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Using data to evaluate the impact of targeted financial support on retention

Early evaluation of the Bucks' NSP

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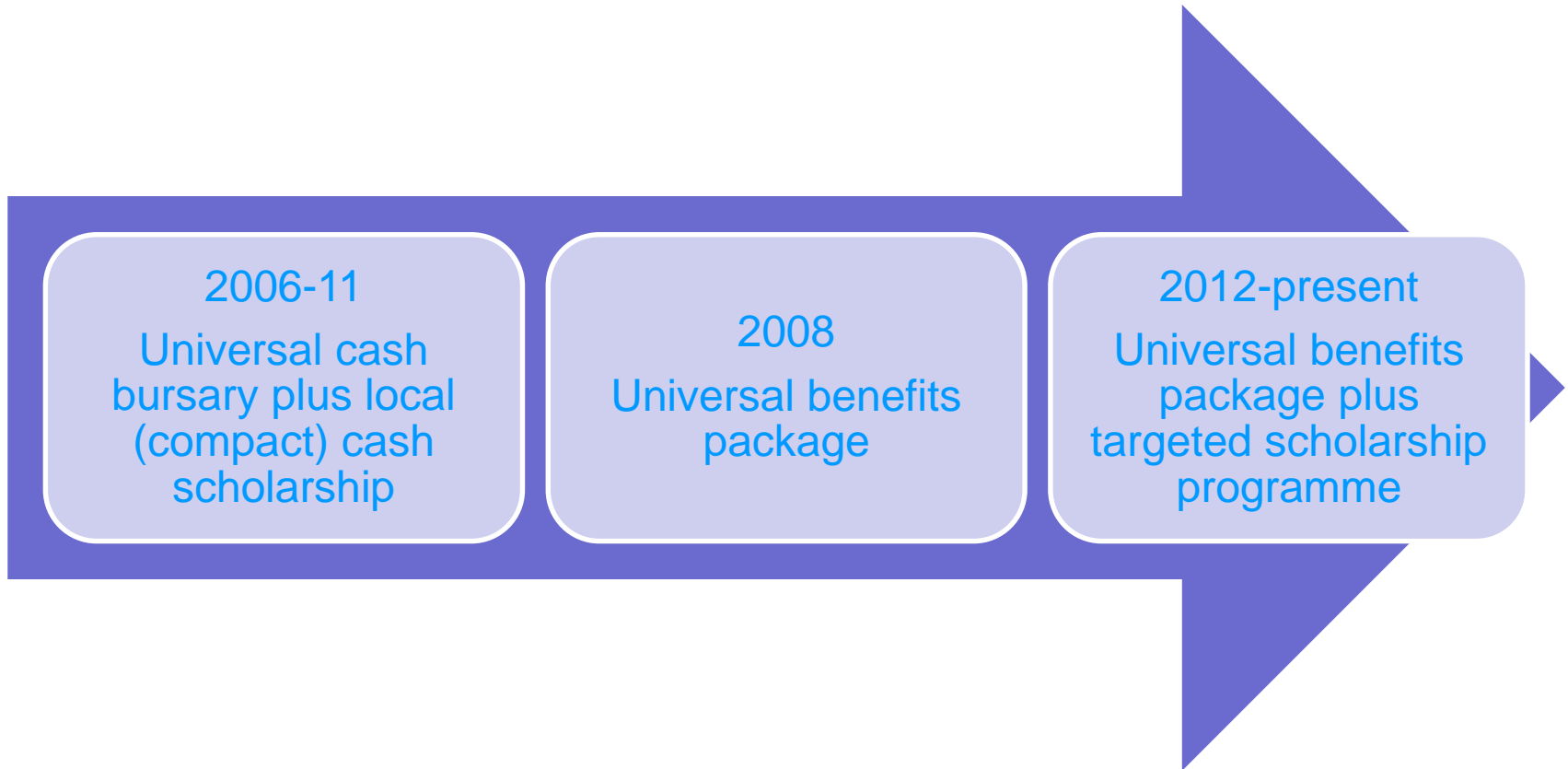
- **What has previous research found?**
- **What did we do?**
- **How did we evaluate?**
- **What did we find out?**
- **What will we do next?**

Evidence to support impact of bursaries?

- No *direct* impact on access or retention but additional support may contribute to retention (OFFA, 2014)
- Robust evidence is currently limited (CFE, 2014)
- Students prefer staggered payments to help with budgeting (NUS, 2012)



How our approach has evolved



Universal benefits package



ON COURSE



bucksstudentsunion.org

THE BIG DEAL

As part of our exclusive Big Deal package, we are the only UK university to offer our students free access to this range of activities to enrich the student experience:



FREE entertainment and events

FREE sports

FREE societies

FREE recreational activities

PAID student reps

FREE workshops and training

bucks.ac.uk/bigdeal

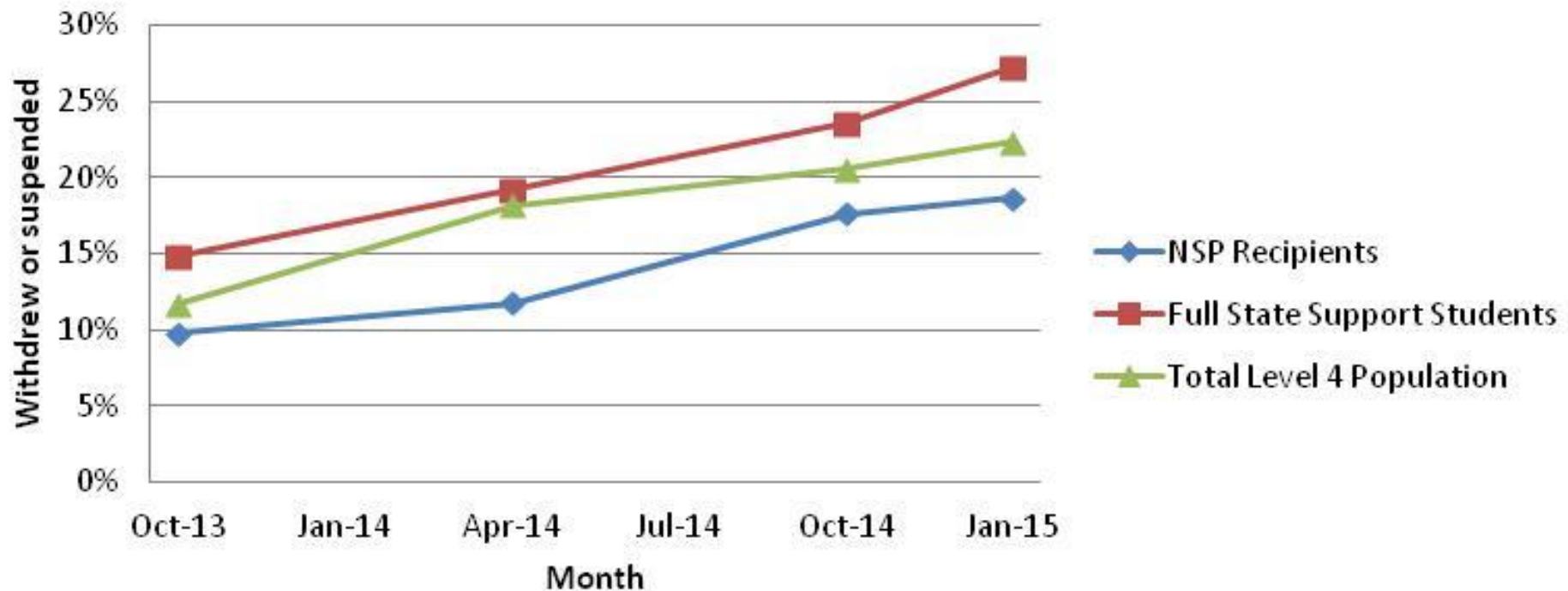
The Bucks' NSP model

- Award value up to £6,000
- Institutional eligibility criteria
- Retention focus informing the delivery of funds:
 - Year 1 - £3,000
 - Year 2 - £1,500
 - Year 3 - £1,500
- Student choice model



- Annual surveys to inform programme design
- Monitoring of student records
- Quantitative analysis of retention rates
- Comparison with students receiving maximum financial support and with total academic year population

Attrition rates for different student groups (Oct 2013 - Jan 2015)



Recommendations and next steps

The study suggests that:

- Bursaries should be integrated with tailored, personal support to enhance effectiveness
- Bursary / Scholarship funding would be better targeted at retention activity than recruitment or access activity

Further research:

- Similar analysis of the 2013/14 and 2014/15 cohorts will help to show a trend across years
- Cross reference attainment details with the control groups and establish impact on degree outcomes