

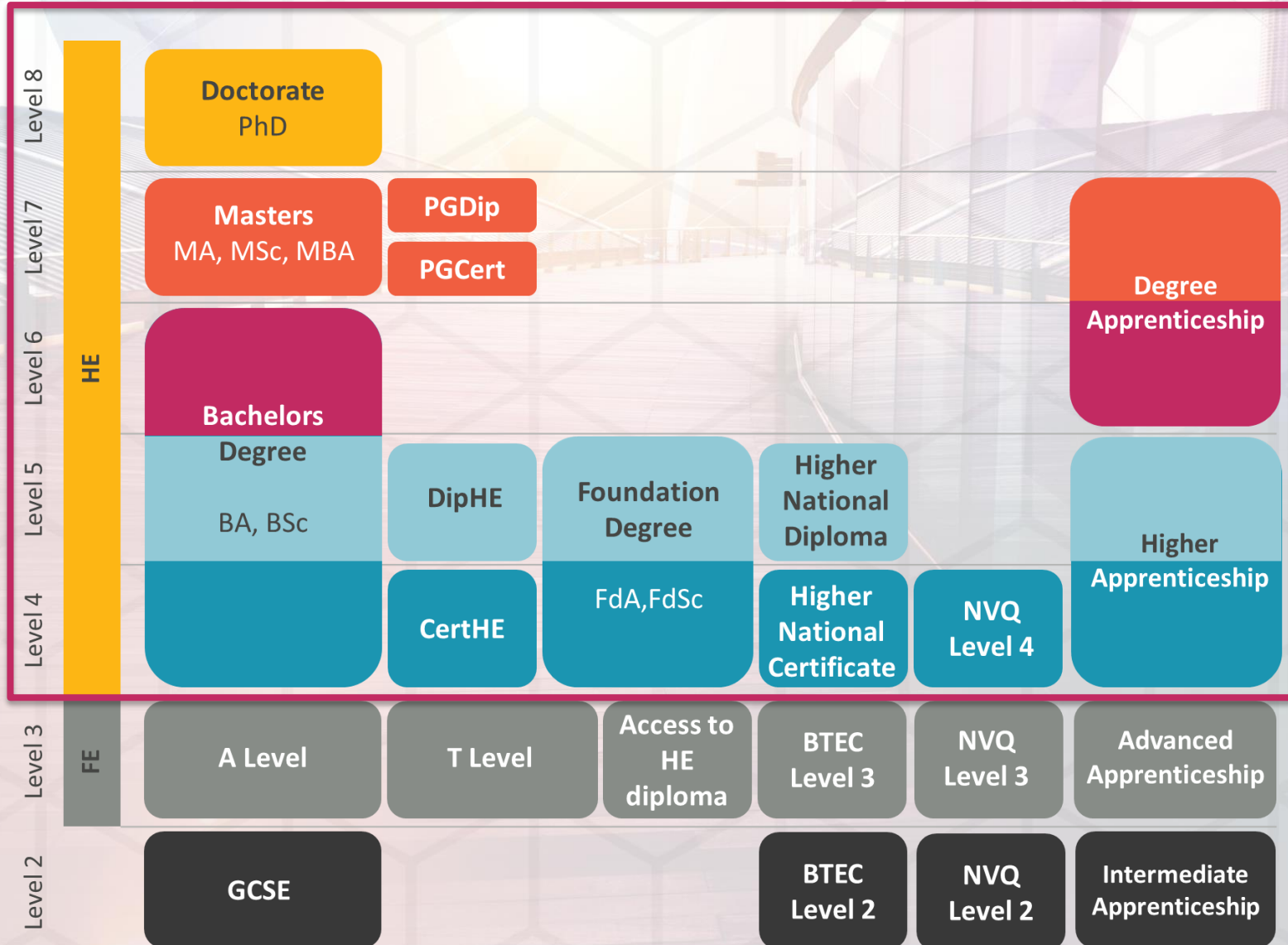
Abbreviations:

- **OfS** = Office for Students
- **SUN** = Southern Universities Network
- **WP** = Widening Participation
- **HE** = Higher Education (any qualification at Level 4 or above)
- **HEI** = Higher Education Institution
- **APPs** = Access and Participation Plans

Key terms explained

- **Underrepresented** – refers to students or groups who are less likely to attend higher education compared to the overall population
- **Disadvantaged** – some bodies refer to underrepresented student groups as ‘disadvantaged’ and you may see this term referenced within today’s training
- **High Tariff HEI/University** – refer to universities often charging higher course fees, requiring higher entry requirement, often considered Russell group and/or highly prestigious universities

HE (HIGHER EDUCATION) = Level 4 and above





SUN SOUTHERN
UNIVERSITIES
NETWORK

**Breaking Barriers to Higher Education
In School & Beyond**



Training Overview

What is WP?

Why do we need
to widen
participation?

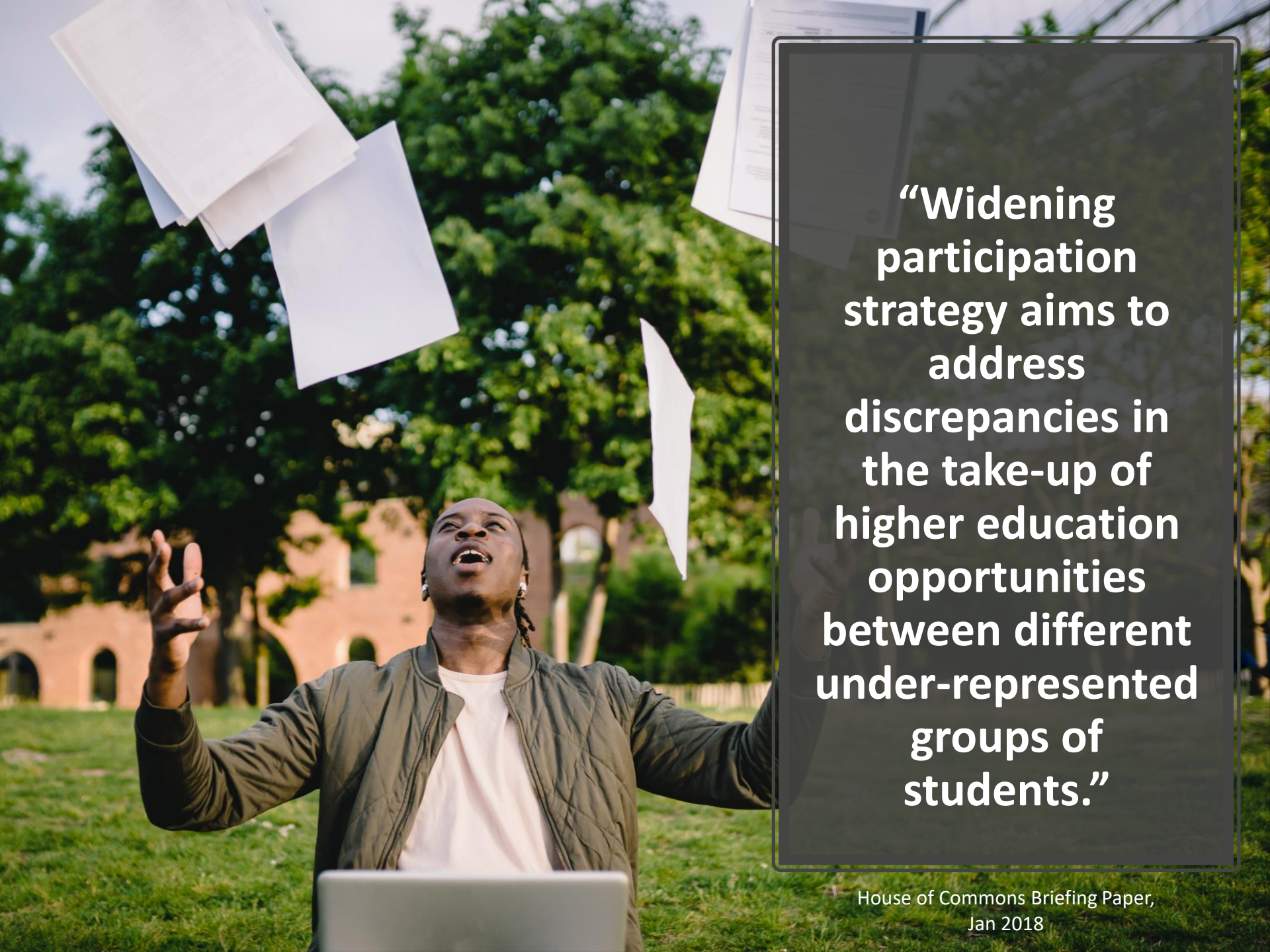
How can
schools &
practitioners
help widen
access to HE?

What is Widening Participation (WP)?

Introduction to
WP

Office for
Students
(Ofs)

Uni Connect
&
HEIs

A man with short dreadlocks, wearing a green quilted jacket over a white t-shirt, is looking upwards with an open mouth, as if in awe or excitement. Several white papers are flying through the air around him. The background shows a lush green park with trees and a brick building with arches in the distance. A dark grey text box is overlaid on the right side of the image.

“Widening participation strategy aims to address discrepancies in the take-up of higher education opportunities between different under-represented groups of students.”

UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS

From lower socio-economic groups

Have caring responsibilities

From low-participation neighbourhoods

In receipt of free school meals

Care-experienced or estranged from families

No previous family experience of HE

From military families

Refugee status

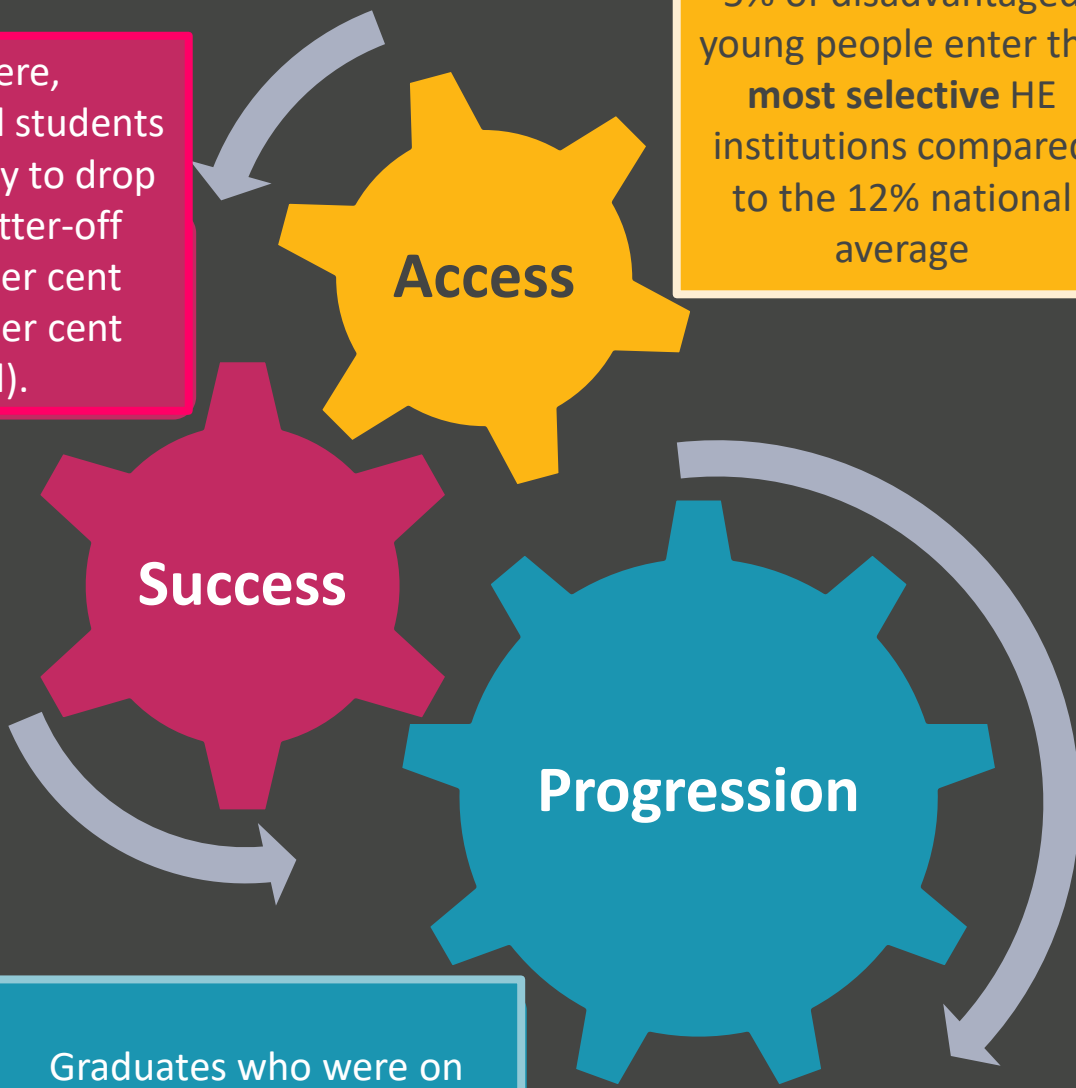
Students with a disability

From some black and minority ethnic groups or white males from economically disadvantaged backgrounds



Once there, disadvantaged students are more likely to drop out than better-off peers (8.8 per cent versus 6.3 per cent overall).

5% of disadvantaged young people enter the **most selective** HE institutions compared to the 12% national average



Graduates who were on free school meals earn 11.5 per cent less than others five years after graduating.

“Widening participation schemes attempt to remove [these] barriers and improve access to education, progress within higher education and to improve graduate outcomes and employability.”

We aim to ensure that...

Office for
Students

ofs

every student,
whatever their
background,

has a fulfilling
experience of
higher education

that enriches
their lives and
careers.

Participation

Experience

Outcomes

Objective 1

All students, from all backgrounds, with the ability and desire to undertake higher education, are supported to access, succeed in, and progress from higher education.

Objective 2

All students, from all backgrounds, receive a high quality academic experience, and their interests are protected while they study or in the event of provider, campus or course closure.

Objective 3

All students, from all backgrounds, are able to progress into employment, further study, and fulfilling lives, and their qualifications hold their value over time.

Value for money

Objective 4

All students, from all backgrounds, receive value for money.

THE WIDENING PARTICIPATION PUZZLE

Widening Participation

An attempt to increase the proportion of students in higher education from under-represented groups



Uni Connect Programme

SUN
Supports Access

Works with young people from specific postcodes where HE participation is low

OfS

Higher Education Institutions' Access and Participation Plans

Access
Success
Progression

Targeted activity towards different 'under-represented groups'

This could mean colleges too

ACCESS & PARTICIPATION PLANS

Set out how a university or college intends to safeguard and promote fair access to higher education through its outreach work & financial support

Each institution outreach offer will differ based on the targets set in their plan



**Why do we
need to
Widen
Participation?**

**National
Progression**

**Local
Progression**

**Barriers to
Progression**



BENEFITS OF HE


- **Increases earning potential**
- **Gain experience and opportunities**
- **Wide range of career options**
- **Become career-ready**
- **Develop knowledge, skills and passions**
- **Positive societal impact**

**“...Its important
to reduce
inequalities
before children
reach 16...”**

**“and [to] target
specific
disadvantaged
groups”**

Social Mobility Commission
Report, March 2021



A young person with a short haircut and a tattoo on their left arm is seated in a wheelchair. They are holding a microphone and speaking to a group of people seated around them. The background shows other people in a room, some smiling. The scene appears to be a group discussion or a panel discussion.

“Students from disadvantaged backgrounds, lower income households and other under-represented groups may face barriers to entry to higher education”

House of Commons Briefing Paper,
Jan 2018



**National
barriers**

**For
specific
target
groups**

What might be some of the barriers for Widening Participation students to educational progression nationally?



UNDER-REPRESENTED GROUPS

From lower socio-economic groups

Have caring responsibilities

Barriers for specific target groups

From low-participation neighbourhoods

In receipt of free school meals

Care-experienced or estranged from families

No previous family experience of HE

From military families

Refugee status

Students with a disability

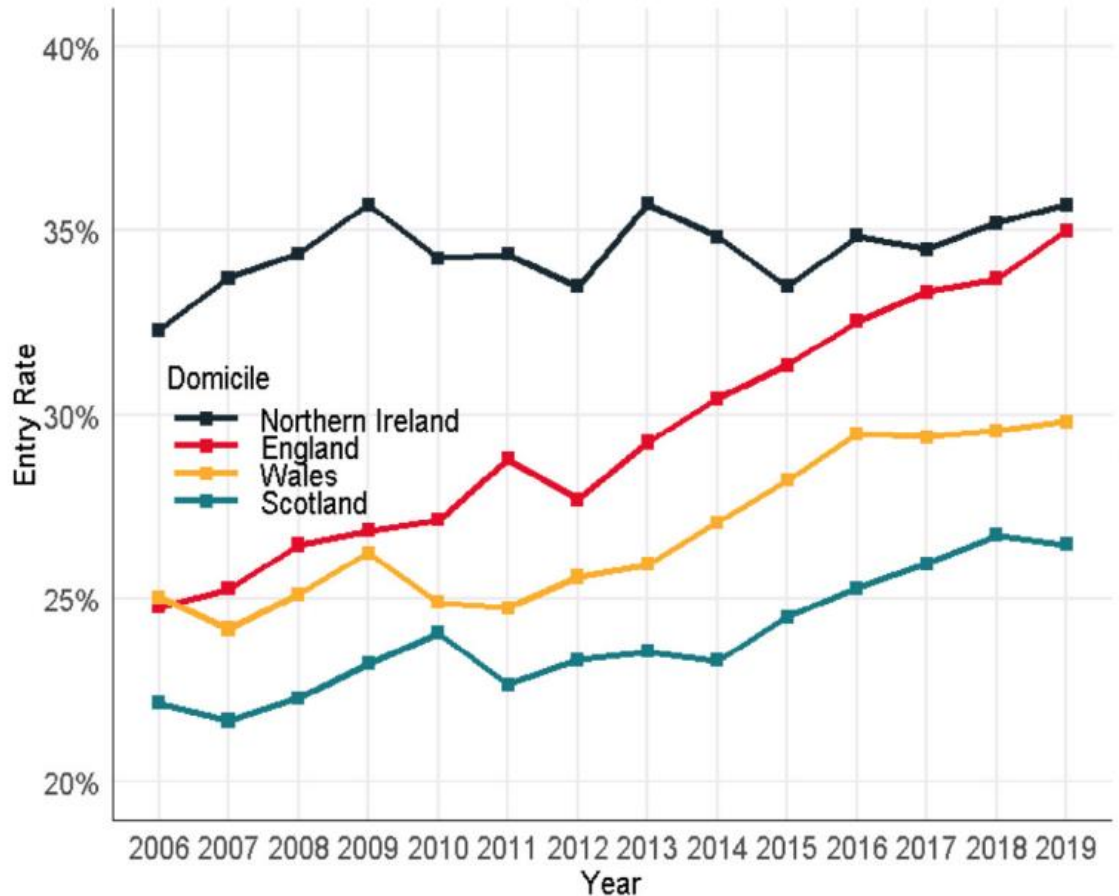
From black and minority ethnic groups or white males from economically disadvantaged backgrounds



REGIONAL AND NATIONAL DIFFERENCES

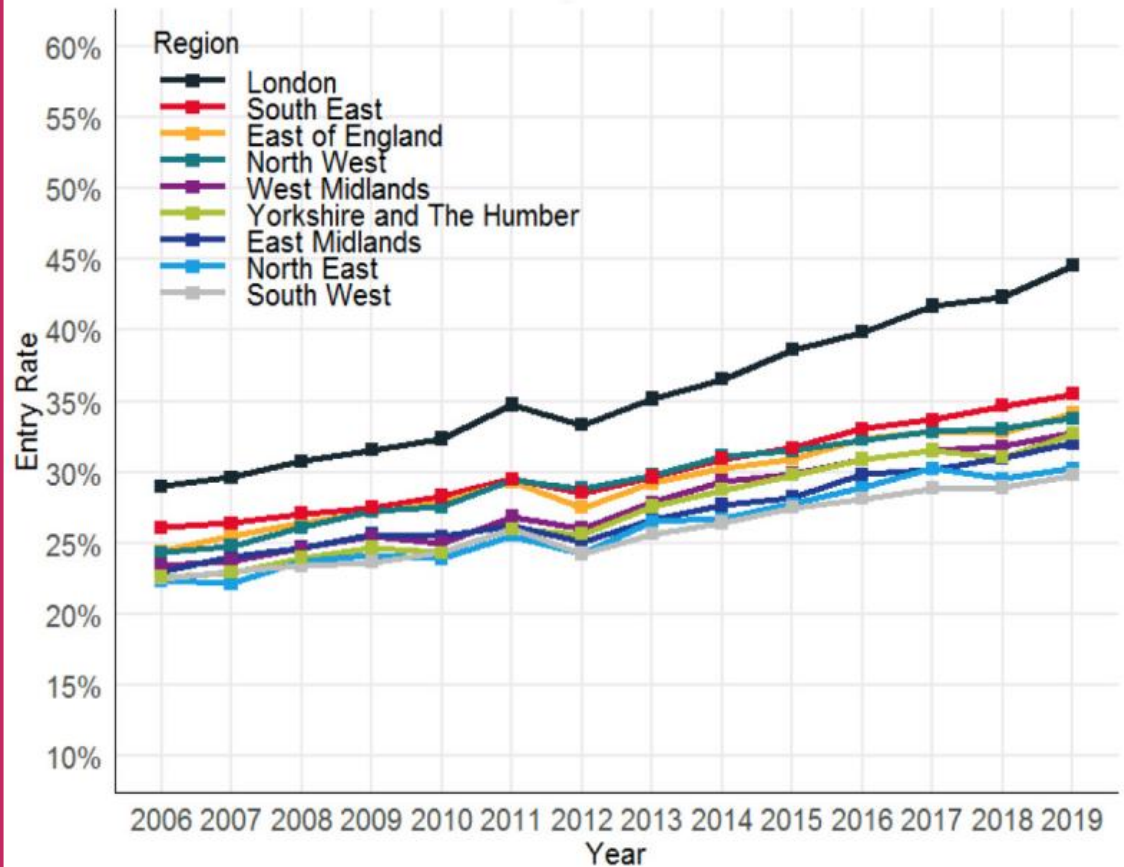
There are important regional and national differences in progression to HE.

The national picture shows lower progression to HE for Scotland and Wales.



REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

In England, progression rates are up, but they are lowest in the South West and highest in London.



FREE SCHOOL MEAL PROGRESSION RATE

Yorkshire

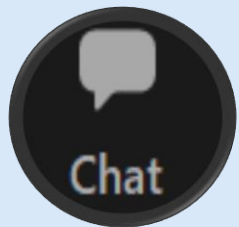


22.0%

South West



17.2%



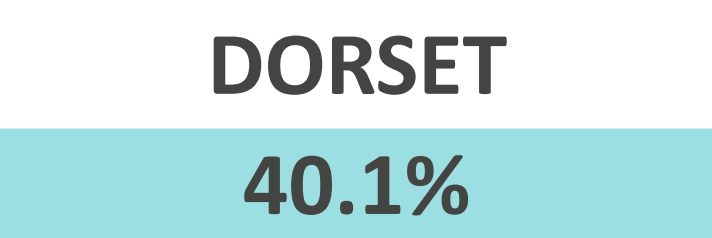
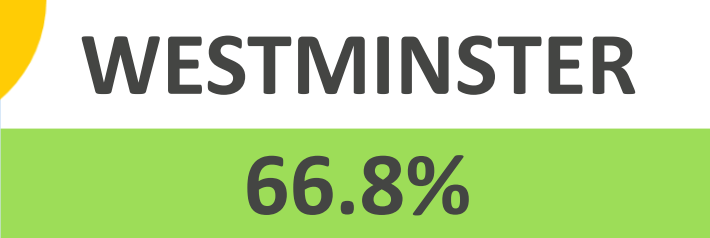
REGIONAL DIFFERENCES

	2018/19		
	HE Progression Rate (FSM)	HE Progression Rate (Non-FSM)	Progression Rate Gap
Yorkshire and the Humber	22%	42.7%	20.7
East Midlands	18.3%	41.6%	23.3
West Midlands	27.6%	44.6%	17
East of England	20.5%	42.8%	22.3
London	45.1%	57.7%	12.6
Inner London	49%	59.2%	10.1
Outer London	41.3%	57.1%	15.8
South East	17.7%	43.9%	26.3
South West	17.2%	40%	22.8

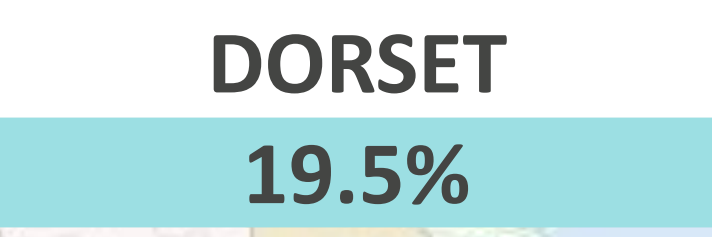
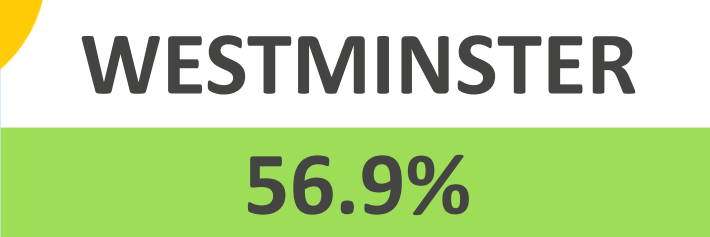
LOCAL CONTEXT

HE Progression Rates (2018/19)

Non-FSM



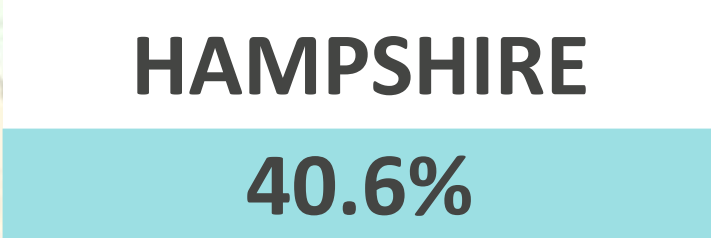
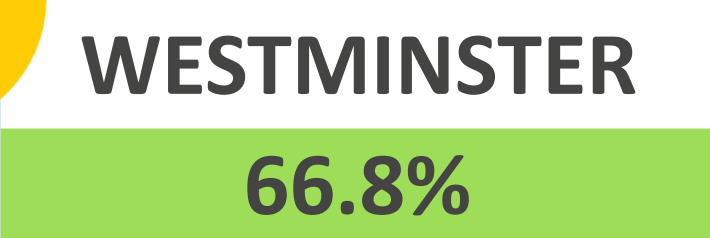
FSM



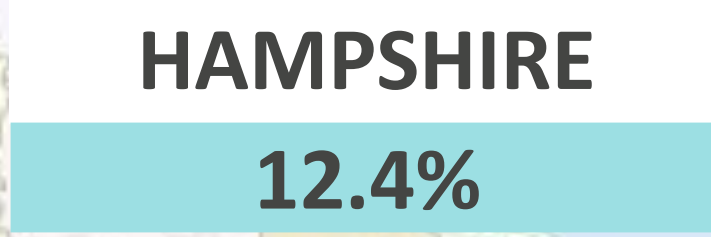
LOCAL CONTEXT

HE Progression Rates (2018/19)

Non-FSM



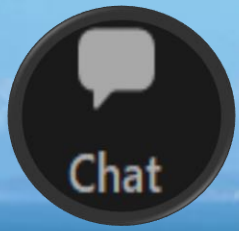
FSM



“Students from disadvantaged backgrounds, lower income households and other under-represented groups may face barriers to entry to higher education”

House of Commons Briefing Paper,
Jan 2018

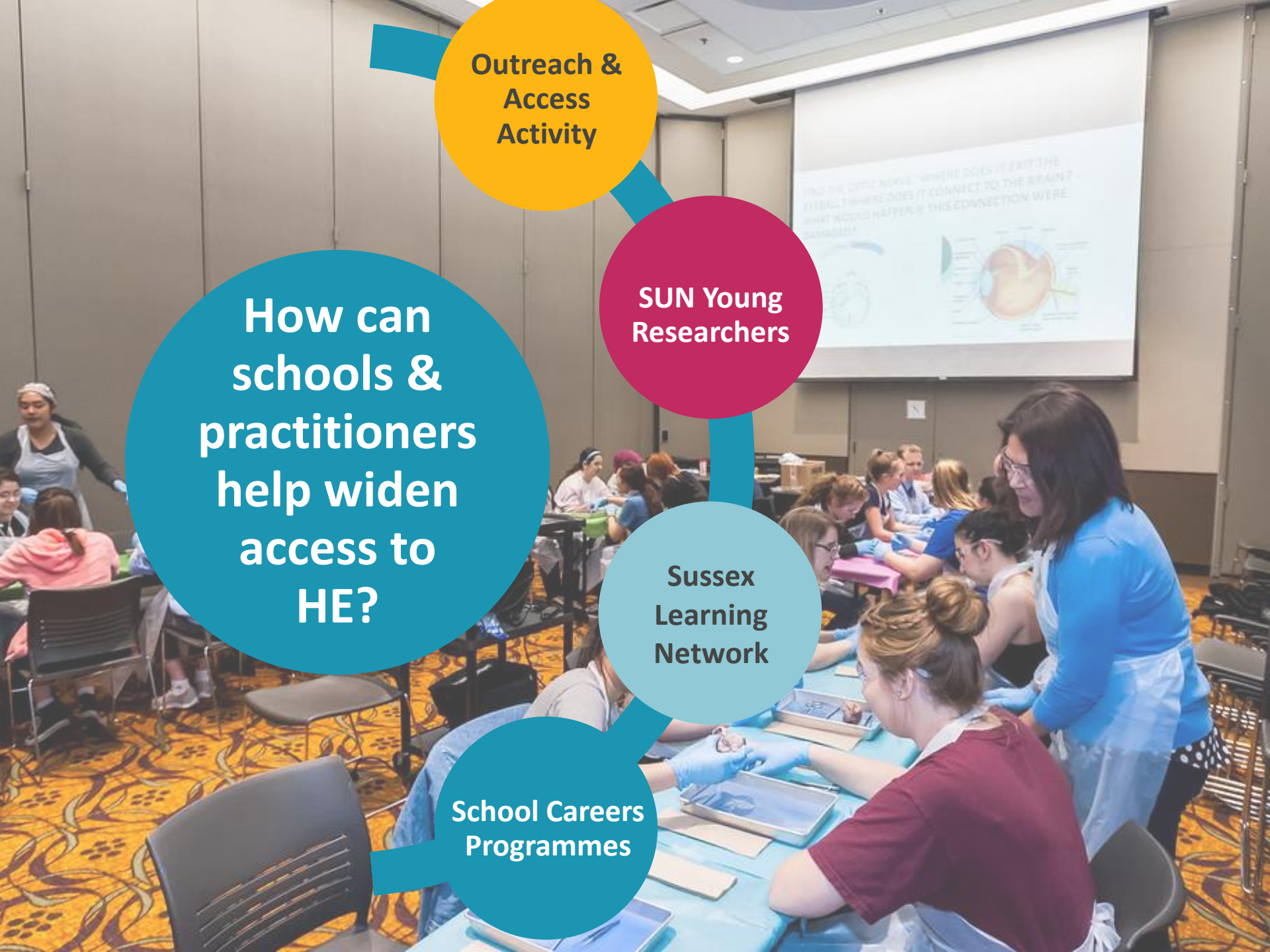




CONSIDER YOUR AREA

ARE THERE ADDITIONAL
LOCAL BARRIERS TO
CONSIDER?





**Outreach &
Access
Activity**

**SUN Young
Researchers**

**How can
schools &
practitioners
help widen
access to
HE?**

**Sussex
Learning
Network**

**School Careers
Programmes**

OUTREACH & ACCESS ACTIVITY

CAMPUS VISITS

WORKSHOPS



UNIVERSITIES



A more bespoke overview of the support available at each institution can be found in the university's student services department and on the university website



CONTEXTUAL
ADMISSIONS

FINANCIAL SUPPORT



CONTEXTUAL ADMISSIONS

A term used to describe the use of additional data to provide context for individual applicant's university applications and achievement

ADDITIONAL CONTEXTS:

- Care Leaver
- Living in an area of low participation
- Living in an area with less advantaged socio-economic characteristics
- Refugee
- Entitled to free school meals when at school



FINANCIAL SUPPORT

**Financial
support**

BURSARIES

Linked to personal circumstances

Financial support

EXTERNAL SUPPORT

Asylum Seekers and Refugees

- Support depends on their status and the university they apply to
- Not usually eligible for the 'home' rate of tuition fees or student finance
- Many universities who have signed up to the **Universities of Sanctuary** scheme offer fee waivers



Estranged Students

- Estranged students can apply for independent status
- **StandAlone** lead the charge and has had 85 universities pledge their support in the areas of: Finance, Accommodation, Mental Health and Wellbeing, Outreach and Transition



Young Carers

- Support for young carers varies between HE institutions so it is vital that students do plenty of research
- Students need to tell their institutions about their caring responsibilities – the **Carer Passport** can make this easier



Financial support

Care Leavers

Local Authority Leaving Care Grant

Care leavers can get support from both universities and local authorities

Local Authority HE Bursary

Universities can offer support such as bursaries or personal tutors

Propel lets you search universities support



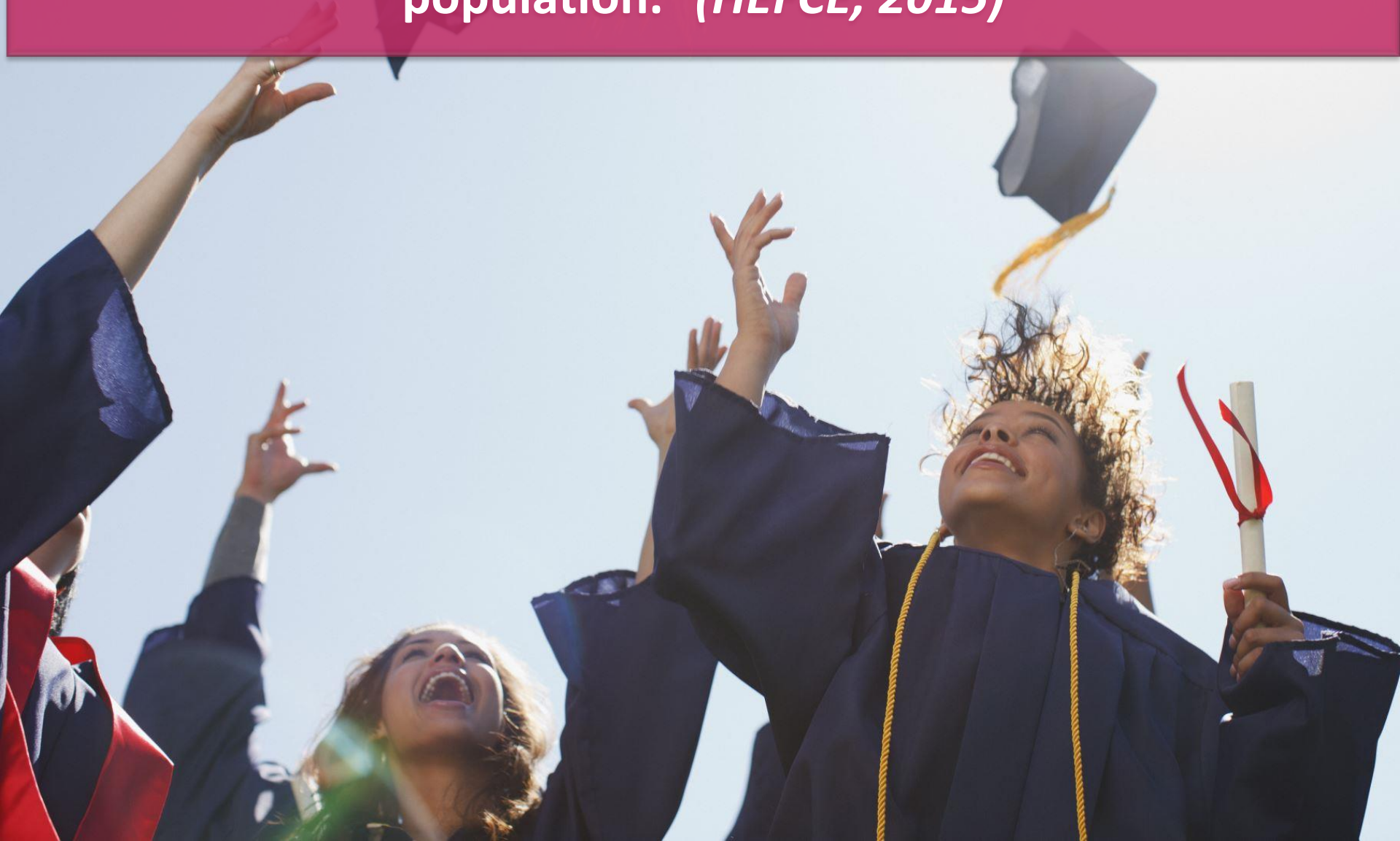
CAREERS STRATEGY - MAKING THE MOST OF EVERYONE'S SKILLS AND TALENTS (2018)

"HEIs... to continue to target the most effective outreach interventions to disadvantaged pupils."

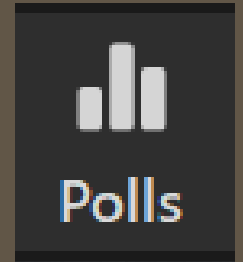
"32% of young people who engaged in university outreach activity progressed to HE (vs 25% of those who did not engage)."



Widening participation outreach participants...
“...achieve outcomes comparable to overall student
population.” (HEFCE, 2015)



**WHAT ACTIVITIES AND
SUPPORT DO YOU THINK
WOULD BE MOST USEFUL
FOR YOUR STUDENTS?**



SUN YOUNG RESEARCHERS



26 Young
Researchers

aged 14-18

2072
surveys

from peers within Southampton &
Portsmouth (equates to 8% school population)

29 students

in the focus group

SUN YOUNG RESEARCHERS

Careers advisors are their first port of call

Need more info on post-16 options

School assemblies – missed opportunity

KEY FINDINGS

Subject tasters are valuable but need to be enjoyable

Understanding apprenticeships

Outside school experience

OVERCOMING BARRIERS: SUSSEX LEARNING NETWORK (2017)

**First-hand
experience**

**Identify and
support
those who
lack
resources**

**Start early
and think
sequential**

**Age
appropriate
&
personalised
information**

**Whole year
group
interventions**

**Whole
school
approach**





**Be aware of
your own
unconscious
bias**

**Challenge
students'
biases**

**Don't
assume
prior
knowledge**

**Avoid
emphasising
'doing what
you're good
at'**

**Talk about
jobs rather
than careers**

**Support
consistent
messages
about
options**

**Highlight
transferable
skills**

**Keep
thinking
about
inclusivity
through all
interactions**

TIPS FROM THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

WIDENING PARTICIPATION & SCHOOLS' CAREERS PROGRAMMES

GATSBY BENCHMARK

WIDENING PARTICIPATION ACTIVITIES

Benchmark 7

Encounters with further and higher education

- Visit universities and campuses
- Subject tasters
- Having local ambassadors and mentors visit school to deliver talks and interactive sessions

Benchmark 2, 4, 5

Encounters with employers and employees

- Curriculum-embedded interaction with employers and employees of various industries

OFSTED

“There is a significant overlap between schools with an ‘Outstanding’ grading by Ofsted and schools with a career's quality mark.”
- Gatsby, 2014

RECAP



TODAY WE HAVE:
EXPLORED WP AND WHY IT EXISTS

EXPLORED NATIONAL AND LOCAL CONTEXTS AND BARRIERS TO HE

REFLECTED ON CURRENT PRACTICE AND HOW TO SUPPORT THE WP AGENDA



PATHWAYS TO LEVEL 4 AND BEYOND

Accredited CPD

Summer Series 2022:
3.30 – 4.30pm

11 May | An Overview of Level 3 & 4 Pathways

18 May | The Apprenticeship Pathway

25 May | The University Pathway



www.sunoutreach.org



Southern Universities Network



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