

SUTTON TRUST  
NEWS RELEASE

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**SUTTON TRUST SUMMER SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM NON-TRADITIONAL BACKGROUNDS DO WELL IN DEGREES**

Students from non-privileged backgrounds who attended Sutton Trust university summer do well in their university degrees, suggests a review published today.

Nearly nine out of ten students (88%) responding to a survey who attended a summer school graduated with a 2:1 or first class degree. This compares with 56% of students achieving these classifications nationally, and 67% in leading research universities (where most summer school students enrol).

This is likely to be an over-estimate of the proportion of Sutton Trust summer school students gaining top degrees, as those who received a 2:1 or first class degree were more likely to respond to the survey than those who did not. Nevertheless it suggests that a high proportion of these students do go on to achieve very good degrees.

This is backed up by a separate analysis at Nottingham University which found that 78.6% of all summer school students admitted to the university received 2.1s or Firsts in their degrees. This compared with 75.5% of students receiving these classifications at the university as a whole.

Summer school students are far less likely to come from professional backgrounds than other university students. Under four in ten (38%) students attending summer schools in 2000 had parents in professional, managerial and non-manual occupations. This compared with over eight in ten full time students at selective research universities.

The Trust, set up by Sir Peter Lampl in 1997 to improve social mobility through education, pioneered the one-week long university courses in the UK in 1997. Over the last decade over 10,000 students have benefited from the summer schools supported by the Trust and its partners. Most universities now run similar summer schools often supported by Government funds helping thousands of students a year.

Pulling together different strands of research, the Ten Year Review of Sutton Trust Summer Schools summarises a number of studies on the impact of the schools as well as interviews with past students.

Sir Peter Lampl, Chairman of the Sutton Trust, said: "The success of the summer schools is not just demonstrated by how well past students do academically at leading universities – impressive though these results are. The summer schools are also about social benefits – many students told researchers how for the first time they found like-minded people during their university stay – after feeling isolated in their own local schools.

Such experiences show just how life transforming the summer schools can be. This is a vital message to get out today to students from homes where neither parent went to university, from schools which don't send many students to leading universities and from families whose parents work in non-professional occupations."

The Trust is currently in the middle of offering these students (aged 16-17 in Year 12) who have must have done well in their GCSEs, a once-in-a-life time chance to sample life at a top university with all tuition, travel and board expenses paid." Deadline for applications is 14 March.

As well as Oxford and Cambridge, the research covers the universities of Bristol, Nottingham and (since 2002) St Andrew's, where the sponsored weeks are conducted by staff and mentors (often themselves former summer school students) from those universities.

The results also suggest that ex-summer schools students are much more likely to go on to do a postgraduate degree – one in five as opposed to one in 16 nationally – particularly at doctorate level. They are also more likely to go into teaching – 17% went on to work as teachers in compulsory education compared to about 7% nationally.

About half of students attending these summer schools each year apply for a place at that university, about a third win places at them, and about 15% enter the host university. Most of the others go to leading research universities.

An analysis of 80 past students showed that 94% went on to enrol at leading research universities including 36% who enrolled at Oxbridge. Of these 26% obtained first class degrees and 62% received 2:1s. This compares with 10.5% of all full time students who gained first class degrees and 45.5% who gained 2:1s in the UK in 2003-04. In 2003, 15.5% of students gained first class degrees at Russell Group universities, and 51.1% received 2.1s.

The review also includes the results of an analysis by the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) into the financial returns for these students based on extra earnings over a life-time. BCG estimated that for every £1 spent on the Bristol summer school a discounted present value of £9 of extra earnings were generated and this figure rose to £14 at the Cambridge summer school.

It also includes a study by the National Foundation for Educational Research which found that the impact of the summer schools was equivalent to having four additional GCSEs at grades A or A\*, or the difference between having parents with no formal qualifications and having at least one parent with a degree-level qualification, in relation to whether or not young people took up places at summer school universities.

## **Notes for editors**

*Ten Year Review of Sutton Trust Summer Schools* is available on request and will be posted on the Sutton Trust website at [www.suttontrust.com](http://www.suttontrust.com)

**The Sutton Trust** is a charity founded in 1997 by Sir Peter Lampl to improve social mobility through education. The activities of the Trust are aimed at children from non-privileged backgrounds, raising

both their aspirations and academic achievement. It funds a wide range of research and projects covering parenting and early years, schools, universities and access to the professions.

The Sutton Trust summer schools target students in Year 12 (the lower sixth form year or first year of college), with the general aim of encouraging them to progress to a prestigious research led university. It focuses on those who have displayed high levels of academic ability from family backgrounds with no previous experience of university. Other indicators of suitability include less affluent socio-economic grouping and low post-16 staying on rates at the school/college of the applicant.

The schools run for a week and are residential, involving both university lecturing staff and student volunteers. There are both academic and social events, and many opportunities for participants to find out about all aspects of study at the host institution. Applicants choose a particular discipline or subject area prior to attendance, although the range of courses offered may vary amongst the universities.

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