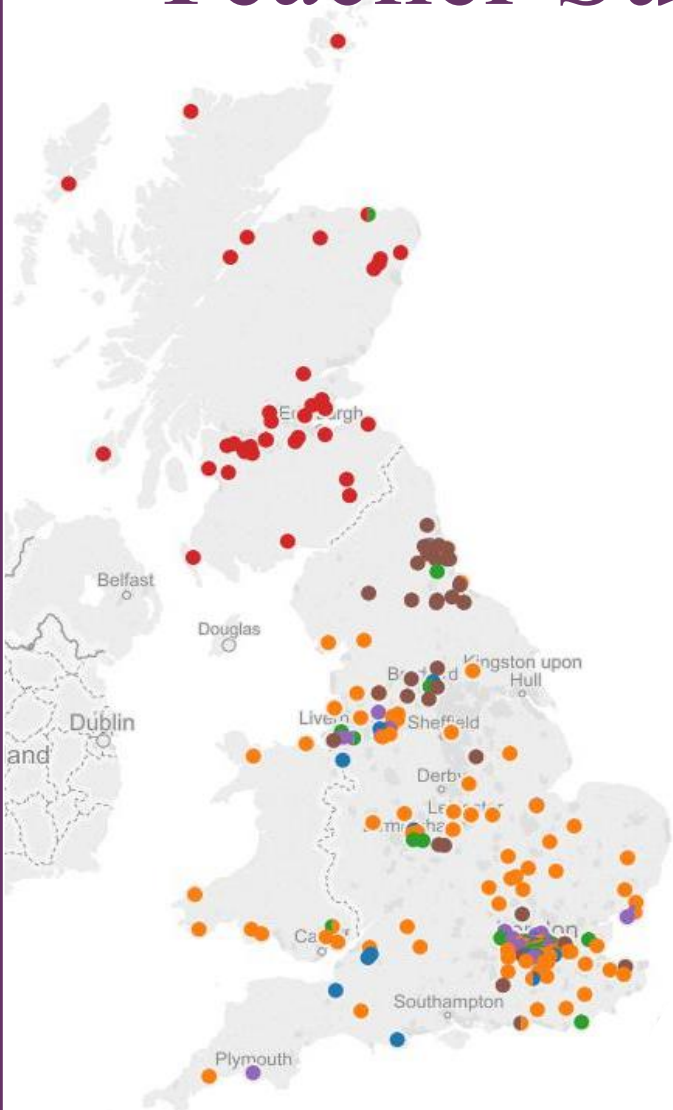
Missing socio-economic student criteria:

- POLAR3 Post code
- FSM
- First Generation
- Children in Care

- Success in GCSE (either projected or actual)

- Also: EAL, gender, distance from HEI

Teacher Summer Schools 2015

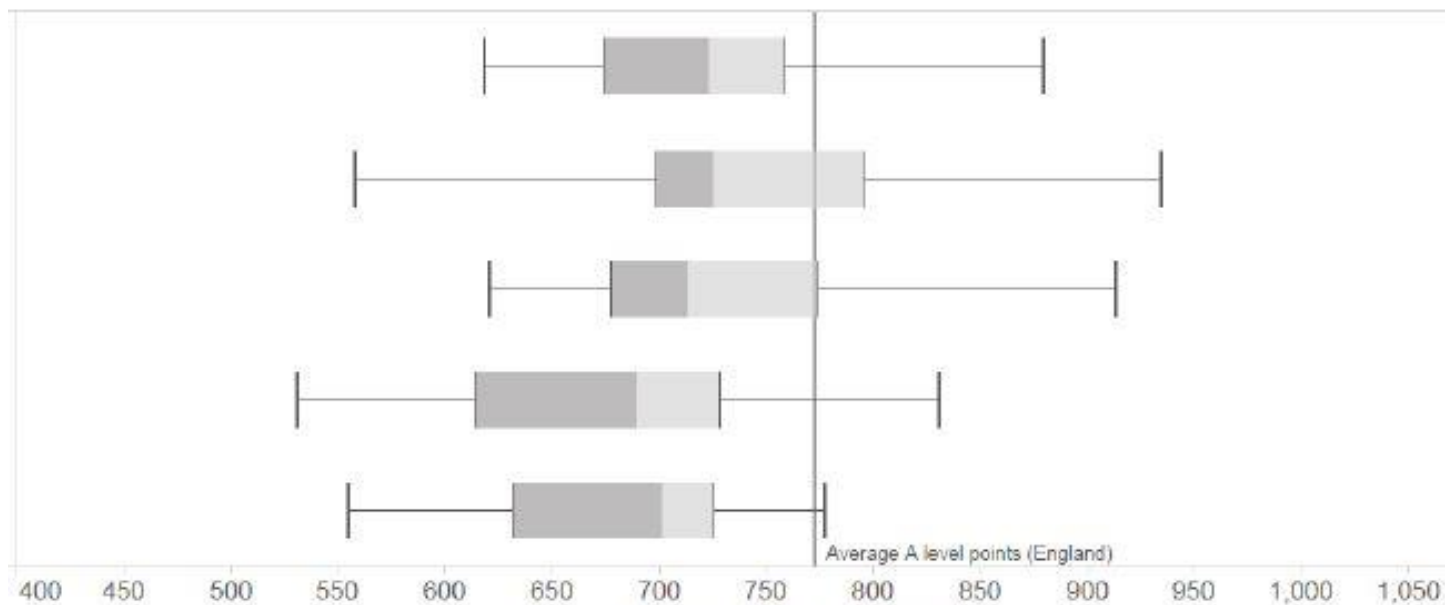


Eight research-intensive universities involved: St. Andrews, Durham, Bristol, Cambridge, UCL, London Consortium

Evaluation (N=265):

- Exit survey (Response rate 82%)
- Follow-up survey (Response rate 43%)
- Interviews (N=6)

Targeting: A level results



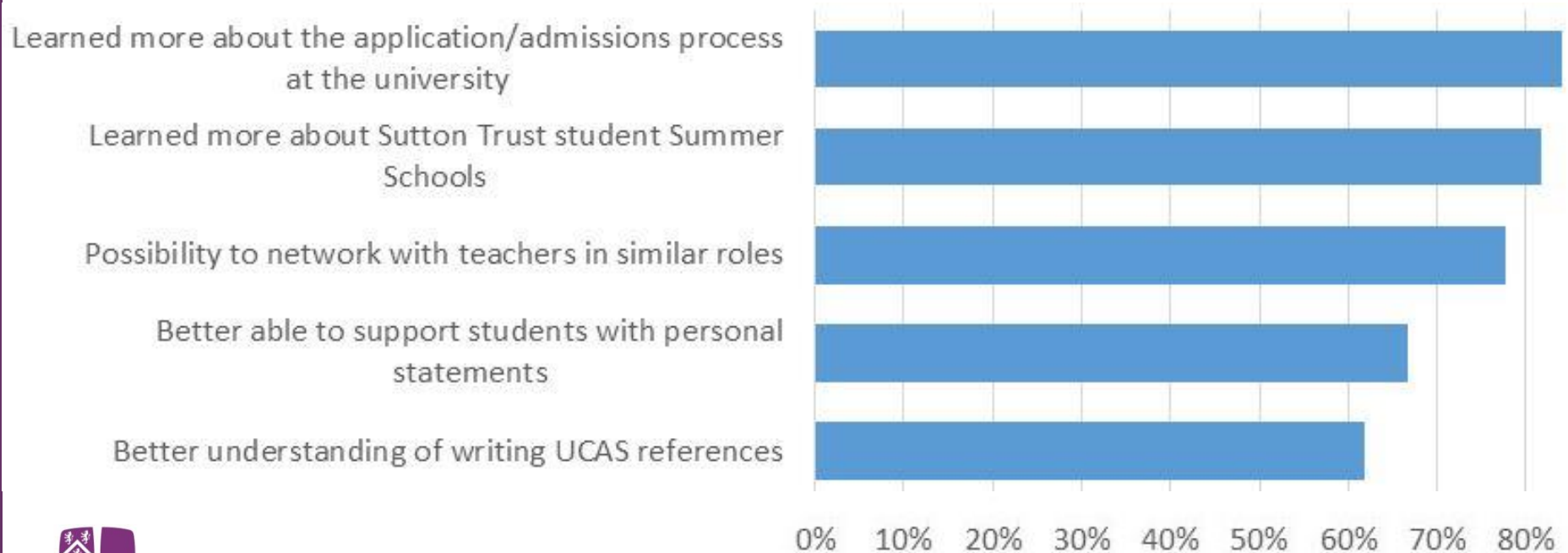
Average A level points for English schools by institution

Contents included

- Outreach work (bursaries, parental influence)
 - Observing summer school student session
- Admissions (e.g. interviews, UCAS)
 - Advice on supporting highly able applicants
- Academic subjects (e.g. STEM, Med, EPQ)
- Online applications: Learning Designer, OSCAR by HEAN

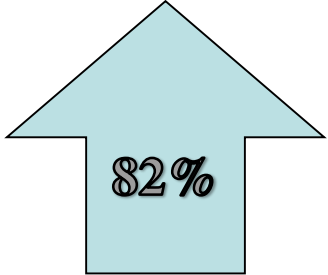
Survey responses

What do you feel you got out of the TSS?

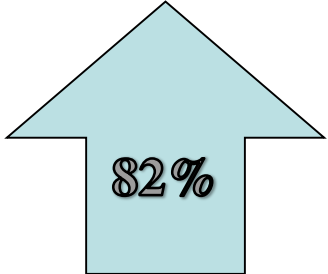


As a consequence of the TSS:

- Teachers said that their ability to support their students applications to highly competitive universities had improved.
- Teachers said that their ability to prepare students for study at a highly competitive university had improved.
- All respondents said that they would now advise their Y12 students to apply for a Sutton Trust Student Summer School



82%



82%



100
%

Positive experiences of the TSS

“Understanding that [a top university] genuinely wants pupils from non-traditional backgrounds.”

“Demystifying the application process. Very clear advice to pass on to students thinking of applying.”

“I have attended over 15 CPDs and this by far will have the greatest impact on me and my students.”

6 months later...

Has anything hindred changes being implemented?

- Time
- Not being the principal individual in charge of this aspect.
- Not enough contact with and knowledge of students

Interviews

- A. How does the teacher's role in school relate to university admissions?
- B. What did they get out of the programme?
- C. What kind of difficulties the teachers faced when trying to make changes after the intervention?

Difficulties: Disseminating information

- Role
 - Personal motivation, no formal recognition for their role, running lunchtime sessions
 - Insignificant, not empowered to change guidelines
- Management do not take advice
- Not allowed to install IT programmes – even free ones – unless approved supplier

Teacher using an intermediary to put forward a warning regarding advice on A level choices:

“We got to be quite careful, because most of the senior management teach subjects that would be regarded as softer subjects. I have been talking to the careers person and she is going to try to intervene when we are enrolling students. [...] Imperial [College in London] in particular, take virtually nobody with business studies to science.”

Possibilities: Networking

Links with other attendees

- Most fruitful part of the intervention; peer support and inspirational stories
- No contact after the residential: time conflicts and distance, no help from technology

Contacts with university

- For later when help with admission was needed

“But I guess there was a good bond with everybody, it was good you know. It’s difficult to keep in touch afterwards. Haven’t done that maybe that was a bit disappointing. [...] If there was time, but I think I would push it, you know. It would be nice as I said, but.”

Aspects to consider:

Context

Main obstacle to implement the changes within the school were structural problems

- Best students have moved to higher achieving schools at prior stage
- Course choices narrow
- Poor facilities
- Students not thinking of travelling/moving far away from home

"It's not access to the highest level of higher education that's our biggest issue, it's actually access to higher education at the lowest level that is as important to us as it is at the top end."

"We know that somebody applied to Cambridge, some point in the last 30 odd years, cause soon he will be retired, but that was the case. From the sixth form this is only the second person who applied and might only be the first person who got an interview. [...] There's no doubt there's excitement towards that."

Guidance to institutions

- For making change, set up short – max day long - courses for senior managers
- For building relationships, offer subject-specific enrichment
- Targeting: where to find students who would benefit?
 - Consider upper limit thresholds for participant schools
- Build follow-up and feedback processes

Thank you for your time

Any questions, you may contact us by email
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Examples of a few current projects

