Outreach and Widening Participation

Summer School Reports – 2014/15

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The Children in Care Summer School raises aspirations for participants who face barriers to entry in higher education. Sessions are designed to engage pupils in academic topics and university life in order to motivate them to think about applying to university. Children in Care (CiC) are immersed in a range of university environments and exciting academic and physical challenges designed to introduce them to life in higher education.

**Participating local authorities:**
- Barnet
- Brent
- Camden
- Enfield
- Haringey
- Hertfordshire
- Islington

**Sessions**
1. Trips to Cambridge Uni, Central School of Speech & Drama and UH
2. Taster lectures and subject-specific workshops
3. Adventure activities & theatre trip

**Aims**
1. To inspire CiC to aim for HE
2. To provide an insight into what uni offers academically
3. To expose CiC to new environments & experiences

**Outcomes**
1. Boost in aspirations
2. Increase in knowledge about academic courses & student life
3. Increase in confidence & engagement
Children in Care tend to have limited exposure to HE

How many conversations have CiC had about university in the last year with carers, social workers and teachers?

- 40% rarely or never had conversations about university in the last year
- 33% had conversations every few months about university in the last year
- 26% had conversations regularly about university

How many family members or friends do CiC have that attended university?

- 36% have zero family members or friends who have attended university
- 36% have 1-3 family members or friends who have attended university
- 29% have more than 7 family members or friends who have attended university

80% of CiC felt Summer School had helped them think about their future

"It helped me to think about my opportunities more wisely"

"It helped me understand which courses I want to pursue to get my dream job"

"Gave me a chance to see Cambridge and that it might be a possibility to go there"
Assessing CiC confidence & views on attending university—before & after Summer School

**Confidence**
- +56% increase in confidence when meeting new people

**Confidence**
- +52% increase in CiC feeling 'very confident' about being in new environments

**Attending HE**
- +47% increase with CiC who 'strongly disagree' that university is not the environment for them

**Attending HE**
- 67% agree that there's no reason why they can't attend university if they wish to
What routes are participants likely to follow after school?

+71% increase in CIC likely to apply to university after Summer School

90% said staff made them feel comfortable

91% felt sessions were delivered to a high standard

91% satisfaction with how staff & ambassadors helped during activities

92% satisfaction with the way staff & ambassadors answered questions

93% said Summer School changed their perception of university

+71% increase in CiC likely to apply to university after Summer School

90% said staff made them feel comfortable

91% felt sessions were delivered to a high standard

91% satisfaction with how staff & ambassadors helped during activities

92% satisfaction with the way staff & ambassadors answered questions

93% said Summer School changed their perception of university

"Great and friendly staff who makes you feel comfortable”

"They were fantastic”

"Everyone was brilliant”

"I have learned a lot more about university and have a better understanding of it"

"I now want to go to university"

"It showed that if I wanted to, that I could get into a well-known university"

"I always thought university would be intense and I didn’t see the good side [until today]"

"It’s made me think more seriously about my future"
A closer look at... Year 10 Beacon Summer School

The **Year 10 Beacon Summer School** offers students the chance to discover what life is like at university. They participate in a number of taster lectures, delivered by academic staff, which are designed to introduce them to new subjects and teaching and learning styles. Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) sessions help participants acquire key knowledge about university in order to make informed decisions about their future. By spending a night in university accommodation, including taking part in a social programme, participants are able to experience student life. The entire Summer School is shaped to increase awareness about university, raise aspirations and boost the confidence of those who might who face barriers to attending university.

**Participating local schools:**
- Adeyfield School
- Barnwell School
- Cheshunt School
- Francis Coombe Academy
- Kings Langley School
- Priory School
- The Sele School
- Thomas Alleyne School

**Sessions**
1. Subject taster sessions
2. Staying overnight in university accommodation
3. Social programme

**Aims**
1. To provide an insight into what university can offer academically
2. To experience what life is like as a university student
3. To expose to new environments & experiences

**Outcomes**
1. Increased awareness of and interest in courses available to study
2. Knowledge of what life is like at university
3. Increased confidence & engagement
Participants' exposure to higher education & main aims

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>37%</th>
<th>would be the first in their family to attend university</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>19.5%</td>
<td>rarely have any conversations about university with family, friends or teachers</td>
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<tr>
<td>87.5%</td>
<td>of participants who rarely talk about university are unsure if university is the right environment for them</td>
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Main aims before Summer School

| 54% | are aiming to find out about student life |
| 34% | want to find out about new courses |
| 8%  | are aiming to build up their confidence |

"My parents would really be proud of me and it would give me a chance to build for my future"

"It can help me decide if going to university is the right option for me in the future"

Participants' outcomes & favourite taster session

**Key Summer School outcomes**

| 19% | boosted their confidence (137.5% increase for those who specifically stated that was their goal at the start of the event) |
| 87% | now have the necessary information to decide if university is for them |

**Aerospace:**
"It included lots of practical work and could lead to my dream job"

**Law:**
"[the lecturer] really engaged the audience"
"This session made me realise that I do enjoy other things that I haven't discovered yet"

**Photography:**
"I love the process of capturing something"
"I had never been in a darkroom before and I enjoyed being able to create something myself"

**Psychology:**
"I am doing Psychology at school so I got to understand the course in a lot more detail"
Boosting confidence and breaking down barriers

**Confidence**

- **+39%**
  - Increase in participants' confidence when meeting new people
  - “It’s much friendlier and it’s a lot more welcoming than I would have expected - seeing as there are so many people”

- **88.5%**
  - Of participants are now confident in new environments
  - “The activities allowed me to become more confident”

**Reducing obstacles**

- **+85%**
  - Increase in participants feeling comfortable in a university environment
  - “I now know what [university] is like and meeting some of the staff has been good and seeing the grounds – that was nice.”

- **-64%**
  - Decrease in participants feeling there are obstacles to attending university
  - “I thought that it would be really expensive. I didn’t know anything about student loans or anything like that”
Most likely route after finishing school: before and after Summer School

Before
- University: 66%
- Don't know: 20%
- Other education (incl. apprenticeships): 14%

After
- University (+17%)
- Don't know: 20%
- Other education (-86% incl. apprenticeships): 78%

98% said staff made them feel comfortable
96.5% satisfaction with how staff & ambassadors helped during activities
98% satisfaction with how staff & ambassadors answered questions
100% felt sessions were delivered to a high standard

"The ambassadors were very welcoming and I felt very comfortable asking questions about university life"

"The ambassadors were fantastic. They helped us fit in and feel comfortable"

98% satisfaction rating
91% usefulness rating

"It was amazing as I got to experience what university life is like and the lectures enabled me to understand how we would be taught. I also got the opportunity to ask a lot of questions which increased my knowledge further"

"It gave us information that we normally would not get. We also got the perspective of uni students and how they live and their experience"

"I really enjoyed having the opportunity to stay in a room instead of just viewing it [...] I have enjoyed trying different things like advertising. I thought I would never try that as I didn’t think it was for me"
The **Year 12 Summer School** has a very strong focus on Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) as sessions and workshops are devoted to navigating UCAS applications, with particular attention paid to understanding and writing personal statements and how to identify courses. Personal development is also a core aspect as students are challenged to adapt to the campus environment and the challenge of meeting new people and navigating campus spaces.

### Sessions

1. Personal statement, UCAS & course-searching workshops
2. HE (Student Finance, Students' Union) & FE (Apprenticeships) talks
3. Social programme

### Aims

1. To improve personal statement writing skills, decision-making & ability to navigate UCAS application process
2. To raise awareness about HE/FE environments
3. To expose to new environments & experiences

### Outcomes

1. Produce personal statement; narrow-down course/university choices
2. Understand options available
3. Increase in confidence, engagement & knowledge of what life is like at university

### Participating local schools:

- Astley Cooper School
- Barclay School
- Elstree UTC
- Hertfordshire Academy
- Longdean School
- Samuel Ryder Academy
- Turnford School
- Watford UTC
- Westfield Academy

### UH staff:

- Cobi Campbell
- Lindsey Rigby
- Emily Ashton
- Zahra Carnochan

### 32 Year 12 students from 9 local schools

### Two-day, one-night residential event, on-campus

### Exposure to student life & HE/FE options

### Improving students' ability to write personal statements

### Helping identify suitable courses & navigate application process
Participants' exposure to higher education

**Frequency of conversations about university with friends, family or teachers in last 12 months**

- Once or more a week: 44%
- Several times a month: 34%
- Every few months: 22%

31% of participants would be the first in their family to attend university

Participants' aims & outcomes

**Main aim before Summer School**

- 55% are aiming to learn about personal statements...
- ...but this drops to 19% for potential 'first in family to university' students
- 31% aiming to find out about student life...
- ...but this rises to 44% for potential 'first in family to university' students

"I want to gain a feeling as to what it's like to live as a student. Also, I want to gain a better understanding of how to write a personal statement"

**Personal statement knowledge**

- 84% increased their confidence in writing personal statements

"I have learned how to write a personal statement. It's a lot easier now to be able to recognise my skills and put them into a personal statement."
**Narrowing choices, making decisions, boosting confidence and breaking down barriers**

**Narrowing choices**
- **+29%**
  - increase in participants considering just 1 course to apply to
  - "It gave me a load of helpful information, which will help me decide my future"

**Decision-making**
- **+60%**
  - increase in participants having enough information to make an application
  - "I learned a lot about university and how I can apply to my best ability"

**Confidence**
- **+35%**
  - increase in participants feeling comfortable in a university environment
  - "Gave me a feel of the environment and a chance to [experience] a bit of freedom and independence"

**Reducing obstacles**
- **+62%**
  - increase in participants agreeing there are no obstacles to attending university
  - "I learnt things that I didn’t know: about uni life, finance and personal statements"
At what point in the decision-making process are participants?

Before
- Identified courses: 37%
- Narrowed down course choice: 28%
- Writing personal statements: 22%
- Other: 13%

After
- Identified courses: 41%
- Narrowed down course choice: 44%
- Writing personal statements: 12%
- Other: 3%

100% said staff made them feel comfortable
91% felt sessions were delivered to a high standard
88% satisfaction with how staff & ambassadors answered questions
91% said staff made them feel comfortable
91% satisfaction with how staff & ambassadors helped during activities
84.5% satisfaction rating
91% usefulness rating

"They were all lovely and tried their hardest to help us with anything that was needed and made us feel welcome!" “They made an effort to get to know you”

"Talking with the ambassadors has helped me to know exactly what I want to do after school” “They were really helpful and full of advice”

"I learned a lot about university and how I can apply to my best ability" "I am so excited to be able to apply to uni because staying in the dorms and being with new people has just shown me that uni is not a scary place"

"What I have learned most is preparing myself for what’s ahead of me, the university, learning about the accommodation, being able to get a feel for [living on my own], what the night life is like, being amongst your peers"

"It was useful because I now know about student life and how I would pay off my loans"