



LOTHIANS EQUAL ACCESS PROGRAMME FOR SCHOOLS

LEAPS

Strategic Themes and Impact

Common themes and long term impact of the LEAPS
programme from
2001 – 2012

Ged Lerpiniere

Report updated in May 2013

LEAPS is a successful and unique widening participation programme, funded by its higher education institution and local council partners, to increase progression to higher education in South East Scotland. LEAPS is also supported by Skills Development Scotland.

LEAPS delivers the Scottish Funding Council's Schools for Higher Education Programme (SHEP)

Strategic Themes and impact

Contents

Abstract

Part 1 Strategic common ground, higher education institutions, government and local authorities in Edinburgh and the Lothians

- 1. Introduction LEAPS**
- 2. Outcome Agreements: Partner Examples**
- 3. Higher Education Institutional Strategy: LEAPS (Appendix 1)**
- 4. Scottish Government Strategic objectives**
- 5. Local Authorities - Schools strategic objectives and themes**

Part 2 Delivery - Impact and Evidence

- 1. Identifying Priority schools (Group 1)**
- 2. History**
- 3. Progression tables and detailed explanation:**
 - **Progression Table 1 – Group One Schools**
 - **Figure 1**
 - **Note 1: Schools with consistently very low progression**
Wester Hailes Education Centre, Castlebrae Community High School and Craigroyston Community High School
 - **Note 2: Tynecastle High School and Broughton High School**
- 4. Group 2 Category Schools**
 - **Progression table 2 – Group Two Schools**
 - **Figure 2**
 - **Figure 3**
- 5. Pre Application interview and admissions process**
- 6. Summer Schools**
- 7. Other considerations to be considered when targeting**
- 8. Conclusion**

Appendices:

Appendix 1

Bibliography

Abstract:

LEAPS is a successful and unique widening participation programme, funded by its higher education institution and local council partners, to increase progression to higher education in South East Scotland. LEAPS is also supported by in kind contributions from Skills Development Scotland. *LEAPS delivers the Scottish Funding Council's Schools for Higher Education Programme (SHEP)*

The LEAPS programme has been in existence since 1995. The aims of the programme remain consistent and are contained within this report. This paper outlines the challenges presented by strategic complexity and illustrates how membership of LEAPS helps HEI and LEA partners to meet strategic, institutional and government commitments. It demonstrates how delivery of LEAPS helps Local Authorities to meet commitments inherent in curriculum development such as Curriculum for Excellence, Getting it Right for Every Child, How Good Is Our School and 16+ Positive Destinations. The paper uses the changes in progression to higher education in the targeted schools as evidence of impact. The programme focuses on changing the culture in schools with low progression to higher education as a way of increasing social mobility.

Part 1 Strategic common ground, higher education institutions, government and local authorities in Edinburgh and the Lothians**1. Introduction LEAPS**

LEAPS or Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools, is a widening participation to higher education partnership that was launched in 1995-96. It was given fresh impetus and reinvestment by the partners in 2000/2001 to put the programme on a more stable footing. This paper reviews how financial and in kind partnership commitment to LEAPS allows higher education institutions and local authorities to meet a variety of strategic aims and objectives. It also demonstrates how LEAPS has influenced policy and what impact the programme has had.

This is an updated version of the paper reviewed in May 2012 and is used to measure the impact of LEAPS and to explain the rationale as to why partners make substantial financial investment in LEAPS. It is part of a strategy that includes a three year Business Plan, an Annual Report and a cost benefits analysis to demonstrate efficacy and value for money.

In March 2013 Lee Elliot Major of the Sutton Trust pointed out in a blog on the Trust's website that: *'Collecting robust evidence remains an Achilles heel to the sector.'*

This paper tries to address such criticisms and provide evidence that the LEAPS partnership has made a significant contribution to the changes in progression to higher education from students in state secondary schools in Edinburgh and the Lothians.

The aims and objectives of LEAPS have not changed since the inception in the nineties they are:

LEAPS promotes social inclusion and equality of opportunity by facilitating increased participation and success in higher education of young people (in Edinburgh and the Lothians) whose ability to choose higher education as a post school option and/or to demonstrate or realise their potential may have been inhibited by economic, social or cultural factors.

The 5 LEAPS objectives are to:

- *Provide young people and their parents with advice, information and encouragement to consider higher education, accessed directly or through a college articulation route, as an attractive and attainable option*
- *Provide impartial information and advice about courses and routes to higher education*
- *Raise awareness of widening participation issues and challenge traditional assumptions about admissions criteria within (a) higher education institutions and (b) schools.*
- *Enhance the prospects of young people fulfilling their academic potential by promoting positive attitudes to learning and acquisition of learning skills to ensure effective transition to and success in higher education*
- *Monitor and evaluate student progression into and through higher education*

LEAPS measures its impact based upon the rise or otherwise of rates of progression to higher education from the schools with which the programme works. As the aims and objectives above suggest, the thrust of the organisation is to change the culture in the schools to create a positive perception of entry to higher education. However the programme does not solely rely on generic aspiration raising and use of role models to do this. The programme delivers: individual advice, guidance, negotiation and brokering with university admissions departments through a pre application enquiry service. A seven week access summer school is central to this process.

In addition partner universities, Heriot-Watt University, Edinburgh Napier University, Queen Margaret University, Scotland's Rural University College, and The University of Edinburgh are committed to an admissions policy which pledges admissions officers to:

- *Make offers of places if at all possible to students who are identified as LEAPS eligible*
- *Hold open places for LEAPS Summer School students who do not meet the conditions set until reports on their performance are available.*
- *Consider admitting any Summer School Student who does not meet their conditions set on SQA results but whose Summer School report shows potential to succeed on the course for which they hold an offer*

Partner universities may also offer '*minimum*' entry offers to students who meet the LEAPS criteria. This aspect of the programme is crucial to the raising of progression from the schools LEAPS works with.

This paper concentrates on the period from 2001 to 2012, and on the work carried out over that period focusing solely on the 46 state secondary schools in Edinburgh and the Lothians. Since 2001 the number of final year students represented by LEAPS who are planning to make the transition to higher education has increased significantly. In 2001-2002 LEAPS supported 763 students through the pre application process. By 2011-12 this number had risen to 1659, and in 2012-2013 is 1829.

Since 2008 LEAPS has expanded services and works in all of the Scottish Borders schools and in 2010 a further four schools were added from local authority areas in Stirlingshire, Clackmannanshire and Falkirk District under the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) Schools for Higher Education Programme (SHEP). It is too early to review in any depth the efficacy of this work at this stage. Early indications are that progression is improving in these schools. However it is worth noting that LEAPS now operates in 59 state secondary schools across 8 local authority areas.

LEAPS has a staff 11 people of whom 8 are full time and is also supported by staff in partner higher education institutions and employs around 100 staff to deliver the LEAPS Summer School.

The development of SHEP is built on the targeted *school culture change* model used since 1995 by LEAPS.

Outcome Agreements

Prior to the development of legislation by the Scottish Government which introduced the Outcome Agreements, partner universities commitment to LEAPS was emphasised in strategic documents (see Appendix 1). This is still the case but this recent development spells out the commitment to LEAPS more specifically and as part of a dialogue with government.

In 2012 the SFC negotiated outcome agreements with Scotland's universities and colleges. These documents are key statements of strategy tailored to the individual characteristics of the institutions. In these agreements universities were asked to demonstrate their commitment to social justice in the shape of widening participation policy. Although the Outcome Agreements are now in place for the majority of this reporting period they were not. However all partners were able to cite in their outcome agreements investment in LEAPS as a long term commitment to widening participation and social justice.

LEAPS Partner Outcome Agreement Examples

Edinburgh Napier University

The University has a long standing strategic commitment to widening access to higher education, with a particular focus on Edinburgh and the surrounding area. We maintain strong partnerships with colleges,..... We also remain committed to the Lothian Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS) which targets school pupils from relevant backgrounds to aspire to and prepare for higher education.

In the context of this outcome agreement, our strategy for outreach can be said to encompass:

- *a continuing commitment to a number of established initiatives including LEAPS, Kickstart, High Flyers, Lift Off and working with SHEP schools*

Heriot-Watt University

Heriot-Watt University (HWU) has been a long-standing and active subscriber to the LEAPS partnership. Through this partnership, HWU is able to engage with 59 secondary schools in Edinburgh, the Lothians, Forth Valley and the Scottish Borders. This programme is delivered through numerous channels with HWU staff supporting LEAPS activities and associated school events throughout the year.

3.8 Develop and enhance commitment to Admissions from target schools: HWU will review our commitment to the LEAPS partnership with a view to providing an enhanced level of commitment to local schools through a wider range of services. Heriot-Watt will commit to increasing the support for school pupils in Edinburgh, the Lothians, the Scottish Borders and the Forth Valley. This will involve the support of academic staff in all Schools as well as through the work of staff in HWU's Recruitment & Admissions Service.

Queen Margaret University

QMU is committed to widening access and participation from those groups who have previously been inhibited from entering Higher Education for social, economic or cultural reasons. Our approach to widening participation and equality of opportunity is set out within a number of strategic documents. The outcomes set out in tables 5-7 reflect strongly the following objectives in particular:

- *To recognise the needs of all learners by developing and delivering programmes that promote flexibility and innovation of delivery allowing our learners to step-on and step-off programmes and promoting the smooth transition of students into, through and from QMU programmes in line with their chosen goals. (QMU Strategic Plan 2010-13 & Student Experience Strategy 2010-13)*
- *To increase student numbers from non-traditional groups whilst promoting staff understanding of diverse student groups. (Widening Participation & Student Retention Strategy 2007-12).*

The University of Edinburgh

We are pleased to support widening participation regionally by housing LEAPS, SWAP (Scottish Wider Access Programme) East and the SFC-funded SHEP (Schools for Higher Education Programme), Reach and ACES (Access to Creative Education in Scotland) projects. These are all partnership projects which benefit universities, colleges and communities in the South East region.

LEAPS delivers demonstrable outcomes, with almost 1,200 participants going on to University level study in 2011. The number of LEAPS students entering the University of Edinburgh has almost trebled over the last 10 years. LEAPS participants from low participation communities and schools benefit those communities through the provision of successful role models.

The University of Edinburgh has a long tradition of providing financial support to students of all ages and social backgrounds to enter higher education and we remain committed to ensuring this continues.

We recognise that not all applicants have had an equal opportunity to evidence their academic potential. Through our use of contextual data in admissions, we seek to

identify those from different social, economic, cultural and educational backgrounds who have the potential to succeed at Edinburgh.

Scotland’s Rural University College

SRUC has an established Widening Participation Policy that sets out four strategic strands of activity (Partnership, Delivery, Information and Support, and Admissions) designed to enable participation from a diverse and under-represented Scottish demographic.

SRUC is an established member in regional school leaver and adult returner programmes to HE participation. These include projects now under SHEP including LEAPS, ASPIRE North, and SWAP West and East. SRUC staff are involved in the strategic and operational management teams of these projects including as Vice Chair for ASPIRE North in 2012/13.

Commitment to these access projects pre-dates SRUC gaining SFC-fundable body status in 2008.

SRUC uses all available information to assess suitability for admissions within, for most programmes, a competitive application process. Applicants indicating participation on LEAPS, SHEP or SWAP programmes are prioritised, subject to their meeting or expecting to meet minimum entry requirements.

2. Higher Education Institutional Strategy - LEAPS (Appendix 1)

For the period 2001-2011 all partners were able to demonstrate delivery on their strategic plans by financial and in kind investment in LEAPS. Some examples of these can be seen at **(Appendix 1)**.

3. Scottish Government Strategic Objectives

The Scottish Government’s national objective 4 is to make the nation *better educated, more skilled and more successful, renowned for our research and innovation, successful learners, confident individuals, effective contributors and responsible citizens, able to fulfil our economic potential and give our children the best start in life*. The objectives aim to *tackle significant inequalities in Scottish society and improve the life chances for children, young people and families at risk*.

The work of the partnership impacts particularly on Scottish Government National Outcome 4 in the following ways:

<p>Successful Learners</p>	<p>The project will help to raise achievement through improved engagement and attendance and higher level attainment.</p> <p>The project aims to reduce the gap between the highest and lowest achievers, reducing the link between personal circumstance and attainment.</p> <p>Links to National Outcomes 3, 5, 7 & 8</p>
<p>Effective Contributors</p>	<p>The project will contribute to increasing the proportion of young people in positive and sustained post school destinations, through increased numbers of young people staying on at school and progressing to HE.</p> <p>The project weakens the link between personal circumstances and destinations.</p>

	Links to National Outcomes 2, 3, 7 & 8
Responsible Citizens	<p>The project aims to increase the numbers of young people engaged and contributing within their community demonstrating increased ability to engage with peers and adults.</p> <p>The project supports young people to make more informed and sustainable life choices.</p> <p>Links to National Outcomes 5, 7 & 8</p>
Confident Individuals	<p>The project contributes to young people being more ambitious, resilient and able to set realistic and challenging goals particularly in relation to their future in higher education.</p> <p>Links to National Outcomes 7 & 8</p>

4. Local Authorities - Schools strategic objectives and themes

The four main areas outlined above are also described as the *Four Capacities* central to the implementation of the new Scottish Schools *Curriculum for Excellence*.

<http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/thecurriculum/whatiscurriculumforexcellence/index.asp>

A Curriculum for Excellence aims to achieve a transformation in education in Scotland by providing a coherent, more flexible and enriched curriculum from 3 to 18. Many have described this as predominately a philosophical structure but it is much more than this. In 2014 new exams, National 4 and National 5 will replace Standard Grades. We must wait to see what impact this will have on university and college admissions. Some have already made statements as to how they will respond EG the University of Edinburgh:

http://www.ed.ac.uk/polopoly_fs/1.112286!/fileManager/University%20of%20Edinburgh%20CfE%20statement%202013.pdf

An organisation such as LEAPS will be required to respond quickly to work with, schools, colleges and universities and adjust to this change. Helping young people to make the correct course choices at the right level will be crucial to ensuring that students meet their higher education aspirations.

For Local Authorities, partnership in LEAPS provides evidence of commitment towards many common themes in relation to other strategic objectives such as: *Getting It Right For Every Child*, *How Good Is Our School?*, *16+ Learning Choices Transitions*, *More Choices More Chances*, *Positive Destinations*, as well as a *Curriculum for Excellence*. All of which require evidence of partnership and successful impact to meet targets.

LEAPS has worked in partnership with Local Authorities to help review key performance outcomes and provide evidence which promotes partnership within the council's HMIE Local Authority inspections. Members of the LEAPS team also continue to contribute to individual schools' HMIE reports. LEAPS and partner colleagues are also represented on Local Authority Strategic Groups and education partnership committees.

This paper provides evidence that the LEAPS partnership continues to make significant impact on progression to higher education from Edinburgh and Lothians state secondary schools. Therefore for Local Authorities LEAPS remains a sound investment.

Part 2 – Delivery, impact and evidence

1. Identifying Priority Schools (Group One)

The Scottish Government publishes the destination statistics of schools leavers on the website <http://www.educationscotland.gov.uk/scottishschoolsonline/index.asp>

The progression to higher education statistics are used as a measurement by the LEAPS partnership to gauge if activity is having an impact. Resources are finite LEAPS must decide where to target activity so this data is used to target resources to the poorest performing schools when measured over a five year period.

Essentially LEAPS is using a 'league table' to decide on the level of intervention. This is accepted by the partners as the best way to gauge the allocation of resources. Some would argue that other factors such as: *percentage of free school meal entitlement, educational maintenance allowance, post code/the index of multiple deprivation or first generation applications to higher education* are important and should be taken into account. And these factors are taken into account in relation to **Group Two** schools. The schools prioritised for intensive activity are described as **Group One** schools.

Targeting is no easy matter as the paper 'The Uses and impact of HEFCE Funding for Widening Participation' (March 2013) points out:

'WP presents institutions with two key challenges: defining and identifying those groups with the potential to benefit from HE but who are under-represented in the sector; and designing and implementing mechanisms capable of successfully engaging these groups and assuring their achievement and success'.

However as LEAPS is a partnership that involves Local Authorities who run the schools that LEAPS works in, targeting is not only an Higher Education Institutional matter. LEAPS strategy is designed in consultation with partners working in senior roles in education in local authorities.

There are often significant variations in progression from individual schools from one year to the next. For this reason LEAPS looks at a five year mean figure to identify a more consistent trend. This analysis takes place every three years.

2. History

In 2001 16 schools were categorised as **Group One** as they had a progression rate to higher education of below 16% when averaged over a five year period or the school had a progression rate at or under 16% for 3 of the previous five years. In 2004 the

bar was raised to 19% and 14 schools were categorised as **Group One**. In 2007, 17 schools were categorised as **Group One** having a progression rate below 21% over five years. In the single year 2009 only two schools had a progression rate below 16% and in 2010 there were four schools that dropped below this 2001 threshold. There are now only three schools when measured over five years which still have progression below 16% and one is 16% when measured over the last 5 years.

LEAPS Group One category since 2001

Year	Group One Threshold	Number of Group One Schools
2001-2004	16%	16
2004-2007	19%	14
2007-2010	21%	17
2011-2015*	22%	14

**There are 6 other schools in South East Scotland receiving the same level of support through the Scottish Funding Councils SHEP programme until 2015.*

The tables on pages 11 and 14 will show how progression has changed since the 2001 baseline when LEAPS was re-constituted. The trend since then has continued to be upwards in most schools. The figures 2008-2012 represent the 'mean' figure which shows what the position is now.

A Group One school receives the full LEAPS programme from S3 onwards (age 13-14), all pupils with potential to reach higher education are eligible for support.

3. Progression Tables and detailed explanation

The progression tables below take the average (mean) figure across the years 1996-2000 as a base line for measuring progression since 2001. The average figure over 1996-2000 was used to select the **Group One** schools from 2001 for three years of activity until 2004. Progression tables 1 & 2 represent a view of the position as of spring 2013. The tables are designed to gauge how far progression has changed since 2001.

The 2012 figures are reproduced to demonstrate the most recent position and the final column displays the number of years a schools has received **Group One** support since 2001. This paper demonstrates what the change in progression to higher education has been since the 2001 baseline. LEAPS has not included full progression statistics over the eleven year period here. However this information is available from LEAPS.

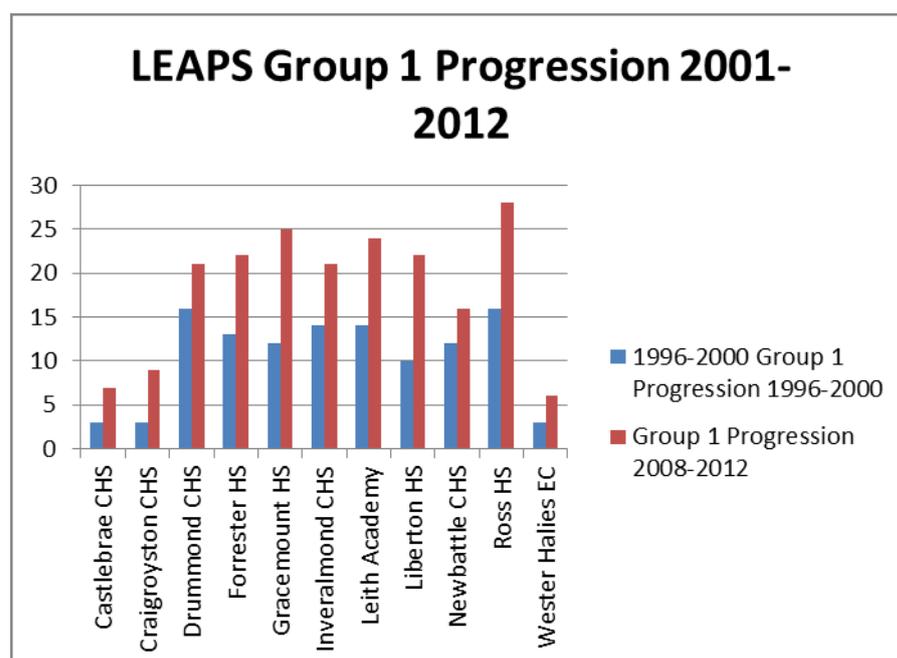
Progression Table 1 – Current LEAPS Group One Schools Edinburgh and the Lothians

Group 1 schools	Baseline 1996-2000	5 Yr Ave 2008-2012	2012	5 yr against baseline	1 yr against baseline	Yrs as Group 1
Armadale Academy	18%	22%	23%	+4	+ 5	9
Castlebrae Community High School	3%	7%	2%	+4	- 1	12
Craigroyston Community High School	3%	9%	3%	+6	Level	12
Drummond Community High School	16%	21%	23%	+5	+7	12
Forrester High School	13%	22%	18%	+9	+ 5	12
Gracemount High School	12%	25%	30%	+13	+ 18	12
Inveralmond Community High School	14%	21%	26%	+7	+12	12
Leith Academy	14%	24%	30%	+10	+16	12
Liberton High School	10%	22%	16%	+12	+6	12
Newbattle Community High School	12%	16%	19%	+4	+ 7	12
Ross High School	16%	28%	28%	+12	+12	12
Tynecastle High School	23%	19%	17%	-4	-6	5
Wester Hailes Education Centre	3%	6%	5%	+3	+ 2	12
Whitburn Academy	19%	22%	17%	+3	-2	5

Data is based on School Leaver Destination Returns (SLDR) provide by Skills Development Scotland (SDS). The baseline figure is the 1996-2000 and is a 5 year mean.

Figure 1

Shows the progression to HE of schools who have been in the Group One category for 11 years



NOTE 1: Schools with consistently very low progression

Wester Hailes Education Centre, Castlebrae Community High School and Craigroyston Community High School

In November 2006 a LEAPS case worker, began working with the three schools with the lowest progression. Results in 2005/06 had been particularly poor with only two students from the three schools entering university and one to an HND programme. Since then a variety of strategies have been employed resulting in a significant improvement; in 2006-2007, 20 students progressed to HE, in 2007-2008 the number rose to 27 and in 2008-2009 the number was 22 and Craigroyston saw progression jump to 16%. In 2010 the number was 20 and in 2011 11 students. In addition over 20 students have returned to study or moved from NQ/NC to HN or degree level from the three schools since leaving school. It has to be borne in mind that the three schools continue to shrink in size, the total roll over this period (2008-2012) dropped by more than 25% and from 2012 the roles continue to decline, leading to the consultation of closure of Castlebrae CHS. The roll has continued to drop dramatically.

In 2006 the official statistics published for two of the three school was classified as 'N/A' which meant the figure was not deemed significant and so there were no published statistics for progression in that year. When looking at the table this fact magnifies the impact that the revised case worker strategy has had in the three schools.

NOTE 2: Tynecastle High School

Until 2008 Tynecastle High School was not categorised as LEAPS **Group One** school. Falling results saw them categorised as a **Group One** school and then received intensive activity until the end of the academic session 2011. LEAPS expected to see an increase in line with every other school that has received **Group One** input since 2001. Since becoming a priority school Tynecastle HS has shown some progress this will be closely monitored in coming years.

There are schools where progression has begun to move forward positively but at a slower pace and in particular Newbattle High School, Drummond High School, Armadale Academy and Inveralmond Community High School. LEAPS increased activity in Inveralmond CHS and Newbattle CHS including them in the more intensive High Flyers residential week and progression rates have begun to increase it remains to be seen if this can be sustained. Whitburn Academy originally a **Group One** moved to being a Group Two due to improved progression. Improvement was not sustained and is so the school is once again supported as a **Group One school**. LEAPS expects to see an improvement over time in Whitburn Academy.

As a whole, **Table 1** demonstrates very encouraging trends in Ross High School, Forrester High School, Gracemount High School, Leith Academy and Liberton High

School. All of these schools have seen significant increases in progression over the five years considered here in comparison to the initial **baseline** statistics.

Broughton HS, Musselburgh Grammar Schools, Holy Rood HS, The James Young HS and Deans CHS have also been **Group One** schools in recent years but all have now improved progression results and have become **Group Two** schools..

Deans CHS had previously moved out of **Group One** but results were not significantly improved or maintained and so Deans CHS was reinstated as a priority school in 2008. Significant improvement in progression to HE has seen Deans CHS go back to being a Group Two.

4. GROUP TWO SCHOOLS

Work with schools designated as **Group Two** begins with 'eligible' students in S5. Over the final two years of schooling students who meet LEAPS eligibility criteria and choose to be supported by LEAPS are offered a variety of interactions with LEAPS. These include an S5 and S6 Conference, work with parents, a guidance interview, a brokering pre application enquiry service and the LEAPS Summer School. This is followed by additional support throughout the application process, as with **Group One** schools.

The major difference in the pre UCAS interview service between **Group One** and **Group Two** schools is that everyone who is presented for three **highers** is offered an interview and continued support in **Group One** schools and only those who meet LEAPS criteria are offered an interview in **Group Two** schools.

Those criteria are: ***students who are first generation applicants to university, those who come from a low income background as evidenced by receipt of Educational Maintenance Allowance or Free Meals Entitlement or parents in receipt of benefits, those who are carers or care leavers.***

Additional contextual data is taken into account by HEIs during the admission process.

Group Two Category – Support targeted at 'eligible individuals' in 32 schools

Description of a Group Two school: Schools that have demonstrated an established tradition of pupils progressing directly to higher education but where individual pupils may have had their potential to participate in higher education reduced by socio-economic or adverse personal circumstances.

Allocating a school to the Group Two category: *'A school will normally fall into the Group Two category where the average rate of progression to higher education over the preceding five years was 23% (2007-2011) or above and the school does not qualify for Group One status on the basis of serving a high proportion of pupils from*

deprived backgrounds or due to a clear declining trend of progression to higher education.'

Progression Table 2 - Group Two Schools

Table 11	Baseline 1996-2000	5 Yr Ave 2008-2012	2012	5 yr against baseline	1 yr against baseline	Previously Group 1
Group 2 Schools						
Balerno Community High School	46%	47%	52%	+1	+ 6	
Bathgate Academy	24%	27%	28%	+ 3	+ 4	
Beeslack Community High School	37%	38%	40%	+ 1	+3	
Boroughmuir High School	52%	58%	69%	+6	+17	
Broughton High School	21%	30%	36%	+ 7	+15	✓
Broxburn Academy	18%	30%	40%	+12	+22	
Craigmount High School	34%	42%	45%	+11	+11	
Currie Community High School	39%	47%	54%	+8	+15	
Dalkeith High School	20%	29%	31%	+ 9	+11	
Deans Community High School	19%	28%	27%	+9	+ 8	✓
Dunbar Grammar School	29%	38%	43%	+9	+14	
Firrhill High School	32%	47%	54%	+15	+22	
Holy Rood RC High School	16%	28%	38%	+12	+22	✓
James Gillespie's High School	46%	51%	50%	+5	+4	
James Young High School	22%	35%	35%	+13	+13	✓
Knox Academy	41%	44%	43%	+3	+2	
Lasswade High School Centre	24%	33%	32%	+9	+ 8	
Linlithgow Academy	49%	58%	59%	+ 9	+ 10	
Musselburgh Grammar School	20%	27%	24%	+ 7	+ 4	✓
North Berwick High School	52%	53%	61%	+1	+ 9	
Penicuik High School	32%	40%	48%	+8	+16	
Portobello High School	27%	36%	37%	+9	+10	
Preston Lodge	24%	31%	34%	+7	+ 10	
Queensferry Community High School	33%	39%	47%	+6	+14	
Royal High School	39%	50%	50%	+11	+11	
St Augustine's High School	30%	32%	34%	+2	+ 4	
St David's RC High School	22%	26%	26%	+4	+4	
St Kentigern's Academy	26%	34%	40%	+8	+14	
St Margaret's Academy	25%	43%	41%	+18	+16	
St Thomas Of Aquin's High School	34%	50%	51%	+16	+ 17	
Trinity Academy	24%	33%	37%	+9	+13	
West Calder High School	28%	36%	38%	+8	+10	

Notes:

Data is based on School Leaver Destination Returns (SLDR) provided by SDS in February 2013.

The national average for progression from State Secondary Schools in 2012 to HE is 36%. 23 schools out of 46 were above or at that national average in 2012. Significant progress continues to be made and many schools are getting closer to the national average figure. The figure varies from year to year so it is also important to take a longer look at trends rather than a one year snapshot.

Figure 2

Group Two schools below the 2012 national average of 36%

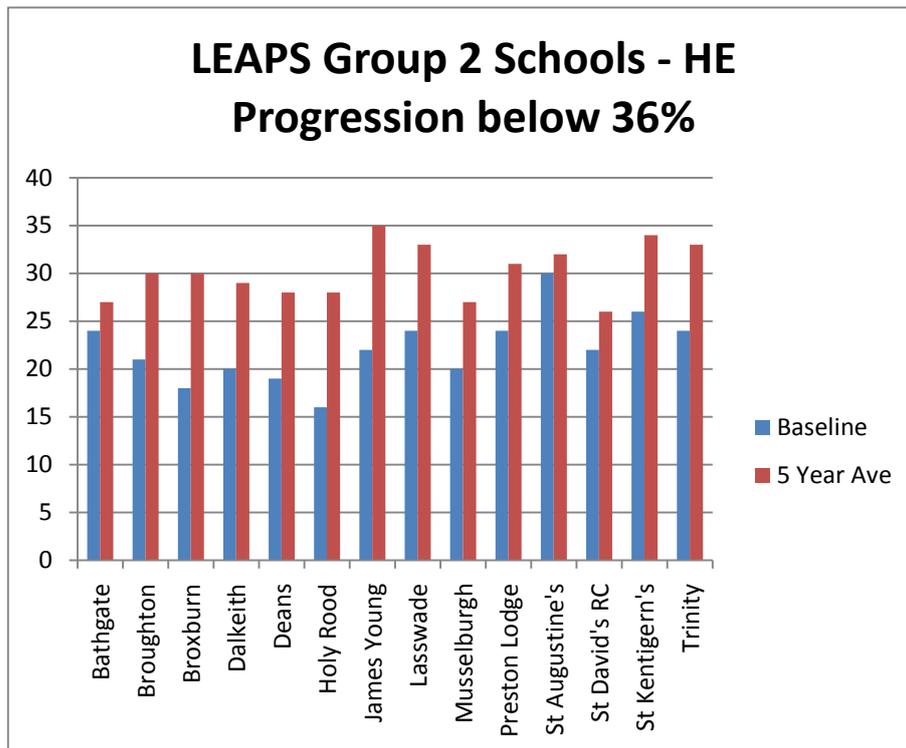
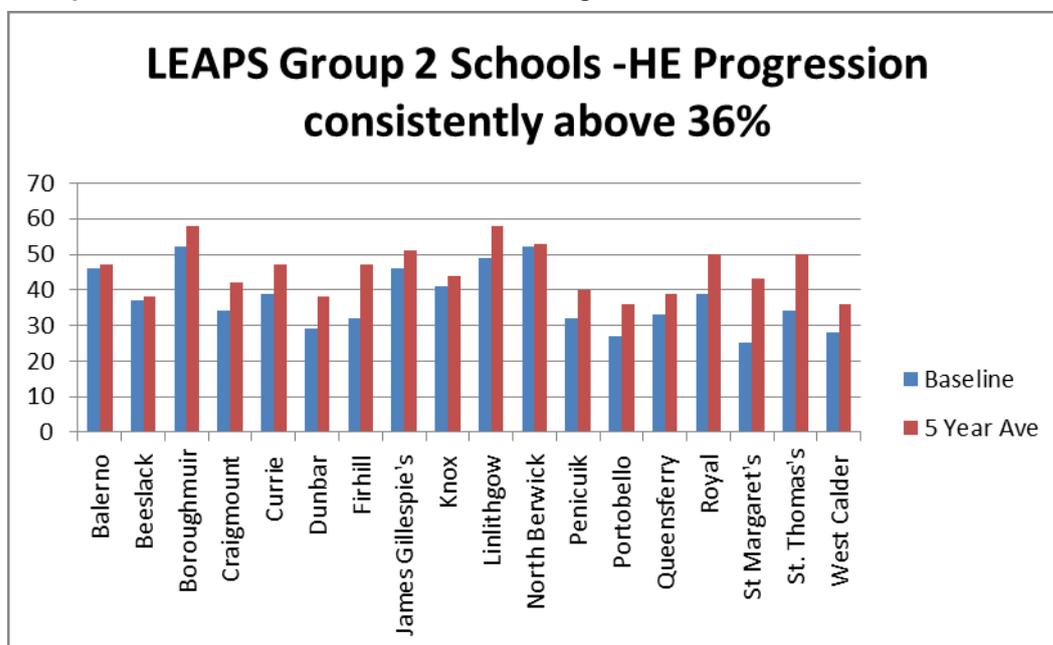


Figure 3

Group Two schools above the national average of 36%



5. Pre-application interview and admissions process

It is LEAPS' contention that the real impact of Widening Participation activity can really be measured through the pre-application interview and admission process. The work with younger students up until this point mostly centres upon learning outcomes and

raising aspiration that builds towards the senior phase. At the end of the final year of a student's secondary education, real outcomes can be assessed. Once a student has agreed to be represented by LEAPS, university and college admission services become aware of the student's widening participation credentials and can take into account contextual data. *The pre-application enquiry service, admissions strand and the universities pledge to offer places to students wherever possible* are important to the success of the pre-application interview programme. Students are given expert advice and supported through the UCAS and college application process.

Good advice, guidance and information are crucial to helping students make the right decision and this in turn gives students a better chance of succeeding in their chosen course of study, which is to the benefit of the student and the institution. In the paper **'First year experience of Higher Education in the UK'** this view of the benefits of guidance and managing transition to higher education is supported by Yorke and Thomas who argue that:

'.....assisting students in the making of choices; being clear about what is on offer; ensuring adequacy of resources; and managing the transition into higher education such that students gain an early appreciation of what higher education is asking of them.'

Once students have been interviewed they are registered on LEAPS databases and LEAPS is able to track the students into their post school destination. This has been achieved through the support of partners and colleagues in SDS since 2001.

In some schools LEAPS will interview large numbers of students (40-70) and it is possible to see 'spikes' in progression where this has happened. It is also possible to see the effect of an increase in the numbers being interviewed over a period a time, for example, St Margaret's Academy in Livingston where progression has risen to 43% over the five year period (2008-2012), compared to 25% for the period 1996-2000. The number of students interviewed in St Margaret's has been consistently high in recent years and 52 in 2010/11, 53 in 2011/12 and 56 in 2012/13 compared with only 20 in 2000/01 and 4 in 2001/02. This may be a factor in the significant increase in progression in St Margaret's Academy, and progression has risen in many schools in line with the huge rise in the number of students represented by LEAPS in all schools since 2001. It is certainly the case that greater awareness of the value of the programme has increased the likelihood of eligible pupils identifying themselves to LEAPS.

There are many other factors which help increase progression; increased attainment in schools, being the most important, school leadership and a changing culture in schools. LEAPS requires a strong relationship with school link teachers to ensure that students are able to access the support through the admissions process offered by the partnership.

Over the period covered by this report LEAPS interviewed 15,512 final year school students and 10,153 (65%) of the students entered university. Another 12.5% went onto study higher education in college (figures since 2007/08). Of the 10,153 students entering universities 6,640 (65%) of them entered LEAPS partner universities. The statistics give some sort of perspective on the scale of the programme.

6. Summer School

LEAPS services fit together like a jigsaw. The Schools Programme raises aspiration from S3 students to S6. In S6 the Pre application interview and admission service dovetails finally with the Summer School.

Summer School is a seven week access to HE programme. 80%-90% of those who attend Summer School have traditionally gone onto degree programmes and a further 5-8% to HN level courses at college. Recruiting students from the lowest performing, or **Group One** schools is a vital element to improving progression statistics.

7. Other considerations to consider when targeting

Whilst working within the three schools with the lowest progression LEAPS has particularly taken into account other factors in an attempt to identify students with potential. In negotiation with schools and services within the local authority LEAPS has received information relating to the predicted Standard Grade results and the reading ages of individuals as early as S1 level (age 12). All of this data can be used as an indicator of potential to succeed in future study. LEAPS has also carried out research into parental aspirations and knowledge of higher education. This has allowed LEAPS to understand what sort of advice and guidance parents require when engaging with LEAPS (This research is available from the LEAPS).

8. Conclusion

The partnership has contributed to the changes in progression to Higher Education in Edinburgh and Lothian secondary schools since LEAPS inception. The evidence produced in this report provides a strong case to suggest the LEAPS model has made a significant impact. This report makes the case for targeted early intervention activity and building a long term partnership with schools to produce an increase in progression to higher education. Early intervention, in schools where progression to higher education has been historically low, normalises the presence of a programme of activity directed at raising the aspirations of students to consider this as an attainable option.

It is essential that this work is supported by a progressive programme throughout a student's secondary education, culminating in pre-application support and guidance. *LEAPS delivers this with strong support from partners who encourage and raise the confidence of students to apply to universities through an admission strand which includes individual guidance, a pre-application enquiry service, admissions pledge and the LEAPS Summer School.*

LEAPS produces an Annual Report and Business Plan both of which provide evidence of value for money. Each activity is costed and reviewed annually to ensure that partners believe that contributions are being used effectively to produce the best possible service for our stakeholders, the students, the parents, the teachers and the schools. This report provides the evidence that the LEAPS programme is producing results to match.

One of the factors that negatively impacts on school progression to higher education is falling schools rolls, (particularly in Wester Hailes Education Centre, Craigroyston CHS and Castlebrae CHS). A combination of housing demolition and parental choice has seen a change in the demographic picture adversely affecting those schools. The rolls in these schools are now small. All three have rolls below 400 students.

There are no quick fixes and this has been a sustained and committed effort by LEAPS partners in local authorities and higher education institutions but the culture in schools is changing. There are potential higher education students in all of the schools in Edinburgh and Lothians and across the South East. The partnership continues to identify them, support them, advise, guide them and broker for them and help them to make the transition from school to higher education. It should be added that research has shown that the programme has also had a positive effect on retention. *McLements 2003* (available from LEAPS).

This report demonstrates how strategies in government, local authorities, higher education institutions and schools can come together to meet common objectives. More importantly it shows that such a 'joined up' approach can have an impact if sustained over time.

Ged Lerpiniere
May 2013

Appendix 1
LEAPS partner commitment to Widening Participation, community engagement and partnership as outlined in strategic plans up until 2012

University of Edinburgh
Mission Statement

The mission of our University is the creation, dissemination and curation of knowledge. As a world-leading centre of academic excellence we aim to:

- Enhance our position as one of the world's leading research and teaching universities and to measure our performance against the highest international standards
- Provide the highest quality learning and teaching environment for the greater wellbeing of our students and deliver an outstanding educational portfolio
- Produce graduates fully equipped to achieve the highest personal and professional standards
- Make a significant, sustainable and socially responsible contribution to Scotland, the UK and the world, promoting health and economic and cultural wellbeing.

Highlights from Strategic Plan:

Strategic Theme: Promoting Equality, Diversity, Sustainability, and Social Responsibility

Current Position: We are committed to widening participation, increasing diversity and providing equality of opportunity for all prospective and current students and staff. As a socially responsible organisation, we take pride in our efforts to ensure that social and environmental concerns influence our decision making and effective operation.

A particular challenge we face is encouraging more prospective students from under-represented groups to take advantage of the opportunities we offer. Our current initiatives range from Pathways to the Professions and the longstanding Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS) to new outreach programmes such as High Flyers and Educated Pass. In 2006/07 these initiatives involved more than 13,000 prospective students from across Scotland. More than £10 million has been raised to support the provision of access bursaries as we strive to ensure that no student is deterred from entering the University by financial barriers.

Objective: increase the proportion of students from under-represented groups admitted to, and successfully completing, a programme of study.

Strategies:

- finding new ways of identifying prospective students with the best potential to succeed
- ensuring that our student admissions policy and procedure is fair, clear and transparent
- providing and promoting awareness of scholarships and bursaries
- ensuring that students and staff with particular needs have access to appropriate facilities and support services
- providing staff with training and information to help prevent discrimination, promote equality of opportunity and respond to internationally diverse needs and expectations

Targets: converge on our participation benchmarks for under-represented groups

Strategic Plan: <http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/governance-strategic-planning/strategic-planning/strategic-plan-2008-12>

Queen Margaret University

Mission Statement

To enhance the quality of life and serve communities, through excellence and leadership in vocationally and professionally relevant education, research and consultancy, as a university which is outward looking and committed to innovation, participation and lifelong learning.

Strategic Plan- http://www.qmu.ac.uk/the_university/download_centre.htm

Widening Participation

QM is committed to widening participation to students who for social, economic or cultural reasons have previously been inhibited from progressing to Higher Education.

Key Widening Participation Objectives:

- Increasing student numbers from non-traditional groups
- Extending collaborative working relationships
- Promoting staff understanding of diverse student groups

- Creating an appropriately supportive infrastructure

http://www.qmu.ac.uk/community/widening_participation.htm

Heriot-Watt University

Highlights from Strategic Plan:

Partnerships and Access

Partnership with other educational providers is crucial to ensuring access to a Heriot-Watt education. We will continue in our core partnership with Scottish secondary schools and in the development of the secondary curriculum. This includes the successful provision of the Heriot-Watt e-learning Scholar programme to every Scottish secondary school in support of highers and advanced highers. Parallel to our overseas partnerships, we will build on our relationship with regional further education colleges and other Scottish institutions to widen student choice and to ensure that the courses of study fully meet the needs of students and employers. On this basis, a number of agreements are in place with further education colleges in Scotland, under the Management Link programme, for example, Ayr College and Cumbernauld College. In the university itself, we are progressing a unique further education-higher education partnership with the co-location at our Scottish Borders Campus between the university and Borders College.

Strategic Plan- <http://www.hw.ac.uk/documents/PDF/focus-on-the-future.pdf>

Edinburgh Napier University

Mission Statement

Our mission is to provide socially, culturally and economically relevant higher education to people who can benefit from it and to support student achievement. We will make available the product of our research and scholarship to businesses and organisations which are able to use our intellectual capital to become more effective and successful. We will do this without regard to social and cultural barriers and boundaries and will serve all of the communities we touch.

Highlights from Strategic Plan:

Vision, Mission, and Values- We will value the potential of every person. **We will be accessible and flexible to deliver a high quality student experience to the widest possible range of students:** to enhance learning, build confidence and create opportunity.

Strategic Objective 5: To Be a Preferred Partner

Edinburgh Napier University has developed significantly through building effective partnerships. **We collaborate with Colleges in promoting wider access to Higher Education and the development of articulation routes.**

Strategic Plan: <http://www.napier.ac.uk/aboutus/Documents/StrategicPlan.pdf>

Bibliography

Bowes L, Jones S, Thomas L, Moreton R, Birkin G, Nathwani T (2013) *The Uses and impact of HEFCE Funding for Widening Participation* pp 37

<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/indirreports/2013/usesandimpactofwpcfunding/The%20uses%20and%20impact%20of%20HEFCE%20funding%20for%20widening%20participation.pdf>

Yorke M & Thomas L (2003) *Improving the Retention of Students from lower Socioeconomic Groups*, Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management 25 (1), pp. 63-74

Yoke M & Longdon L (2008)

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/resources/publications/fyefinalreport.pdf>

Thomas L (2013) *Building student engagement and belonging in Higher Education at a time of Change*

Rayment-Pickard H (2013) *Impact Report Into University*

http://www.intouniversity.org/sites/all/files/userfiles/files/IU_IMPACT_REPORT_Email_Version.pdf

Hoare T & Mann R (2012) *The Impact of the Sutton Trust's Summer Schools*
<https://www.suttontrust.com/%2fresearch%2fthe-impact-of-the-sutton-trusts-summer-schools-a-summary%2f>

Elliot Major L(2013) *Evaluating the impact of widening participation initiatives*

<http://www.thesuttontrust.wordpress.com/2013/03/18/evaluating-the-impact-of-widening-participation-initiatives/>

Lerpinier G, (2008) *A study of parental support for children making the transition to higher education and their attitudes towards careers guidance and related guidance services in 17 state secondary schools in Edinburgh and Lothian*

