

# Rethinking access

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**Reform  
@ReformThinkTank**

# Agenda

- > Introducing Reform
- > The wider political context
- > Our HE access project
- > Participation differences
- > The five common challenges
- > What works?
- > Q&A

*(slides available afterwards, sources in the notes)*

# Introducing Reform

- > Independent and non-partisan Westminster think tank
- > Our mission is to set out a better way to deliver public services and economic prosperity

REFORM

**REFORM** Reform [@reformthinktank](#) Following


Great photos of Jeremy Hunt from our [#reformhealth](#) conference in BBC and other news outlets today!



RENEWED A&E TARGETS  
Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt demands hospitals meet A&E targets

ITV News, 10 March 2017

Louis Coffait, Head of Education at Reform, responded to ASCL's school leader [survey](#) about school budget on ITV news, making the point that [Reform analysis](#) last Spring predicted the per-pupil fall in funding, that school budgets have fared relatively well, and that many schools can achieve better value for money – for instance by looking at class sizes, working together more and pooling staff.




Home | The Reformer Blog | How learning analytics will transform universities

## How learning analytics will transform universities

8 September 2016

**REFORM** Reform [@reformthinktank](#) Following

Look fwd to hearing from [@ChiOnwurah](#), Shadow Minister for Industrial Strategy, on 'How to create a modern industrial strategy' this morning



RETWEETS 5 LIKES 9

**REFORM** Reform [@reformthinktank](#) Following

What's next for criminal justice reform? Looking forward to our [#reformjustice](#) conference! [bit.ly/2KUqiqD](http://bit.ly/2KUqiqD)



## Tackling disadvantage (I): the role of universities

16 September 2016

In the struggle to

**Emilie Sundorph** [@ESundorph](#) Following

Give us a few months and [@reformthinktank](#) report will do its best to debunk this (harmful) nonsense [@LouisMMCoiffait](#) [@dan\\_b\\_vasilev](#)

**David Morris** [@dgmorris295](#)  
I'm running an open call for a take-down and riposte to this utter rubbish that we can publish on Wonkhe. This is getting silly. [twitter.com/tele\\_education...](https://twitter.com/tele_education...)

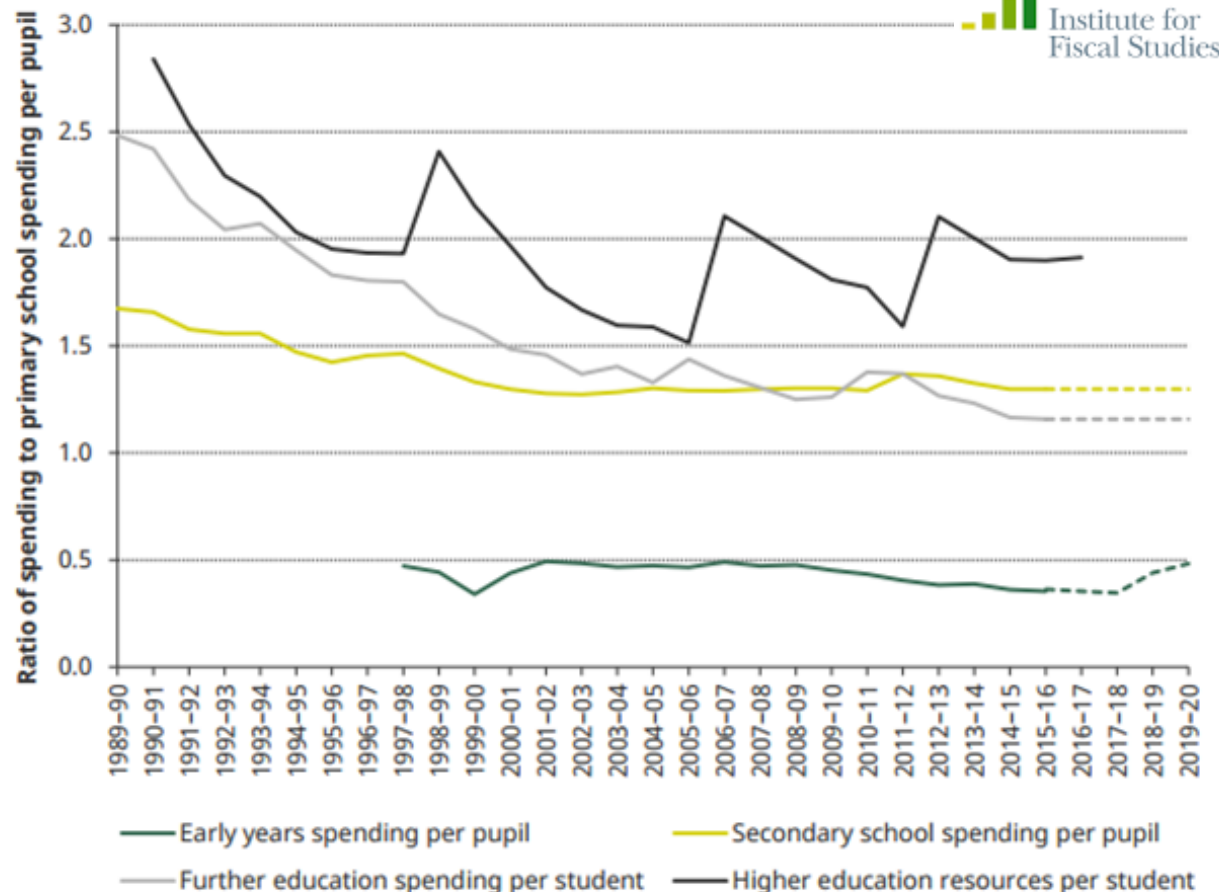
**Work in progress.**  
Towards a leaner, smarter public-sector workforce.

Alexander Hitchcock  
Kate Laycock  
Emilie Sundorph

## The wider political context

- > Ongoing (if inconsistent) focus on ‘social mobility’
- > UK £ inequality stubbornly high
- > HE returns make it a key lever for social mobility
- > HE *relatively* well funded
- > Renewed focus on ‘skills’ coming?
- > Greater role e.g. attainment and/or sponsor schools?

Figure 6.1b. Relative spending per pupil or student per year at different stages of education, actual and plans (primary school spending per pupil = 1)



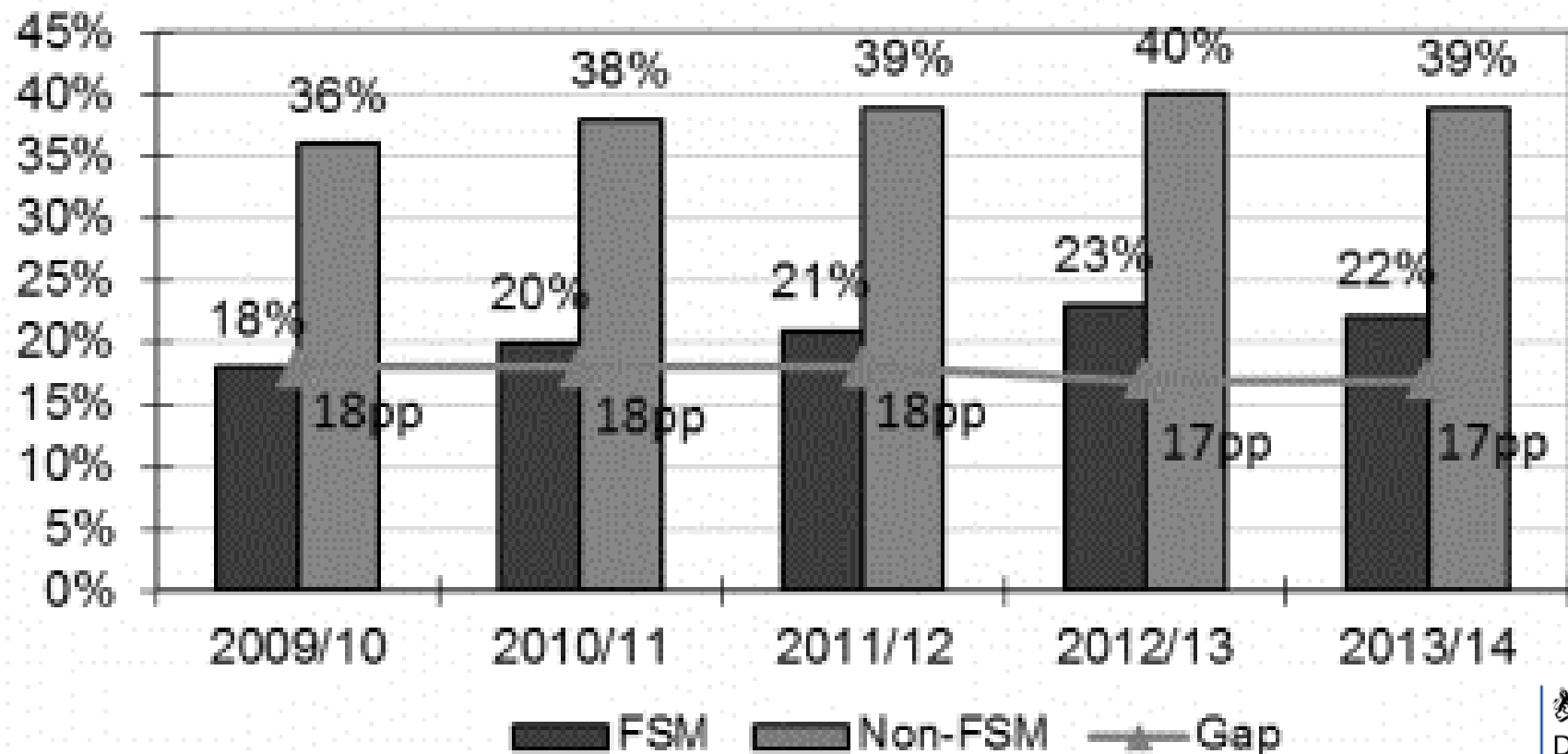
## Our HE access project

- > Increasing access at high-tariff institutions
- > Where have institutions improved and how?
- > HESA data, access agreements, OFFA spending data, FOIs and interviews
- > Available this summer – we'd love your feedback

# Participation differences

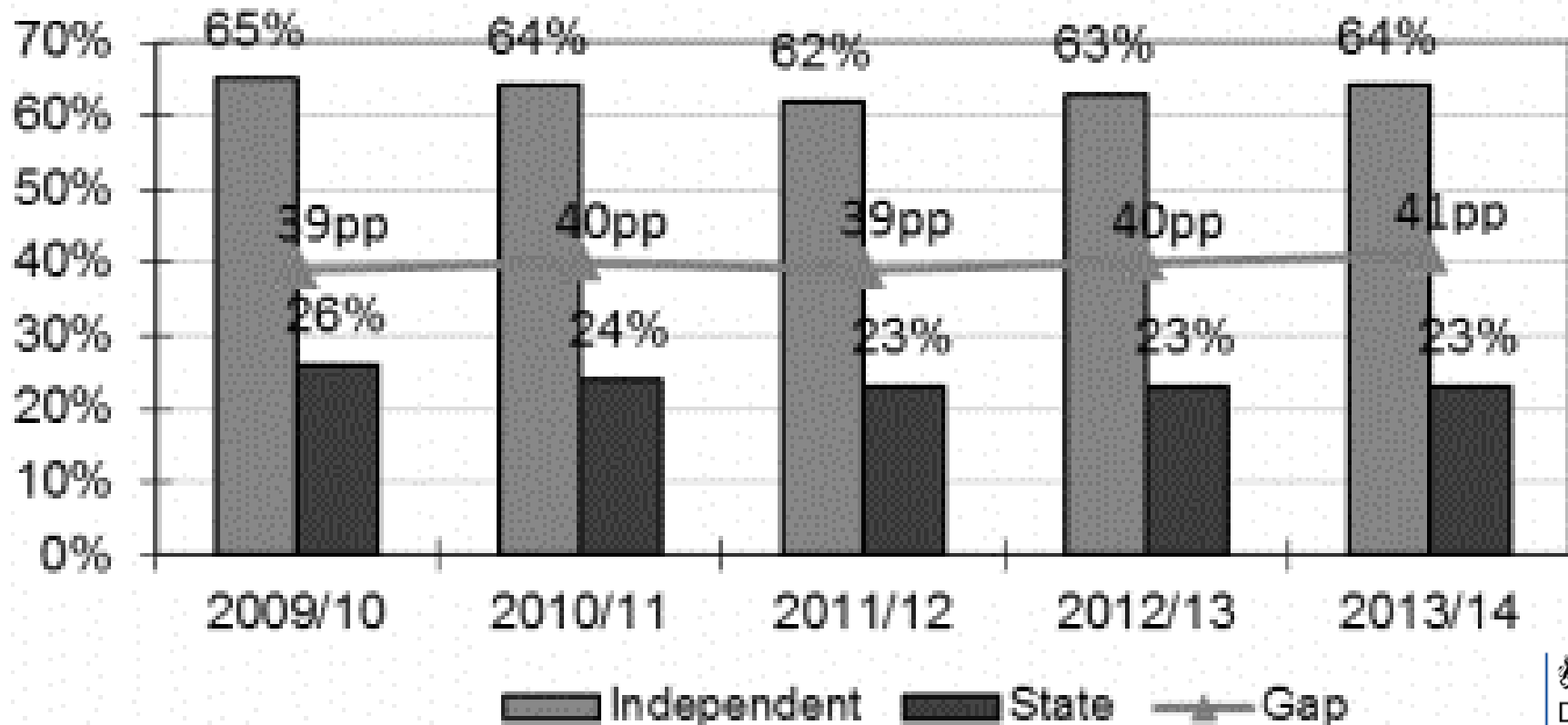
> These will be familiar to you...

Estimated percentage of 15 year old state-funded school pupils by Free School Meal status who entered HE by age 19



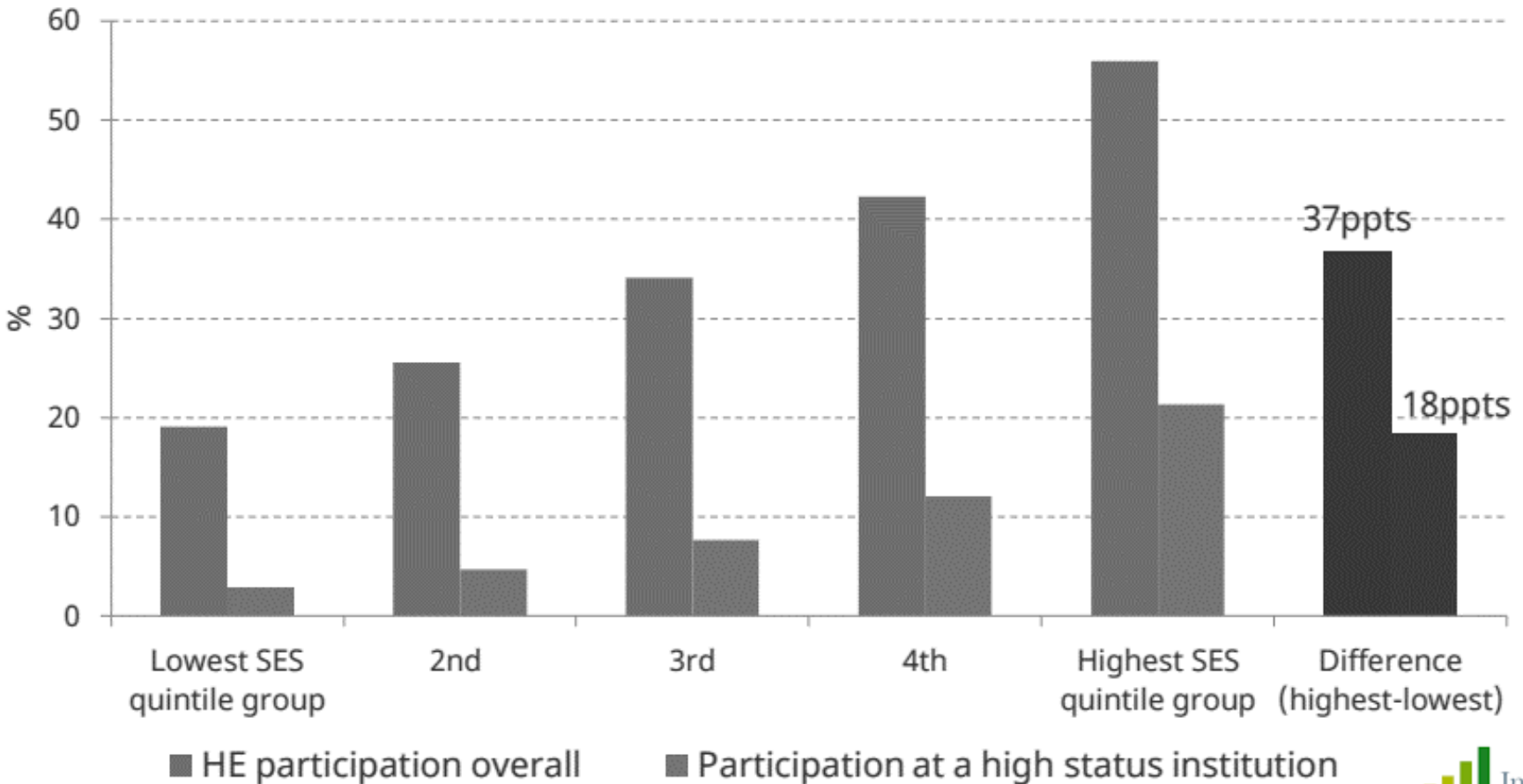
## Participation differences

Estimated percentage of A level and equivalent students who progressed to the most selective HE providers by age 19 by independent and state school/college



# Participation differences

**% of state school pupils going to university at age 18/19**



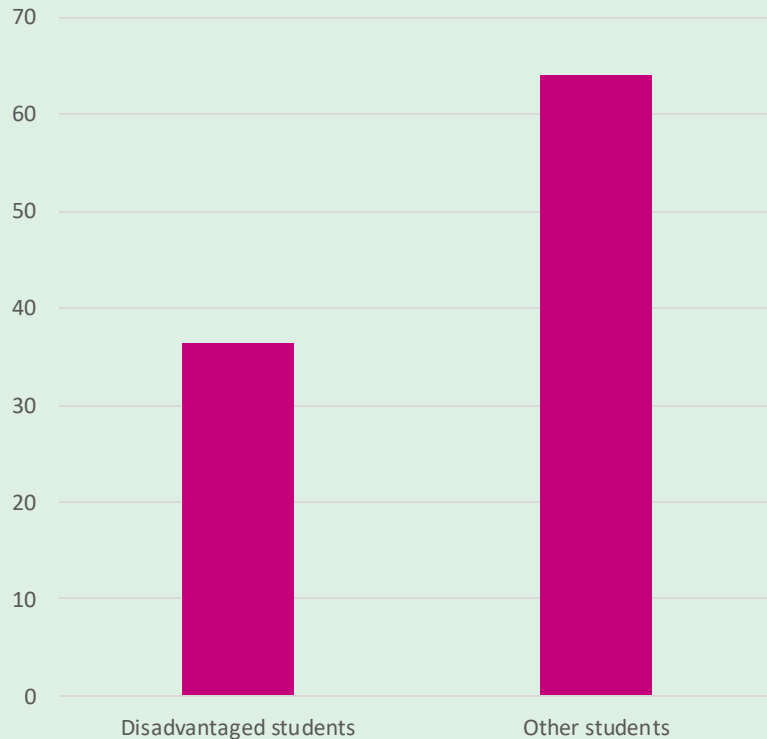


# The five common challenges

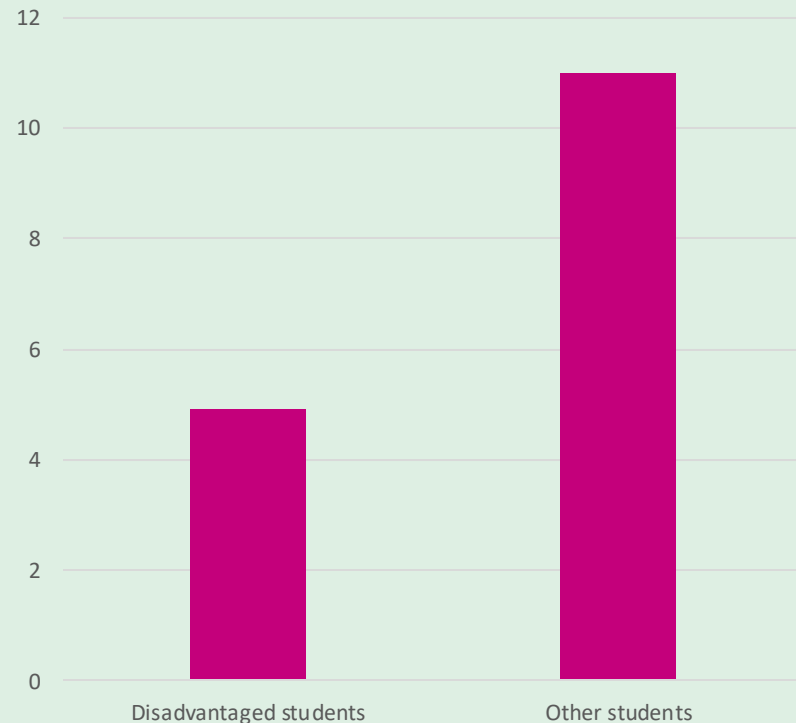
> You may know these all too well too...

## 1) Prior attainment

Percentage of students achieving 5 or more A\*-C grades at GCSE in 2013-14



Percentage of students achieving 3 or more A grades at A level in 2015-16



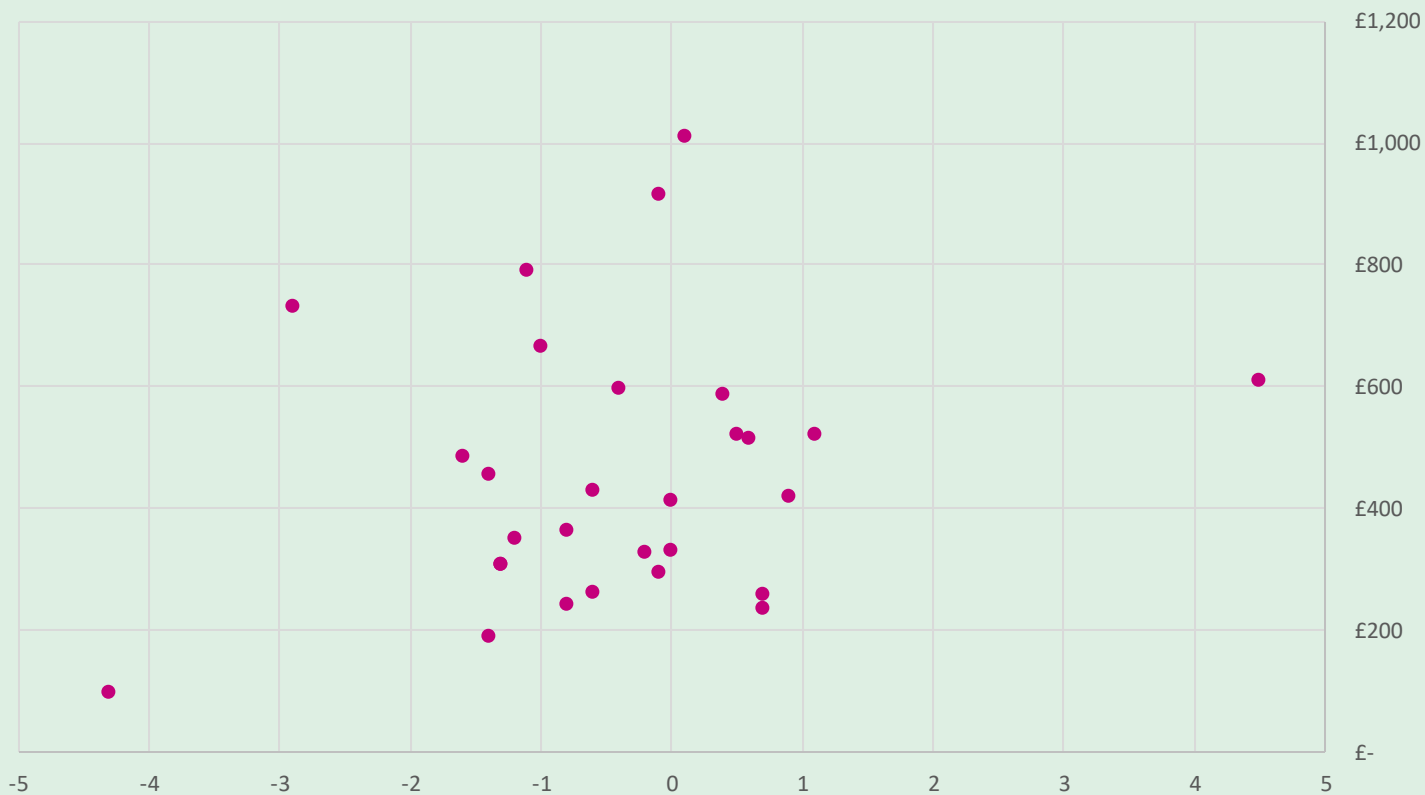
# The five common challenges

- 2) Cooperation with schools
- 3) Aspirations and perceptions of HE
  - > Parent and teacher encouragement
- 4) Measuring success
  - > POLAR issues
  - > What kind of impact?
- 5) Commitment of institutions?
  - > “Some institutions see Widening Participation spending as a tax”

# What works

## > Spending?

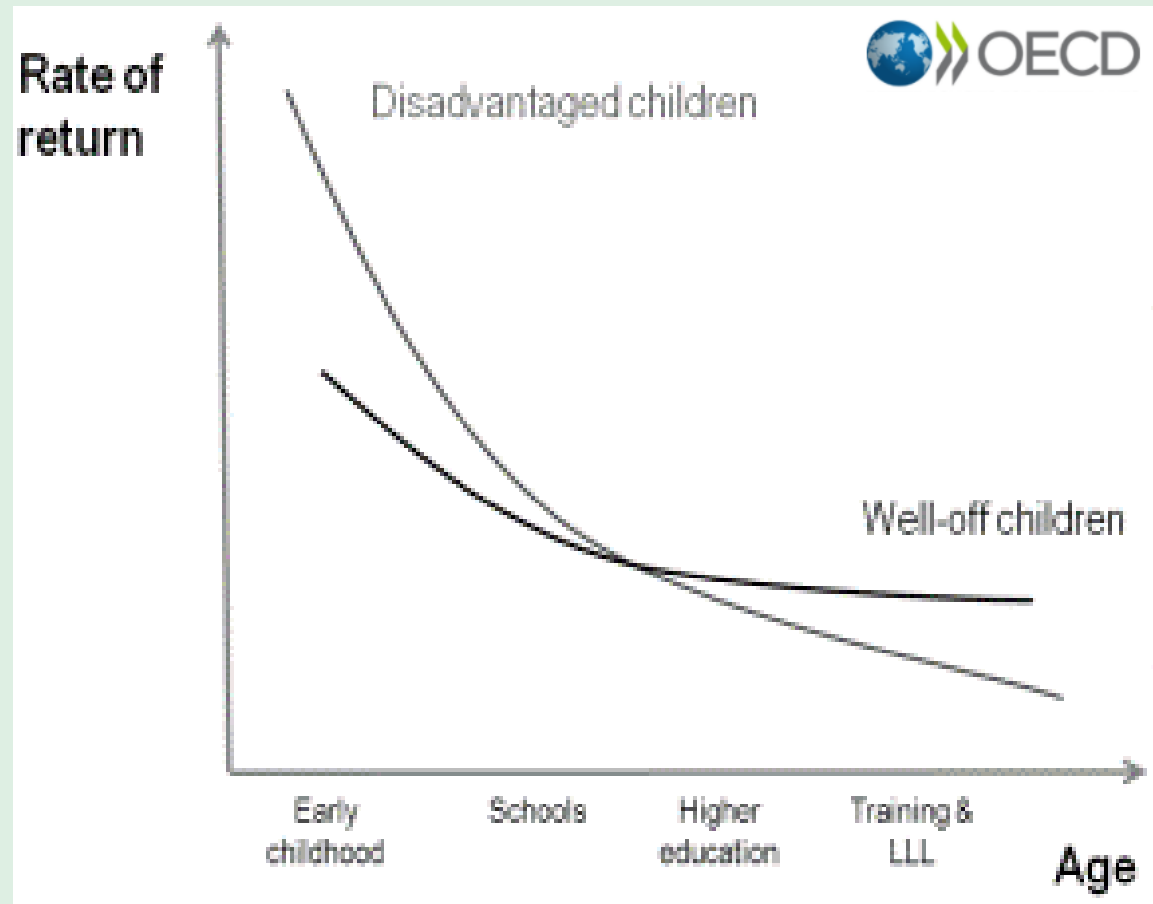
Average outreach spend per student and progress against benchmark 2012-15



> Lack of consistency

# What works

- > Working with younger students?



- > Using Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT)
- > Clarifying good outcomes

# What works

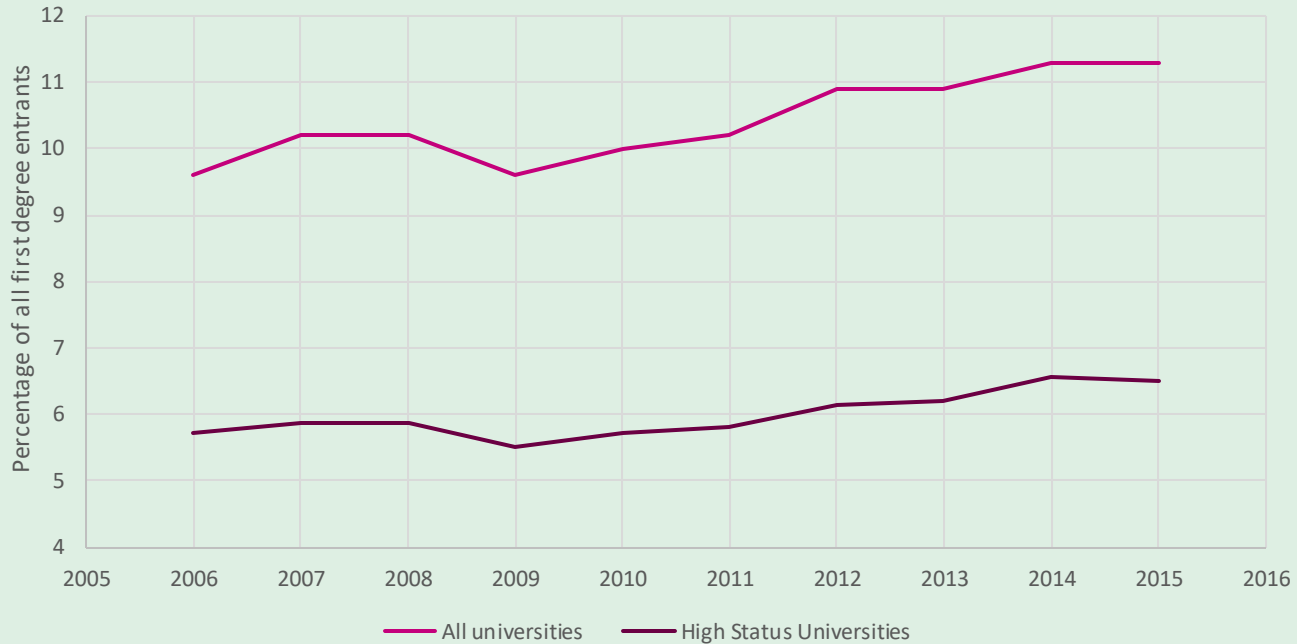
- > Senior staff buy-in
  - > “People will even support the same football team as the VC”
  
- > Link to admissions
  - > Centralised and contextualised and (even more!) professionalised
  - > Clear effect in the data
  - > “Any institution that takes WP seriously has to consider contextualised admissions”

# Accelerating contextualised admissions

> Progress hard and slow(ing)  
1.5pp  
0.5pp

> Could help whole sector

Proportion of POLAR3 quintile one students at English universities



- > Value for money (clearer impact than 16-18 outreach?)
- > TEF *should* show value added by HEIs
- > Why not?
  - > Can they handle it / compete? Seems so
  - > Lowering standards? Also seems not. Research more
  - > Unfair on others? They already have advantages

# Rethinking access – Q&A

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