



Ten Year Review of Sutton Trust Summer Schools

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Foreword

University summer schools were the very first projects the Sutton Trust funded, back in 1997.

I had returned to the UK in the mid-nineties and was genuinely shocked by the decline in opportunities for bright youngsters from modest homes. The proportion of undergraduates at Oxford had actually fallen since I was there in the Sixties, from two thirds to under a half. It was a tremendous waste of the talent of the thousands of able pupils who were not fortunate enough to attend the small number of schools that were mainly feeding our elite universities.

From living in the US I was familiar with the summer schools offered by Ivy League universities, so I approached Oxford with the idea of funding a similar scheme for students in state schools which had rarely or never made applications to the university. Then, together with representatives from Oxford, we went to the US to see first hand the schemes they offered and to devise a suitable programme for trial in England.

So in 1997 we funded the first summer school for 64 students. They spent a week at Oxford sampling lectures, tutorials and enjoying the social life. It was an amazing week. Apart from the fun and the buzz, I saw with my own eyes the myths of Oxford being dispelled. Sixteen out of 64 of the summer school students got in to the university. It changed many of their lives and it also changed mine: I realised I could actually make a difference.

Since then we have established summer schools at Cambridge, Bristol, Nottingham and St Andrew's universities, which have reached some 6,000 students. If you include all the other interventions that stemmed from the summer schools (such as Master classes at Durham or the UCL-British Museum residential week), over 10,000 young people have benefited from the university access work of the Trust and its partners. Importantly, our summer schools were the model for the government's own scheme, and similar programmes are now run at the majority of UK universities.

The idea of our summer schools is simple. Bring bright young people from non-privileged backgrounds to prestigious, research-led universities. Give them the opportunity to meet with like-minded students from similar backgrounds, as well as undergraduates and academics. Allow them to experience the social life on offer and teaching in the subject areas that are of most interest to them. And, more than anything, show them that this environment is for people like them. So the summer schools are targeted at those who need support the most: young people from non-professional backgrounds, with parents who have no experience of higher education

and who are in schools with relatively low progression rates. Each year the programme is hugely oversubscribed and each year we wish we could take more students.

This report outlines some of the experiences of the young people who have been on our summer schools. It shows that those who attended were from much less privileged backgrounds than the average student at a top university and that going to the summer school made them more likely to apply to and get in to an elite institution. Encouragingly, once there, our students did well in their degrees too. The report also tells the human stories behind the statistics – what aspects of the week the young people found to be particularly beneficial and what further support they believe they needed.

In the future we will be able to tell even more about the impact of our summer schools. The 2008 cohort will be the first to be tracked via the UCAS system. We will know what grades they get; to which universities they apply; which institutions make them offers; and where they end up. Crucially we will be able to compare their outcomes with those from similar backgrounds.

None of the achievements of the last ten years would have been possible without the hard work and support of the university staff, from the Vice Chancellors and senior staff to those who run the events on the ground with such dedication and enthusiasm. We and thousands of summer school students owe them huge thanks. Thanks should also go to those who helped to create this report: Lesley Kendall, Liz Thomas and Rob Jones.

Most of all, I would like to thank past students of our summer schools and wish them the very best for the future.

Sir Peter Lampl

Chairman, Sutton Trust

Executive summary

Summary statistics

During the last ten years, over 6,000 students have attended Sutton Trust summer schools at Bristol, Cambridge, Nottingham, Oxford and (since 2002) St. Andrews' Universities.

Students attending one of the summer schools are considerably more likely to apply to, and to take up undergraduate places, at one of the host universities compared with similar students who applied for but did not attend the summer schools.

About half of the students attending the summer schools apply for a place at the same university, about a third is offered places and about 15 per cent enter the host university.

In relation to whether or not young people took up places at the university where they had applied for a place at the summer school, the impact of the summer schools was equivalent to about four additional GCSEs at grades A or A*, or the difference between having parents with no formal qualifications or having at least one parent with a degree-level qualification.

A survey of 80 past summer school students found that 88 per cent received 2.1s or Firsts in their degrees, and 26 per cent gained Firsts¹. At Nottingham University meanwhile, 79 per cent of all summer school students received 2.1s or Firsts at the university.

These figures compare favourably with the proportions of university students gaining 2.1s or Firsts, suggesting that despite their relatively disadvantaged backgrounds, students were well able to cope with academically rigorous degree courses.

The same survey found that 94 per cent went on to enrol at leading research universities, while 36 per cent attended Oxbridge.

A separate analysis by Boston Consulting Group meanwhile found that for every pound spent on the Cambridge summer school, a discounted present value of £14 of extra earnings were generated for attendees over their lifetimes - a rate of return of 14 to 1.

¹ 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.

Student experiences

A series of interviews with past students identified the following benefits from attending summer schools:

Applications support

Summer schools helped students to decide which university and which subject to study, often changing intentions over which degree courses to apply to.

Admissions support

Summer schools provide practical guidance, helping preparation for interviews and some specialist entrance examinations for example.

Academic preparation

Experiencing university-style teaching and learning and aiding preparations for the transition from A-level to university are among the academic benefits cited by participants.

Social benefits

Social benefits of attending summer schools should not be underestimated. These include: meeting like minded people, developing social skills and confidence and meeting academic staff.

Extracurricular activities at university

One aspect of the longer term benefits of the summer schools was a commitment among many participants to 'give something back' later on when they had become university students. Helping out at summer schools when at university was one way of achieving this.

Progression beyond university degrees

Another possible outcome of the social commitment demonstrated by summer school students later on was a higher likelihood to study at postgraduate level and go into teaching than other students.

Introduction

Sixty students attended the first Sutton Trust Summer School at Oxford University in 1997. It was the first time that the week-long residential scheme providing a taster of university life had been offered at Oxford, or indeed any university in the UK. The aim was to raise the aspirations of academically able students from less privileged backgrounds and give them the confidence to apply to elite academic institutions.

Ten years on, over 6,000 students have attended Trust summer schools at Bristol, Cambridge, Nottingham, Oxford and (since 2002) St. Andrews' Universities. When other university access programmes are included, the number of young people who have benefited from the work of the Trust and its partners is approximately 10,000. Now the majority of universities in the UK run similar summer schools, supported by Government funds -- bringing benefit to tens of thousands of pupils who might not otherwise apply to a particular type of university or, for some, choose to go to university at all.

This report provides a summary of the findings from a review of the impact of the Trust's summer schools, commissioned a decade on from their inception in the UK. The aim is to take stock of the programme on the tenth anniversary of the Trust, but also to help inform discussions over future summer schools the Trust supports as it looks forward to the next decade.

The review draws on both quantitative and qualitative evidence. Lesley Kendall, former Principal Research Officer at the National Foundation for Educational Research and now a statistical adviser to the Trust, compiled all available data on the schools that could be gathered from the last ten years. This included information produced from annual monitoring exercises and findings of a number of studies on the schools. Other figures were generated by the five host universities and a survey of past students.

The Trust also commissioned Professor Liz Thomas, now Director of the Widening Participation Research Centre at Edge Hill University and Dr Rob Jones, to undertake a survey of past students to gauge the views first hand of those who had experienced the summer schools in the first few years of their operation. Over 500 past students were contacted, with 117 sending detailed responses, and 20 volunteering for in-depth interviews. The interviews offer insights into both the types of outcomes the summer schools have, and how these have been played out in individuals' lives. They create insightful 'back stories' to the statistical summary.

The picture that emerges from both the figures and the words is that summer schools are an extremely positive experience for participants, providing a range of benefits -- academic, aspirational and social.

The review also highlights some issues for consideration for future summer schools - for example the extent to which they should offer financial advice to prospective university students. Targeting – the issue of which students should be selected for the summer schools – provides an ongoing challenge. But the figures suggest that past summer school students were far less likely to come from professional backgrounds than their peers on degree courses in some of the country's most prestigious research universities.

In purely academic terms the success of the Trust's summer schools is demonstrated by the high proportion gaining top class degrees at leading universities. A separate economic analysis by the Boston Consulting Group for the Sutton Trust meanwhile has revealed startlingly high financial returns in terms of extra earnings generated for participants compared with the cost of running summer schools.

Yet although the financial returns are compelling, one of the most powerful points that comes across in this review is the recurring theme of students who feel isolated in their own local schools meeting like-minded people for the first time during their university week-long stay. Such experiences, unrecognised by the statistics, show just how life transforming the summer schools can be.

Summary statistics

Applicants

In total, almost 20,000 students applied to attend these summer schools.

The summer schools seek to attract applicants from schools with:

- a low overall A-level point score
- a high proportion of students entitled to free school meals
- a low proportion of the sixth form pupils going on to higher education.

The most detailed analysis of the information relating to students applying to the summer schools was carried out in 2006.

About 70 per cent of applicants to the 2006 summer schools were female. Just over 70 per cent described themselves as White. The next largest category was British Asian (5 per cent).

Seventy per cent of applicants to the English summer schools, and 60 per cent of those to St. Andrews, were from non-professional backgrounds. Most of these students were also from families where neither parent had experience of higher education.

Overall, slightly less than half the students applying to the English summer schools had at least 5 GCSEs at grade A or better and were from non-professional homes with no experience of higher education. The proportion applying to St. Andrews and meeting both the academic and demographic criteria was slightly higher, at nearly 60 per cent.

Attendees

About 60 students attended the first Sutton Trust summer school at Oxford University in 1997.

During the last ten years, over 6,000 students have attended summer schools at Bristol, Cambridge, Nottingham, Oxford and (since 2002) St. Andrews' Universities.

Again, the most detailed analysis relates to students attending the 2006 summer schools.

Almost 65 per cent of attendees of the 2006 summer schools were female. 80 per cent described themselves as White, and 5 per cent as British Asian.

The ethnic backgrounds of attendees were similar to those of applicants as a whole. 80 per cent described themselves as White, and 5 per cent as British Asian.

Three quarters of those attending had at least five GCSEs at grade A or A* or equivalent.

Applicants from target schools tended to be less likely than those from other schools to be offered a place at, and to attend, a summer school.

Family backgrounds of students

Past summer school students were less likely to come from professional backgrounds than their peers on degree courses in highly selective universities.

In 2000 for example, the proportion of students with parents in professional, managerial and non-manual occupations at summer schools was 43 per cent at Oxford, 35 per cent at Cambridge, 29 per cent at Nottingham, and 30 per cent at Bristol. For all four schools combined, the equivalent figure was 38 per cent of students.

Government performance indicators published for university students enrolling in Autumn 2000 showed that the proportion of students with parents from these occupations was 90 per cent at Oxford, 91 per cent at Cambridge, 86 per cent at Nottingham, and 89 per cent at Bristol. The equivalent figure for a group of similarly selective universities – the ‘Sutton Trust 13’² – was 86 per cent of students.

In 2006, three quarters of summer school students were from non-professional backgrounds and/or whose parents had no experience of higher education. This compares with approximately three fifths of students enrolling in similar universities.

² The Sutton Trust 13 universities are those ranked the highest in an average of published university league tables. The list comprises: Birmingham, Bristol, Cambridge, Durham, Edinburgh, Imperial College, London School of Economics, Nottingham, Oxford, St Andrews, University College London, Warwick and York.

Outcomes

Information comes from a number of sources:

- monitoring of summer school attendees by the universities hosting summer schools
- follow-up studies of students taking part in the 1999 and 2002 summer schools
- a survey of past students to ascertain degree outcomes

Monitoring

Monitoring by the individual universities suggest that about half the students attending the summer schools apply for a place at the same university, about a third are offered places and about 15 per cent enter the university. The difference between the percentages being offered a place and those entering the university arise for a variety of reasons, including students choosing not to take up the offer, or keeping it as a reserve offer and subsequently obtaining a place at their first choice university.

The 1999 cohort

In a follow-up study³ of the students attending summer schools in Bristol, Cambridge, Nottingham and Oxford in 1999, the schools and colleges attended by about 800 of the students applying for a summer school place provided information on the students' subsequent A level attainment, the applications they made to university, and the university – if any – subsequently attended.

Statistical analysis explored the relationship between whether or not students applied to the university at which they attended a summer school and a range of student characteristics such as prior attainment at GCSE and parental background. Overall, the probability was higher for those with better GCSE results, and for those whose parents were well qualified academically.

The analysis showed that attending one of the summer schools significantly increased the probability that a young person would apply to at least one of the four universities concerned, when compared with otherwise similar students who applied for a summer school but who did not attend.

The effect varied between summer schools, but was equivalent to achieving two to five additional GCSEs at grade A or A*. Similar comparisons can be made between summer school attendance

³ Do the Sutton Trust Summer Schools have an effect on university applications and entries? Lesley Kendall and Ian Schagen (NFER).

and parental education level. Broadly speaking, the difference between attending or not attending a summer school was similar to the difference between a young person, neither of whose parents had any formal qualifications and a young person with at least one parent with some higher education.

In relation to whether or not young people took up places at the university where they had applied for a place at the summer school, the impact of the summer schools was again marked, being equivalent to about four additional GCSEs at grades A or A*, or the difference between having parents with no formal qualifications or having at least one parent with a degree-level qualification.

Overall, this study concluded the following:

Young people attending one of the Sutton Trust summer schools were considerably more likely to apply to, and to take up undergraduate places, at one of the four relevant universities than were otherwise comparable students who applied for but did not attend one of the summer schools. There was also considerable evidence that attendance at one of the summer schools was a factor enabling students with relatively few very good GCSEs, or from families with little experience of higher education, to enter these four universities.

A summary report of the findings by the National Foundation for Educational Research is presented in Appendix 1.

The 2002 cohort

The study following up the students attending summer schools in 2002 took a different form⁴. Those attending the summer schools were contacted about 18 months later, at which time most of them were at university or waiting to take up a place in the following academic year, and asked to reflect on their experiences at the summer school and the impact it had on them and to complete a short questionnaire.

About half the students had found the summer school very useful in helping them to apply to university, and three quarters were very positive about the way the summer schools had provided a way of sampling university life both academically and socially.

Degree outcomes

⁴ Follow-up study of students attending summer schools, Chamberlain, White and Kendall (NFER)

In 2007 the Trust contacted 100 past students⁵ from all five summer schools to find out what degrees they had attained. 82 students responded to the survey. This found that 88 per cent received 2.1s or Firsts in their degrees.

This compared with 56 per cent of all full time students receiving 2.1s or Firsts at all universities in 2003-04. In 2003 meanwhile the proportion of First and Upper-second-class degrees awarded by the 'Russell Group' selective research universities – where summer school students overwhelmingly attend -- was 66.6 per cent.

26 per cent of the sample of summer school students received Firsts in their degrees meanwhile - compared with 10.5 per cent of all students receiving Firsts at all universities in 2003-04. In 2003, 15.5 per cent of students gained Firsts at Russell Group universities.

These comparisons have to be treated with extreme caution as the survey of summer students was not necessarily a representative sample, with those students with the best degree results most likely to respond.

However, a separate analysis of all past summer school students at Nottingham University who went on to be admitted at the university found that 78.6 per cent of summer school students received 2.1s or Firsts in their degrees. This compared with 75.5 per cent of students receiving 2.1s or Firsts at the university as a whole.

Overall the figures suggest that the majority of summer school students will gain good degrees – and despite their relatively disadvantaged backgrounds, they were well able to cope with academically rigorous degree courses.

The survey of past students from all summer schools also found that 94 per cent went on to enrol at leading research universities, while 36 per cent attended Oxbridge.

⁵ These students were those who had responded to the survey undertaken by Professor Liz Thomas and Dr Rob Jones.

Financial returns

An economic analysis by Boston Consulting Group⁶ carried out in 2007 found that for every £1 spent on the Cambridge summer school, a discounted present value of £14 of extra earnings were generated for attendees over their lifetimes - a rate of return of 14 to 1.

The returns were measured in terms of the present value financial benefit to the individuals who took part in the schools. The analysis did not include the wider benefits to society – for example, in terms of better health, well-being and community participation.

The cost of providing the week long summer school at Cambridge to 144 students was estimated at £72,000. BCG then calculated that the summer school increases the percentage of participants applying to top universities by 24 percentage points, and of those applying who take up places by 35 percentage points.

More of the participants will therefore gain a degree from a top university, which in the case of Cambridge is worth a premium of £79,000 over a degree from a university outside a small group of elite institutions. The study found that the value generated by the initiative is therefore £975,000 – a return of 14 to 1 on the investment made.

Using the same methodology, the analysis also found that for every £1 spent on the Bristol summer school, a discounted present value of £9 of extra earnings were generated for attendees over their lifetimes - a rate of return of 9 to 1. The full calculation is presented in Appendix 2.

⁶ Investing in Impact, A report on the returns to investments in educational programmes based on work by The Boston Consulting Group, Sutton Trust, October 2007

Interviews with past students

The following commentaries emerged from in-depth interviews undertaken with 20 past summer school students during the summer of 2007. A total of 508 past participants were initially contacted in early 2007, with 117 responding to detailed questions⁷.

Structured interviews were then undertaken with a representative sample of 20 students who had attended summer schools mainly during 1997-2000. All interviewees have been anonymised and given different names in this report.

The following sections detail comments from student interviews, grouped into six areas:

- Decisions about going to university
- Support with the admissions process
- Academic preparation
- Social benefits
- Taking part in university-based extracurricular activities
- Progression beyond university

⁷ More details of the results and methodology can be found in a full report on the interviews to be posted on the Sutton Trust's website. Interviewees were selected on the basis of their availability to take part in the research, and whether they were first in their family to enter higher education. The sample was also representative of the gender make-up of participation rates in the summer schools.

Decisions about going to university

The summer schools can be seen to have impacted on participants' decisions about going to university in the following ways:

- Whether or not to go to university
- Which universities to apply to
- Which discipline and course to study
- Cost of higher education

Whether or not to go to university

Many participants interviewed had strong ambitions to progress to university before attending the summer schools. This was not true for all participants, however. For example, prior to their experiences at the summer schools, students were at various stages of indecision:

Francis -

My parents just wanted me to do whatever I wanted to do – I certainly had low aspirations where university was concerned. They didn't push me one way or the other. I got more nudges from teachers at school – which I appreciate more now, telling me I should do a degree. But I said I don't know if I want to. And I couldn't really see there was any great benefit at the time.

Debbie -

University was kind of at the back of my mind - ooh, I'd like to - but I wasn't convinced I'd be able to, because at the time university was seen something that the rich, posh kids did, it wasn't seen as something I would be able to do, but I was interested in it from being at high school...

Students' misgivings relating to entering HE vary, and link to issues of motivation, aspiration, academic ability and social fit.

Which universities to apply to

Most interviewees were aware of the potentially diverse, and increasingly stratified nature of the Higher Education sector and also what were felt to be the ranging reputations of institutions. More specifically, many of those interviewed were aiming to go to a 'top' university (both prior to and after summer school attendance). It was apparent that the summer school often had a very important influence on which institutions they applied to:

Beth -

That week at the summer school definitely gave you a sense of what level, academically, things would be pitched at. Which for me made me think yes, I could come here [Cambridge] – I could handle this, and I'm actually excited by this challenge. Whereas I think for some of the other people it really made them think no I really don't want to come here, I don't want this level of intensity.

Kirsty noted that being selected for the summer school gave her confidence to apply to a top university, and that conversations with other participants informed her decisions about applying to other institutions.

Which discipline and course to study

For some, summer school played a valuable part in the decision making processes surrounding which subject to study at university. For some participants the summer school helped to reinforce their choices:

Holly -

... You also got the feeling that you could be passionate about your subject, and you could have a discussion with them, or in a group of people, where you wouldn't have to be embarrassed about feeling strongly one way or the other about, say, a certain historical event. And I think that kind of stuff was really good because it made me feel even more positive about my subject. So I came away from the summer school feeling that I really did want to study history.

Beth -

The summer school fully ignited my interest in literature – there was this tantalising moment where it was mentioned that literary criticism grew up in Cambridge University, when it all kicked off in the 1920s, and that’s a really exciting point. I think that was something I didn’t feel prepared for but then neither did anyone else, so it was ok

For other participants, the week long summer school experience caused them to review certain prior assumptions and thus the choices they had made previously:

Charlie -

Up to that point I was probably leaning towards doing computer science, something like that. But doing the summer school in maths then made me apply to a different subject. So in terms of the path I ended up trying to follow it had quite a profound effect.

Finally on this issue it must be noted that the courses offered by the summer schools cannot always accommodate participants’ first choice of degree course. One example here relates to the discipline of medicine. We spoke to several participants for whom this area of study was their main interest. However, the tendency is for such students to attend the natural science course at the summer school as this is usually deemed to be the most suitable programme available.

Cost of study of higher education

Unsurprisingly, those from the least affluent backgrounds tended to view the cost of higher education as a major factor in the decision to go to university. The summer schools (in 1999) did not explicitly address financial issues, or discuss available sources of funding. For Debbie it was important to study at a university where she would not stand out as being poor, and where she could live at home to reduce costs:

Debbie -

Actually, I came away from the summer school a bit more confused than what I was when I went in because I enjoyed it so much, the living in the halls for the week and being with everybody that I thought I’m going to miss out if I live at home. Then I had a really good sit down and thought is it worth going through all this if I’m going to get in massive debt. And that’s what I had to go through in my own mind. And in the end the money did just have to win. So in the end I did live at home when I was studying.

In a similar vein, after the summer school Ewan was very excited by the prospect of studying at the higher level, but for him and his mother financial pressures loomed. He quickly began to feel that unless he secured some form of funding he would be unable to accept a university place:

Ewan -

I had a gap year, I worked for a year on a sort of gap-year scheme, because the thing I thought was so cool about the summer school was it kind of prepared you to apply to universities but then I always thought it would be nice if at the end of the summer school there was some other advice. Because it looks at under-privileged kids who're doing well from state schools, and of those who went to state schools I felt really under-privileged – I think I was probably in the bottom 10% of people from poor families. And I didn't have any money for university and my mum didn't know how she was going to support it or anything, so there was this massive worry in the family. So I decided to have a year off working.

Support with the admissions process

In addition to encouraging students to progress to higher education the summer schools often provided participants with valuable information about the admissions process. This information was often of a type that would have been all but inaccessible from within their families or schools. In particular, the participants identified the following ways in which the summer schools had supported them here:

- Interview technique and Step (Sixth Term Examination Paper) preparation
- Confidence and social skills to apply to university

Interview technique and Step Paper preparation

The summer school participants often commented on the utility of the summer school in relation to interview preparation. Certain key activities helped them to overcome nerves, and enabled them to engage with academic staff in settings similar to those they might encounter in interviews:

Ruth:

We had mock interviews which were really good, and if I hadn't have had those I'd have been even more shocked by what interviews for university are actually like.

Theresa:

It wasn't as scary as I thought - I had this view of Cambridge as perfection. I thought it was very hard to get to, and you have to really perform very, very well at the interview. So I was really nervous – but when I actually went on the day I wasn't as nervous as I thought I'd be because I'd had experience of the place and I knew my perception wasn't actually what I saw when I was at summer school. So the interview, well there were three interviews in the end. They all went fine.

Several participants did not recall such activities at the summer school, and found the interview process at university quite intimidating. Grace provides one example here:

Grace -

The Oxford interview, I think a lot of schools are quite well prepared for that, and I think I was the only one from my school who'd applied. I had no preparation from school at all. I didn't know what I was going to be facing. I remember being asked what I thought was the most important invention in history, and I'd written on my personal statement that I was doing Grade 8 piano, and they asked me what pieces I'd had to learn. I think I said the light bulb for the most famous invention – the first thing that came into my head was the wheel but I thought God no don't say that!!

In subjects where a Step Paper is required, participants found the summer school had assisted them in preparation - providing them with information and support regarding the type of questions that would be asked, and how to approach them. Kirsty describes being given a past Step Paper at the summer school with hints on how to answer it, which she notes was particularly helpful because “No one at my school had really heard of a Step Paper”.

Confidence and social skills to apply to university

The view that the summer schools had given them confidence and support to apply to top universities was strongly held by, as is demonstrated by the following statements:

Ewan -

What the Summer School made me realise was, well, I could rationalise it in my head, I knew that if I'd have had, well – everyone there, although they were from state schools, there was quite a difference. A couple I met were from the best state schools, and they got better grades. I knew if I'd lived in a slightly better area and gone to a slightly better school I could've done better. So that was fine with me, I could put it to one side, I didn't worry then. And then I could compare myself to them and I could see that in the classroom setting I could've been just as good. And I just thought I don't really feel afraid of them now.

Vicky -

...some of the other things, little projects and things did encourage me that I could cope with it. So although I would've applied anyway, I think the Summer School was important because it showed me that I could cope with the environment at an elite university.

Academic preparation

In terms of preparation for the academic context of higher education most students felt that the summer school had provided a helping hand, particularly in relation to their first year of study. Put concisely, a number of participants stated that the schools had given them an insight into the nature of learning at the higher level, which in turn developed their academic confidence:

Ruth -

The example lectures were really good, we had to do an essay while we were there and take it to a tutorial, so that was a very authentic week of what it's like at university. That was pretty similar to being at Sheffield...the summer school was really good at giving you a flavour of what it would be like.

Holly identified specific ways in which tutors helped her to develop her academic skills:

The summer school really helped, I remember, because we had to do some assignments – and we had these great opportunities of speaking to the tutors on a one-to-one basis. And they talked to us about our style and how to develop it, which was really very, very useful.

However, despite taking full advantage of the academic activities some students still felt quite anxious about the prospect of making the transition from 'A' level to degree study. Levels of academic preparedness appeared to vary according to the course participants took on the summer school and that which they eventually studied. When the two differ, preparedness is probably more likely to vary. Nevertheless, the academic focus of their week long experience can certainly still have direct and positive effects. Others commented that they were not prepared for the sheer quantity of work they would be expected to undertake as they progressed through their degree programmes.

Social benefits

A recurring theme in terms of the benefits of attending summer school relates to a somewhat broad category, which might be termed social issues. This social dimension encompasses developing and sustaining friendships (which often emerged as an important part of the summer school experience), the acquisition of honed and potentially more mature social skills, and the opportunity to interact with those for whom academia is also a priority. The various aspects of this social context have been categorised in the following way:

- Meeting like minded people
- Fitting in socially
- Friendships
- Developing social skills and confidence
- Meeting academic staff

Meeting like minded people

A significant proportion of our interviewees spoke of feeling somewhat isolated amongst their school friends and peers. This resulted from comparatively very high levels of commitment to school work, together with ambitions that tended not to conform to those of classmates etc. Needless to say then, the chance to mix with and befriend those with similar aspirations and academic abilities was highly valued.

For Laura and Kirsty the opportunity to discuss topics that others would have found uninteresting or intellectually intimidating was the highlight of their week, and something which they recall with fondness:

Kirsty:

It was nice to talk to people with the same level of education and background, and to meet people for the first time who were interested in what I was doing was wonderful... that was probably one of the best things of the summer school, meeting other people who were like myself.

Laura:

Of the people that were in my class from age 11 I'd say that about 30% of them went on to VI Form, and I'm guessing when I say about 60% of all the people at college went to university...so what the summer school did was, well, it was the whole experience of meeting with other people – really intelligent people, and having interesting...well, fascinating conversations with them about anything and everything in the world. I thought gosh I love this place and I'm going to apply.

Fitting in socially

A large number of students expressed some anxieties about fitting in at an elite university, especially Oxford and Cambridge. For Adrian the concern was that at Oxford he would stand out amongst the privileged majority:

I didn't really know what to expect what with the images of posh people and so on, public schools – all this sort of thing. I think Leeds would have been a lot easier to go to. So I was a bit apprehensive, yes.

However, the summer schools did provide most participants with reassurance – primarily by dint of the fact that they were in the company of others from similar backgrounds and with comparable ambitions. Also and almost as importantly was the presence and input of undergraduate volunteers who themselves had passed through the summer schools:

Marie -

I met lots of nice people on the summer school who all seemed quite normal – in inverted commas – they seemed like me, you know, not stuck up, snobby or in some way socially above me.

These sentiments are summarised nicely by Nick:

The main thing is the people – it's not what we did. To be honest, I remember very little of the actual subject, of the things we did like that. It was the people I met...Firstly you've got the other students on the course – who, delightfully, are all the same as me. They're all going "Ooh I don't know what this is going to be like, I'm not sure what the people are going to be like, are they all going to be upper class toffs that I'm not going to get along with." Secondly, what you've got was the fact that we had current undergraduates who were helping out on the summer school and who knew the University inside and out, so they could tell you exactly what to expect and what the place was like and what you'd be getting up to if you applied.

Friendships

Perhaps one of the most striking aspects of the social context created by the summer schools was the friendships it gave rise to and the way these often lasted into university and beyond (even when participants attended different institutions):

Charlie -

There was a couple of people who went to Cambridge off the Summer School, and I still stay in contact with now – so that's a nice thing definitely. So that's about 8 years, I suppose. Quite a while.

Nick -

The other students were brilliant and some of them are now lifelong friends who I've kept in touch with for the past 10 years.

Developing social skills and confidence

Some felt that their time at the summer school had developed their social skills and brought about increased levels of confidence - benefits which were especially useful in the context of the

application process (see above), and in making the transition to university and, later, the world of work etc:

Ian -

The summer school was good because it was an environment that you're thrown in somewhere, because obviously I didn't know anyone who was going on the summer school before I went, so that environment where you're thrown in at the deep end – I was really ready for that when it came to university. So I was very ready to get involved, really. I think as a person I'm not shy in general anyway, but when you're at school you've grown up with a lot of people from the same village as you so you're never put into a situation where there are – say – 50 people and you're the only one you know. So it was good practice basically.

Meeting academic staff

A further aspect of the social context within the summer school experience linked to the opportunities participants had to interact with academic staff. This also served to demonstrate that the host institution (and thus by association, higher education more generally) was an environment into which they could fit:

Nick -

We had two lectures and they were both lecturers in the college, and they showed us that lecturers were human beings and could have a good time, and were down to earth. And it just made you feel really welcome. So because of the people there, I then really had a desire to apply to go there.

Taking part in university-based extracurricular activities

The wider and less direct benefits of the summer schools can also be seen in relation to students' extra-curricular activities at university – activities that were motivated by reflecting on their own backgrounds and the opportunities provided for them by the Trust. As such, this activity can be seen to contain an altruistic element and a desire to support others:

Charlie -

I helped out a couple of years later, after the Summer School, while I was at Cambridge, and that was something I felt really strongly about doing because these people who'd helped me had a strong effect on what I'd done and I wanted to pass that back, and do something myself. It's interesting because there was one girl who was on the Summer School when I was helping and then she came to Cambridge and she ended up helping a couple of years later. So there's definitely evidence there that it has a strong effect on not just what people end up doing but also on their thinking – there's huge amounts of gratitude and they feel like they want to put something back. So ok, it's only anecdotal, but it's definitely evidence that people feel gratitude about what it provides for them and that they want to do put something back.

These attempts to 'put something back' are evident in a number of participant's progression pathways beyond university, and are discussed in the following section.

Progression beyond university

In terms of career trajectories, the effects of the summer schools and of university attended are extremely difficult to disentangle. Nevertheless, an analysis of the graduate (and postgraduate) progression routes taken by 117 respondents produces some interesting findings, especially when compared with statistics at the national level for 2003. These figures need to be treated with caution as summer school attendees are more likely to attend an academically elite university and so, for example, more likely to undertake postgraduate study.

It is striking that 23% of summer school students went on to study at postgraduate level (excluding teacher training), contrasting with only 6% nationally. It should also be noted that all those involved in postgraduate courses from our sample are studying at the doctoral (as opposed to masters) level. This comparatively disproportionate figure may be symptomatic of the relatively high levels of commitment to study and academic attainment characteristic of summer schools participants.

The number of those going into teaching also deserves mention. 17% went on to work as teachers in compulsory education - contrasting with 7% nationally. This may reflect the strong 'social commitment' of summer school students (discussed below) or the fact that a large proportion of the sample are first generation entrants - for whom there may be fewer graduate career role models. Alternatively it could also be an upshot of the keenly held belief in the worth and value of education generally, and a concomitant desire to kindle this interest in others.

In relation to business and finance 18% entered the various types of career available in this broad sphere, against a national figure of just 2%. It is difficult to speculate what the reasons for these disproportionate rates might be, but it may include a heightened desire on the part of some participants to completely transcend their working class backgrounds. We must also note that employers from this sector are more likely to recruit from older and more elite institutions. Thus, because our respondents mostly attended the former kind of institution, it follows that they have more opportunities to enter this area of work.

Long term benefits

It is also possible to examine some of the possible longer term benefits of summer schools in terms of future graduate and postgraduate career progression. These included:

- Institutional status
- Social skills and confidence
- Social contacts
- Social responsibility
- Choice of PhD subject

Institutional status

Some participants recognised the indirect benefits of the summer school, which in the context of career progression included encouragement them to study at a reputable university. Charlie, for example, recognised that graduating from Cambridge would have a positive impact on future opportunities:

Charlie -

Well, if I hadn't gone on the summer school I'd have followed a different route – there's no question that things would've been different. There's no question that Cambridge is one of the best places you can go to and, for example, I know that part of the reason I've got interviews and carried on is because I've got that to my name. I'm not trying to boast or anything – it's just the nature of it, when you have this kind of thing on your CV people sit up and take notice. People sit

up and take notice – there's no question about that. So it's definitely had a profound effect on what I've ended up doing.

Social skills and confidence

For some participants the social skills and confidence gained at the summer school has had lasting effects, aiding progression beyond higher education. Owen for example felt that the social skills and confidence he gained on the summer school have had a positive impact on his career, and helped him to gain a place on the Marks and Spencer's graduate trainee programme:

Owen -

Well, the thing again is the social skills. I really do think that without going on things like the Summer School going through that experience and learning how to make friends and just to be a personable person, that sort of thing would've been more experience, and going to interviews of course. I'd have found that a lot more difficult.

Social contacts

For one of the participants – Simon - friends made during the week at summer school would have a pivotal effect on his future career, providing him with vital contacts:

Simon -

[I] applied for the Warner Music graduate scheme and then from the January of the final year until the day I got my final results I was involved in that interview process. I think it was something like a thousand people applied for like six jobs and the first interview was an all day affair with a hundred people at it, then the next time two months later it was an all day event with 30 people there, then the final interview was meeting the MD and head of departments on the day I got my degree results. So it was a really drawn out process but I got the job... The biggest discovery I had and this was just because they were friends of mine was this now famous band from Derby, but again this is so weird now thinking about it because the friend I met on the Sutton Trust who went to Bristol like me, and who I got into university radio with, his best friend is the singer in the band. So I can't now quite believe how much of this stuff actually goes back to the Sutton Trust. But that friendship through the bloke I'd met on the summer school, they were the first band I ever took to the label, and to a large extent got me the job.

Social responsibility

The summer school encouraged some past participants to undertake voluntary activities while at university. Similarly, for some the summer school influenced their career choice - as they addressed a desire to 'give something back' or help others like themselves in the way the summer school had assisted them. The most common route adopted to address this social responsibility role appears to be teaching. As noted above 17% of the sample became teachers, and in our interviews we spoke to three teachers who mentioned the desire to help others to succeed academically and enter higher education.

Laura for example, has been involved with the charity Teach First, and has taught in inner London comprehensive schools – activities which she hopes will change perceptions and educational experiences for the better:

Laura -

I would like to imagine I'm helping people to think – personally, the science aspect of it is a potentially brilliant form of mental training, for getting people to think rather than just memorise SATs, information for SATs. And I want to teach people to be, in a sort of quite dictatorial way, I want them to take responsibility to some extent. Or another way I think about it is that, well, often 10% of our kids are caring for a parent, and 80% have English as a second language. Most of these people didn't have a beautiful, loving upbringing – but it's kind of saying you're not stuck with that. What we can do is say "well what do you want to do with your life?"

Beth also made the decision to enter teaching, and had aspirations to work with disadvantaged pupils:

Then, after deciding to teach, I had this thing about not wanting to teach in a selective school, not even if it was a selective State school. I didn't believe in that at all – I saw myself working in a really difficult inner city school, because when I was doing my 'A' Levels I used to teach workshop drama in the inner city at Nottingham, so I thought that's exactly the kind of thing I want to do.

After completing her teacher training programme Beth taught in a grammar school, and is soon to move to an independent school. She has struggled to come to terms with her egalitarian principles and the love of her subject and desire to teach it to motivated pupils.

Choice of PhD subject

An exceptional example of the long lasting impact of the summer school is provided by Kirsty. Her PhD topic was inspired by an inspirational lecture at the Cambridge summer school.

Kirsty:

I remember that one of the lectures we had at the Sutton Trust was on knot theory, and I still remember that because that's what I'm doing now... I still remember the lecture and the guy who gave the lecture. It was really inspiring.

While this is not the norm, it is a striking example of how the summer schools have the potential to have long-term impacts - often in unexpected ways.

Conclusions

Applications support

Summer schools helped students to decide which university and which subject to study, often changing aspirations over which degree courses to apply to.

Admissions support

Summer schools provide practical guidance, helping preparation for interviews and some specialist entrance examinations for example.

Academic preparation

Experiencing university-style teaching and learning and aiding preparations for the transition from A-level to university are among the academic benefits cited by participants.

Social benefits

Social benefits of attending summer schools should not be underestimated. These include: meeting like minded people, developing social skills and confidence and meeting academic staff.

Extracurricular activities at university

One aspect of the longer term benefits of the summer schools was a commitment among many participants to 'give something back' later on when they had become university students. Helping out at summer schools when at university was one way of achieving this.

Progression beyond university degrees

Another possible outcome of the social commitment demonstrated by summer school students later on was a higher likelihood to study at postgraduate level and go into teaching than other students.

Issues for consideration

This review highlights a large number of strengths and benefits of the summer schools. There are also some areas for further consideration:

- Selection and targeting of students – which types of students are the summer schools aimed at?

Some students expressed some surprise at the range of backgrounds of participants attending the first summer schools. The summer schools have since become more targeted - using a range of criteria to select academically able pupils from less privileged backgrounds. Selection of pupils is a constant challenge for the summer schools - as often the very pupils in most need of support are the least likely to apply. A counter-argument is that schools should be available for all pupils

- Financial information and support for students – should this be offered at all summer schools?

The costs of higher education – both real and perceived – remains a major factor in the decision to go to university -- particularly those from the least affluent backgrounds. The summer schools (in 1999) did not explicitly address financial issues, or discuss available sources of funding. Financial advice for students is, however, now being considered by current summer schools, with some integrating this into their activities in 2008.

- Recognising the value of social interaction – could this be encouraged or supported beyond the summer school?

A major benefit of the summer schools is social as well as academic – with many past students reporting how for the first time they had a chance to mix with and befriend those with similar aspirations and academic abilities. Many had felt isolated amongst their school friends and peers. There was also a strong desire among many students to 'give something back' – either by helping out with summer schools as university students or going into teaching.

The review has provided a first direct contact between the Trust and past students – with the vast majority willing to play some role in publicising the benefits of schools in the future.

Appendix 1

Do Sutton Trust Summer Schools have an effect on university applications and entries?

Lesley Kendall and Ian Schagen with Alison Kington and Paula Hammond (1999)

Background

The Summer School for students at Oxford University was the first project initiated and funded by the Sutton Trust in 1997. In 1998 the project expanded to include Bristol, Cambridge and Nottingham universities, and 330 places were available. The scheme has continued to expand and 650 places are being offered in 2001.

The Summer Schools are targeted at students who will be taking A-level or equivalent examinations a year later, and who will, in general, be completing their applications for university places in the autumn following the Summer Schools. The Summer Schools are open to students from all maintained schools and colleges of further education (including sixth form colleges) in England, and equivalent establishments in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Summer Schools aim to encourage high-achieving students from non-privileged backgrounds to apply to leading universities, and to enrich these students' A level studies.

Each Summer School lasts for a week, with students resident in a university college or hall of residence. Summer Schools involve the academic staff of the university, as well as student helpers, who are mainly existing undergraduates or recent graduates. Young people attending the Summer Schools participate in academic activities, receive advice on applying to higher education and have the opportunity to take part in a range of social and sporting activities. The academic subjects on offer and the balance of activities differ slightly between the universities, but include subjects such as chemistry, mathematics, modern languages, English and history.

Priority is given to young people attending schools or colleges with little or no previous experience in applying to universities with demanding entry requirements, and to young people from non-professional backgrounds and whose parents did not attend university.

A comprehensive program of evaluation has allowed the Summer Schools to respond to feedback from those attending. Almost all the young people who have attended have reported that they have found the week to be stimulating and enjoyable. But do the Summer Schools meet their aims in terms of encouraging students who would not otherwise do so to apply to the universities participating in the Summer Schools? This Bulletin attempts to answer this question, by comparing the patterns of entry to higher education for those applicants selected to attend the Summer Schools and those whose application was unsuccessful. The Bulletin focuses on the

students who applied to attend the Summer Schools held in 1999. Many of these students completed their A level or equivalent studies in the summer of 2000, and took up university places in the autumn of that year.

Almost 1700 young people in the first year of their A level or equivalent studies in maintained schools and further education colleges in the United Kingdom applied to attend the Summer Schools held in 1999. The application form gathered a variety of information about these young people, and on the basis of this information about 500 of them were selected to attend. In the autumn of 2000, we asked the schools and colleges attended by all the applicants, whether or not they attended a Summer School, to let us know whether these young people had applied for a university place and, if so, to provide details of the results of their applications.

The Summer School applicants

As noted above, this Bulletin is aimed at establishing whether or not there appears to be a relationship between attending one of the Summer Schools and young people's subsequent choices about applications to universities. To do this we need to consider a number of factors.

With over 1700 applicants for about 500 Summer School places, universities had to balance a number of criteria, and the application form was designed to provide them with relevant information to enable them to do this.

The universities wished to ensure that young people selected to attend the Summer Schools were credible as possible applicants for undergraduate entry to a university with demanding entry requirements. Each student was therefore asked to indicate the number of GCSEs he or she had obtained at grades A or A*.

It was also necessary to ensure that applicants had the appropriate background for the subject(s) which they wished to study at the Summer School. To enable the universities to do this, students were asked to indicate the A level or equivalent courses that they were studying.

The Summer Schools are targeted at young people from non-professional backgrounds, and from families with little or no experience of higher education. Students were asked to indicate the highest level of education undertaken by their parents, and to provide a brief description of their parents' current occupations.

The Summer Schools also aim to reach young people attending schools or colleges with little experience of sending young people to universities with demanding entry qualifications. It was not possible to measure this directly, but it was possible to use the average A level point score for the school, as published annually by DfEE, as an indicator of the overall level of academic attainment of a school or college. We also knew whether each young person attended a grammar school, a comprehensive school, or a college of further education.

We would, therefore, expect that the young people selected to attend the Summer Schools would, in general, have higher levels of attainment at GCSE, come from lower socio-economic groups, have parents with less experience of higher education, and attend schools and colleges with lower levels of academic achievement, than those students not selected to attend.

In looking at the applications to university made by applicants for Summer School places, we need to ensure that we are, as far as possible, comparing 'like with like', and so we need to take account of these differences between successful and unsuccessful applicants to the Summer Schools.

There are a number of further factors which may be relevant. Firstly, there is evidence that young women are less likely than young men with similar academic achievements to apply to universities with demanding entry requirements (Unpublished report to Universities of Oxford and Cambridge). Also, young people attending colleges of further education are less likely than those attending schools to apply to these universities. Applicants were asked to record whether they were male or female, and the school or college attended, so that we could take account of these possible differences. Information was not, however, available on some other factors which might be relevant, such as ethnicity.

Schools and colleges of further education returned information relating to just over 800 young people. Of these, 50 attended the Bristol Summer School, 58 Cambridge, 34 Nottingham, and 126 Oxford. The remaining 536 did not attend a Sutton Trust Summer School.

Do the Summer Schools work?

We used a statistical technique known as logistic regression to try to establish whether there was a real relationship between attending a Summer School, applying to university, and entering university as an undergraduate. Details are given in the Technical Appendix.

Firstly, we looked at the question:

Which factors had the greatest impact on the probability that a young person will apply to at least one of the four 'Sutton Trust' universities?

In particular, we were interested in the extent to which attending one of the Summer Schools could help a young person to overcome the disadvantages of their background.

As we expected, we found that young women were significantly less likely than young men from similar backgrounds and with similar levels of academic achievement to apply to at least one of these four universities.

Again as expected, young people with higher levels of academic achievement were more likely to apply to these universities, which all have demanding entry requirements, than those less well qualified.

We also found a significant relationship between parental level of education and the probability of a young person applying to at least one of the four universities: young people with at least one parent who had attended university were more likely to apply than those whose parents had completed some post-compulsory education, and these were in turn more likely to apply than those whose parents had left education at an earlier stage.

Of most interest in the context of this Bulletin, however, is the impact of the Summer Schools themselves. We found that attending one of the Summer Schools significantly increased the probability that a young person would apply to at least one of the four universities concerned, although the impact differed somewhat between Summer Schools. Consider the results for the Summer School with the greatest impact. A young person with a given number of A or A* grades who attended this Summer School was as likely as an otherwise similar student, but with an additional five such GCSEs and who did not attend any of the Summer Schools, to apply to at least one of the four universities. For another Summer School, the effect was equivalent to about four additional GCSEs at grades A or A*, and for each of the two remaining Summer Schools, the corresponding figure was about two A or A* grades.

Similar comparisons can be made between Summer School attendance and parental education level. Broadly speaking, the difference between attending or not attending a Summer School was similar to the difference between a young person, neither of whose parents had any formal qualifications and a young person with at least one parent with some higher education.

Gender, parental education, academic achievement, and whether or not the young person attended a Summer School were the factors which had the greatest impact on the probability that a young person would apply to at least one of the four universities. Once these factors had been taken into account, we did not find that parental occupation, school average A level score, or type of school, were useful in predicting whether or not a young person would apply to one of the four universities. This is not equivalent to saying that these factors have no influence a young person's decisions when applying for higher education. But because the various factors are

themselves inter-linked – for example, parents in higher socio-economic groups are more likely than those from lower groups to have continued in education – these factors add little new information to that given by the factors which were shown to be significantly related to applying to one of the four universities.

We then considered a further question:

Which factors had the greatest impact on the probability that a young person will take up a place as an undergraduate to one of the four universities?

Not surprisingly, young people with a relatively large number of GCSEs at grades A or A* were more likely to take up places at these universities than those less well qualified at the age of 16. As with applications, there was a relationship between parental education and the probability of taking up a place: young people whose parents had continued in education were more likely to take up places than those whose parents had finished their education at a relatively early age.

Again, the impact of the Summer Schools was marked, being equivalent to about four additional GCSEs at grades A or A*, or the difference between having parents with no formal qualifications or having at least one parent with a degree-level qualification.

We saw earlier that young women were less likely than young men from similar backgrounds and with similar levels of academic attainment to apply to one of the four universities. However, there is no evidence to suggest that they were more or less likely to take up a place at one of these universities.

Young people attending one of the Sutton Trust Summer Schools were considerably more likely to apply to, and to take up undergraduate places, at one of the four relevant universities than were otherwise comparable students not attending one of the Summer Schools. There was also considerable evidence that attendance at one of the Summer Schools was a factor enabling students with relatively few very good GCSEs, or from families with little experience of higher education, to enter these four universities.

Appendix 2: Financial returns calculated by Boston Consulting Group for the Cambridge and Bristol summer schools.

Cambridge Summer School

Cambridge summer school	Data	Key assumptions
Cost of programme ⁽¹⁾	£72,000	<p>The Cambridge Summer School increases the likelihood of participants applying to the UK's top universities; and it also increases the number of participants who get in⁽²⁾.</p> <p>The summer school increases the percentage of participants applying to top universities⁽²⁾ by 24% points⁽³⁾ and increases the percentage of those applying who take up a place by 35% points⁽⁴⁾.</p> <p>A degree from Cambridge is worth a premium of £79k⁽⁵⁾ over a degree from a university outside the small group of top UK universities.</p>
Number of young people benefiting	144	
Value generated by programme	£975,293	
Return per £1 spent	£14	

(1) Full financial cost for one year

(2) 'Do the Sutton Trust Summer Schools have an effect on university applications and entries?', Kendall and Schagen (NFER, 2001)

In this instance top universities refers to the four universities that participated in the study (Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and Nottingham)

(3) An increase from 50% (Sutton Trust Analysis), BCG Analysis

(4) An increase from 24% (Sutton trust Analysis) to 59%. BCG Analysis

(5) In real terms. 'Graduating and Graduations within the middle classes: the legacy of an elite higher education', Power and Whitty (to be published). BCG Analysis

Bristol Summer School

Bristol summer school	Data	Key assumptions
Cost of programme ⁽¹⁾	£56,762	<p>The Bristol Summer School increases the number of summer school participants who apply to top Universities and increases the number of summer school participants who take up a place at a top university⁽²⁾.</p> <p>The summer school increases the percentage of participants applying to 78%⁽³⁾ and increases the percentage of those applying who take up a place to 50%⁽⁴⁾</p> <p>A degree from a top university, like Bristol, is worth a premium of £79k⁽⁵⁾ over a degree from a university outside this elite group</p>
Number of young people benefiting	90	
Value generated by programme	£484,908	
Return per £1 spent	£9	

(1) Full financial cost for one year

(2) 'Do the Sutton Trust Summer Schools have an effect on university applications and entries?', Kendall and Schagen (NFER, 2001)

In this instance top Universities refers to the four universities that participated in the study (Oxford, Cambridge, Bristol and Nottingham)

(3) An increase from 50% (Sutton Trust Analysis), BCG Analysis

(4) Based on Cambridge acceptance rates. BCG Analysis

(5) In real terms. 'Graduating and Graduations within the middle classes: the legacy of an elite higher education', Power and Whitty (to be published). BCG Analysis