

# EVALUATING ACCESS

## OVERVIEW

Too many high-attaining low-income students fail to gain access to higher education, and universities are under increasing pressure to address this. Spending around £750 million per year, English universities are attempting to widen participation through a catalogue of outreach initiatives including summer schools, mentoring schemes, tutoring, teacher engagement, parental support, information campaigns and more. Although some universities collect data on the outcomes of their interventions, there is very little evidence indicating which outreach initiatives are the most effective.

Whilst there is a lack of robust research in the UK measuring the impact of outreach initiatives, there is a growing body of international evidence indicating which initiatives may be most effective. This review collates the most promising research from around the world that has been conducted within the last 15 years. The review focuses solely on outreach initiatives, not strategies related to student attainment, retention, or post-university outcomes. It only includes research on initiatives that target low-income students, and does not consider evidence related to mature or part-time students.

These caveats should be carefully considered before drawing conclusions from the review's findings, especially as the evidence-base for each initiative remains small even when international evidence is factored-in. A research brief [[INSERT HYPERLINK TO RESEARCH BRIEF](#)], published alongside this report, considers these caveats and summarises the review's main findings.

This review is a first attempt to bring together research from different sources around the world, and the Trust would welcome the inclusion of additional evidence. We see this review as an organic document that will grow over time as we are alerted to new studies and as the results of existing and future evaluations are published. Contextual admissions, the provision of lower-grade offers to less privileged students, was an area that lacked sufficient evidence, however the Trust is pursuing research into the prevalence and potential impact of this strategy in 2016.

The central finding from the review is that more robust evaluations are needed. Existing research in the UK too often lacks a control group by which to benchmark participants' outcomes. Whilst this review includes studies that don't use control groups, we encourage universities to develop more robust evaluations, so that the causal impact of their initiatives can be quantified. The Trust also recognises the importance of combining quantitative studies with high quality qualitative research as this can provide much needed explanatory power and give meaning to the results of quantitative impact-driven work.

This review forms part of the Trust's wider efforts to improve the evidence-base in education. In 2011 the Sutton Trust published the Pupil Premium Toolkit – an accessible summary of the evidence suggesting which interventions work best to improve the attainment of disadvantaged pupils in schools. This toolkit now underpins the work of the Education Endowment Foundation, and since 2011 the toolkit has been used by two thirds of UK teachers.

## STRUCTURE OF THE REVIEW

The review identifies the initiatives that are most commonly used by universities and divides them into ten categories, listed below. For each initiative, the following information is provided:

- **Definition of initiative**

- **Example of initiative**

- **Estimated cost**

*While costs vary greatly depending on scale and intensity, all initiatives are broadly categorised into low, medium and high cost.*

- **Quality and volume of evidence**

This review includes a broad range of impact studies, ranging from reports describing a single intervention, to large-scale robust randomised controlled trials. All of the evidence collected in the review is divided into three separate categories: non-experimental, quasi experimental, and experimental.

1. Non experimental studies. A published document that describes an intervention and collects quantitative and qualitative data associated with it. This may be published independently or by the intervention provider. Studies of this kind may include a regression analysis with an implicit control group; however the control group is not clearly defined. These studies may compare outcomes before and/or after an intervention and establish a statistical relationship.

2. Quasi-experimental studies: A study that uses a clearly defined comparison group with explicit efforts to make them similar to the treatment group. A study that evaluates data before and after the intervention. A study that is published independently, by a University Press, or in a peer-reviewed journal.

3. Experimental studies: A study that uses a fully randomised controlled trial. A study that is published by a University Press or in a peer-reviewed journal.

- **Next steps for evaluation**

*This section outlines potential next steps for universities in conducting evaluations.*

## THE IMPACT OF INTERVENTIONS

Click on each initiative to find out more. The most promising initiatives are shaded in a darker colour.

	<a href="#"><u>Application information and assistance</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Bursaries and fee reductions</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Combined interventions</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Combined interventions with guaranteed university offer</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Mentoring</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Widening Participation open days</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Parental engagement schemes</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Residential Schemes</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Teacher engagement schemes</u></a>
	<a href="#"><u>Tutoring</u></a>

## APPLICATION INFORMATION AND ASSISTANCE

*A low cost intervention with positive impact indicated through several robust studies.*

### Definition

This strategy involves providing information to students about higher education opportunities and/or financial support. This could include general information or information that is tailored to individual students. Delivery methods include posting information to homes, presentations in schools, offering informational materials at youth centres; and providing instructions for completing funding applications.

### Example

[LSE Information Campaign](#)

### Estimated cost

This is a low cost intervention

### Quality and volume of evidence

Four experimental studies indicate positive impact, mostly in a US context.

*The role of application assistance and information in College decisions: Results from the h&r block fafsa experiment.*

Eric p. Bettinger, Bridget Terry Long, Philip Oreopoulos, Lisa Sanbonmatsu

The Quarterly Journal of Economics (2012) 127 (3): 1205-1242.

First published online: April 18, 2012

<http://qje.oxfordjournals.org/content/127/3/1205.abstract>

*What High-Achieving Low-Income Students Know About College Options*

Caroline Hoxby and Sarah Turner

[http://economics.virginia.edu/sites/economics.virginia.edu/files/ppHoxby\\_Turner.pdf](http://economics.virginia.edu/sites/economics.virginia.edu/files/ppHoxby_Turner.pdf)

*Information and College Access: Evidence from a Randomized Field Experiment*

What Works Clearing House Review, 2013

[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/single\\_study\\_reviews/wwc\\_collegeaccess\\_070213.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/single_study_reviews/wwc_collegeaccess_070213.pdf)

*Student Awareness of Costs and Benefits of Educational Decisions: Effects of an Information Campaign.*

Mcguigan, M., mcnally, S., and Wyness, G.

CEE Discussion Papers, London School of Economics,

London School of Economics, 2012

<http://cee.lse.ac.uk/ceedps/ceedp139.pdf>

### Next steps for evaluation

Promising evidence in an international context indicates that this low-cost intervention could have a high impact. A randomised controlled trial could be conducted at a reasonably low cost by disseminating information packs to schools, delivering the intervention via class teachers and randomising by school. Pupils' outcomes could be easily tracked using the Government's National Pupil Database and Higher Education Statistics Agency data.

## BURSARIES AND FEE REDUCTIONS

*A high cost intervention with conflicting results from robust research trials.*

### Definition

A bursary is a means-tested financial award given to a student after they have been offered a place at a university to off-set their living costs. A fee reduction is a means-tested discount on the overall tuition fees that students are required to pay. Universities can advertise bursaries and fee reductions to potential students as a way of encouraging them to apply to their institution.

### Example

Most universities offer means-tested bursaries (such as [Leeds Bursary](#)), and several also provide fee waivers (such as [University of Bath fee waiver](#))

### Estimated cost

This is a high cost intervention

### Quality and volume of evidence

One review of 14 experimental studies mostly in a US context, two non-experimental studies and five descriptive reviews combine to offer conflicting conclusions, making it difficult to determine the impact of the intervention.

Higher Education access: Evidence of effectiveness of university access strategies and approaches: A report to The Sutton Trust Professor Carole Torgerson, Louise Gascoine, Clare Heaps, Victoria Menzies, Kirsty Younger Durham University, 2014 <a href="#">[INSERT LINK TO TORGERSON REPORT ON ST WEBSITE]</a>
Financial support in English universities: the case for a national bursary scheme. Chester, J. And Bekhradnia, B. Higher Education Policy Institute, 2008 <a href="http://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/37nationalbursaryfull.pdf">http://www.hepi.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/37nationalbursaryfull.pdf</a>
The impact of financial aid guarantees on enrolment and persistence: evidence from research on Indiana's Twenty-first Century Scholars and Washington State Achievers programs. St John, E. P. In D. E. Heller & P. Marin (Eds.), State Merit Scholarship Programs and Racial Inequality: Harvard Education Publishing Group, 2004 <a href="http://www.inpathways.net/impact_of_information.pdf">http://www.inpathways.net/impact_of_information.pdf</a>
Have bursaries influenced choice between universities? Corver, M. Office for Fair Access, 2010 <a href="Http://www.offa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Have-bursaries-influenced-choices-between-universities-.pdf">Http://www.offa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2010/09/Have-bursaries-influenced-choices-between-universities-.pdf</a>

Awareness, take-up and impact of institutional bursaries and scholarships in England.  
Callender, C  
Bristol: Office For Fair Access, 2009  
[Http://www.offa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/OFFA-2009.07-summary-and-recommendations.pdf](http://www.offa.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/OFFA-2009.07-summary-and-recommendations.pdf)

Expensive and failing? The role of student bursaries in widening participation and fair access in England.  
Harrison, N and Hatt, S.  
Studies in Higher Education, 37(6), 695-710, 2012  
<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075079.2010.539679>

College Grants on a Postcard: A Proposal for Simple and Predictable Federal Student Aid.  
Dynarski, S. And Scott-Clayton, J. 2007  
<http://www.brookings.edu/research/papers/2007/02/education-dynarski>

A quasi-experimental estimate of the impact of financial aid on college-going  
Thomas j. Kane  
NBER working paper series, 2003  
<http://www.nber.org/papers/w9703>

### **Next steps for evaluation**

Considering the existing international robust evidence-base, this intervention would benefit from a randomised controlled trial across several UK universities. In order to avoid conflicting results, the trial should measure the impact on access, retention, and academic success. It should also assess the extent of support needed.

## COMBINED INTERVENTIONS

*A high cost intervention with a broad evidence base indicating that it does have a positive impact on access.*

### Definition

A programme that combines at least two of the interventions listed in this review and supports participants for several years. For example a combined intervention could be a programme that offers a course of mentoring, financial information and a residential at a university. As opposed to a residential scheme that may combine several activities in one week, a combined intervention lasts for at least one full academic year.

### Example

[Manchester Access Programme](#)

### Estimated cost

This is likely to be a medium or high cost intervention, depending on the make-up of each programme.

### Quality and volume of evidence

Two RCTs in a US context, one quasi-experimental study in a US context, two non-experimental studies using administrative data, and one descriptive review of a programme all point towards positive outcomes for combined interventions.

*The impact of financial aid guarantees on enrolment and persistence: evidence from research on Indiana's Twenty-first Century Scholars and Washington State Achievers programs.*

St John, E. P. In D. E. Heller & P. Marin (Eds.), *State Merit Scholarship Programs and Racial Inequality*: Harvard Education Publishing Group, 2004  
[http://www.inpathways.net/impact\\_of\\_information.pdf](http://www.inpathways.net/impact_of_information.pdf)

*A qualitative evaluation of the Into University programme*

White, K., Eames, A. And Sharp, C.  
National Foundation for Educational Research (2007)  
<Http://www.nfer.ac.uk/nfer/publications/EIU01/EIU01.pdf>

*Effects of a college access program for youth*

*Under represented in higher education: A randomized experiment.*  
Bergin, D., Cooks, H., & Bergin, C.  
*Research in Higher Education*, 48(6), 727-750. 2007

*Realising Opportunities Evaluation Cohort 3 Final Report*

Kelly Kettlewell, Helen Aston  
National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), 2014  
<Https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/ROEE03/ROEE03.pdf>

*Increasing the college preparedness of at-risk students*  
*Journal of latinos and education*, 5(2), 79–97, 2006  
Alberto F. Cabrera, Chul Lee, Regina Deil-Amen, Patrick T. Terenzini, Radhika Prabhu, Robert E. Franklin, Jr.  
<https://www.coe.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/journaloflatinosandeducation.pdf>

*Evaluation of the College Possible*  
*Program: Results from a Randomized Controlled Trial*  
What Works Clearing House Review of the Report, 2014  
[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/single\\_study\\_reviews/wwc\\_collegepossible\\_071514.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/single_study_reviews/wwc_collegepossible_071514.pdf)

*Expanding College Opportunities for High-Achieving, Low Income Students.*  
What Works Clearing House Review of the Report, 2014  
[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/single\\_study\\_reviews/wwc\\_hoxby\\_031114.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/single_study_reviews/wwc_hoxby_031114.pdf)

*Evaluation of the Reach for Excellence Programme.*  
*Longitudinal Report for Cohorts One and Two.*  
Kettlewell, K., Lamont, E. And Aston, H.  
National Foundation for Educational Research. 2011 <http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/1an-eval-of-rfe-cohort-1-2.pdf>

*Realising Opportunities Evaluation Cohort 3 Final Report*  
Kelly Kettlewell, Helen Aston  
National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), 2014  
<https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/ROEE03/ROEE03.pdf>

### **Next steps for evaluation**

Combined interventions represent a useful way to measure the comparative impact of different interventions within one programme (for example, where one group receives a different combination of initiatives from another). Since combined interventions have proved effective in a US context, it would be useful to conduct an experimental trial in the UK to determine whether the results could be replicated.

## **COMBINED INTERVENTIONS WITH GUARANTEED UNIVERSITY OFFER**

*A high cost intervention with positive impact indicated through one study.*

### **Definition**

A programme that combines at least two of the interventions listed in this review and supports participants for several years. A combined intervention could be a programme that offers a course of mentoring, financial information, and a residential at a university. Unlike a residential scheme that may combine several activities in one week, a combined intervention lasts for at least one full academic year. For these combined interventions, successful completion of the programme results in a guaranteed university place.

### **Example**

[Realising Opportunities Programme](#)

### **Estimated cost**

A high-cost intervention

### **Quality and volume of evidence**

One study using administrative data to show statistical relationships, which should be considered alongside the evidence for combined interventions.

*Realising Opportunities Evaluation Cohort 3 Final Report*  
Kelly Kettlewell, Helen Aston  
National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER), 2014  
<https://www.nfer.ac.uk/publications/ROEE03/ROEE03.pdf>

### **Next steps for evaluation**

Combined interventions represent a useful way to measure the comparative impact of different interventions within one programme for example, where one group receives a different combination of initiatives from another. Since combined interventions have proved effective in a US context, it would be useful to conduct an experimental trial in the UK to determine whether the results could be replicated. Unsuccessful applicants for programmes could be used as a control group if an opt-in/out clause is included in the programme's recruitment process.

## MENTORING

*A medium cost intervention with positive impact indicated through several robust studies.*

### Definition

Support provided by an adult or older student that aims to improve the aspirations and develop the confidence and motivation of students. Mentoring can be delivered through email or in person, but must be sustained over a minimum period of several months. Mentors should be fully trained with up-to-date knowledge of university admissions.

### Example

[LSE widening participation mentoring scheme](#)

### Estimated cost

This is a low-to-medium cost intervention depending on whether mentoring is delivered online or in person.

### Quality and volume of evidence

One review of 14 experimental studies mostly in a US context, two descriptive reviews of mentoring programmes using surveys. Three further RCTs in a US context. One non-experimental review using administrative data. This evidence broadly indicates positive impact.

*Student perceptions of Aimhigher learning mentors and post-16 pastoral support.*

Rogers, R.

NFER, 2010 [Http://www.nfer.ac.uk/nfer/PRE\\_PDF\\_Files/10\\_43\\_11.pdf](http://www.nfer.ac.uk/nfer/PRE_PDF_Files/10_43_11.pdf)

*What have we learned to date to inform access, retention and success under the new funding regime in England? A literature synthesis of the Widening Access Student Retention and Success National Programmes Archive*

Brooks, R

York: Higher Education Academy, 2012

[http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/WP\\_syntheses/Brooks](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/WP_syntheses/Brooks)

*Promoting post-16 participation of ethnic minority students from disadvantaged backgrounds: a systematic review of the most promising interventions.*

Huat See, B., Gorard, S. And Torgerson, C.

Research in Post-Compulsory Education, 17(4), 409. 2012

<http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13596748.2012.738968#.ViDSOX6rSUK>

*Late interventions matter too: the case of college coaching in new Hampshire*

Scott Carrell and Bruce Sacerdote, 2012

<http://econ.msu.edu/seminars/docs/Carrell%20Sacerdote%20College%20Coaching%20Late%20Interventions%207.16.12.pdf>

*High School Students As Mentors: Findings from the Big Brothers Big Sisters School-Based Mentoring Impact Study*

What Works Clearing House Review of the Report, 2013

[http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/single\\_study\\_reviews/wwc\\_bbbs\\_031213.pdf](http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/pdf/single_study_reviews/wwc_bbbs_031213.pdf)

*Aspiration and Inspiration - A pilot study of mentoring in schools*

Sanders, M., Kristal, A., Sabri, F., and Tupper, A.

CMPO Working Papers. Bristol: Centre for Market and Public Organisation, University of Bristol, 2013

[Http://www.bristol.ac.uk/cmppo/publications/papers/2013/wp314.pdf](http://www.bristol.ac.uk/cmppo/publications/papers/2013/wp314.pdf)

### **Next steps for evaluation**

There is high quality evidence in an international context indicating that mentoring can have a significant positive impact on higher education access. A quasi-experimental pilot trial should be developed in the UK to find out whether the international findings are replicable. Information on matching successful mentors would be particularly valuable.

## WIDENING PARTICIPATION OPEN DAYS

*A low cost intervention with no robust evidence indicating impact.*

### Definition

An event lasting one day that is held on a university campus tailored towards prospective students from under-represented groups in order to give them an insight into university life. Open days might include tours of accommodation, informal sessions with current students, introductory talks by university staff.

### Example

[Cambridge University challenge days](#)

### Estimated cost

This is a low cost intervention

### Quality and volume of evidence

One non-experimental study using attainment data and two descriptive studies indicate positive outcomes from open days.

*Evaluation of Aimhigher: learner attainment and progression. Final Report.*

Passy, R, and Morris, M

NFER, 2010 [http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/2010/rd1510/rd15\\_10.pdf](http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/2010/rd1510/rd15_10.pdf)

*Evaluation of Aimhigher: Excellence Challenge, Longitudinal Pupil Analysis Report.*

Morris, M. And Rutt, S.

Dfes Research Report RR814. 2006

<https://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eorderingdownload/RR814.pdf>

### Next steps for evaluation

A qualitative research piece measuring the impact of open days on potential students' attitudes and university aspirations could easily be conducted in this area. In addition more information about the type and nature of experiences on open days which are influential would be useful.

## **PARENTAL ENGAGEMENT SCHEMES**

*A medium cost intervention with positive impact indicated through some studies. Parental engagement also cited among other, robust studies as a key element of effective interventions.*

### **Definition**

This includes any widening participation initiative that involves parents. This may involve written correspondence addressed to the parents of high-attaining children; parents' evenings at universities or in schools; and provision of advice for parents about the University application process.

### **Estimated cost**

This could be a low, medium or high-cost intervention depending on the nature of delivery.

### **Quality and volume of evidence**

Two non-experimental studies, one review of studies that used comparison groups and another study that used publically available cohort data, found parental engagement to have a positive impact on admissions. Parental engagement was also a common feature of other effective outreach strategies.

*Effectiveness of programs to improve postsecondary education enrolment and success of underrepresented youth*  
Schultz, J. L., & Mueller, D. (2006)  
[Http://www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Publications/Studies/Effectiveness%20of%20Programs%20to%20Improve%20Postsecondary%20Education%20Enrollment%20and%20Success%20of%20Underrepresented%20Youth/Effectiveness%20of%20Programs%20to%20Improve%20Postsecondary%20Education%20Enrollment,%20Full%20Report.pdf](http://www.wilder.org/Wilder-Research/Publications/Studies/Effectiveness%20of%20Programs%20to%20Improve%20Postsecondary%20Education%20Enrollment%20and%20Success%20of%20Underrepresented%20Youth/Effectiveness%20of%20Programs%20to%20Improve%20Postsecondary%20Education%20Enrollment,%20Full%20Report.pdf)

*The Relationship between Parental Involvement as Social Capital and College Enrolment: An Examination of Racial/Ethnic Group Differences*  
Laura Walter Perna and Marvin A.  
The Journal of Higher Education, Vol. 76, No. 5 (Sep. - Oct., 2005), pp. 485-518, 2005  
<http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.465.8806&rep=rep1&type=pdf>

### **Next steps for evaluation**

With little evidence of impact in relation to higher education access, initially a longitudinal pilot study would be recommended to explore which aspects of parents' knowledge and understanding of higher education are of most value.

## RESIDENTIAL SCHEMES

*A medium cost intervention with positive impact indicated through several studies.*

### Definition

Pupils stay at a university for several days and experience 'student life'. Activities usually focus on academic enrichment, guidance on entrance examinations, advice on university admissions and social events.

### Example

[Sutton Trust UK Summer School Programme](#)

### Estimated cost

This is a medium-high cost intervention

### Quality and volume of evidence

One quasi-experimental study using comparison groups, one non-experimental study using administrative cohort data and four descriptive reviews.

<p><i>The impact of the Sutton Trust's Summer Schools on subsequent higher education participation: a report to the Sutton Trust</i> Dr Tony Hoare and Rosanna Mann, December 2011 (<a href="http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/full-summer-school-report-final-draft.pdf">http://www.suttontrust.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/01/full-summer-school-report-final-draft.pdf</a>)</p>
<p><i>Evaluation of Aimhigher: learner attainment and progression. Final Report.</i> Passy, R, and Morris, M NFER, 2010 <a href="http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/2010/rd1510/rd15_10.pdf">http://www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/2010/rd1510/rd15_10.pdf</a></p>
<p><i>Evaluation of Aimhigher: Excellence Challenge Longitudinal Pupil Analysis Report</i> Marian Morris and Simon Rutt National Foundation for Educational Research, 2006. <a href="http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eorderingdownload/RR814.pdf">Http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20130401151715/http://www.education.gov.uk/publications/eorderingdownload/RR814.pdf</a></p>
<p><i>[Aimhigher] makes you realise what you can actually accomplish. A longitudinal study of Aimhigher Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire learners.</i> Emma Church and Michael Kerrigan, 2011 <a href="file:///C:/Users/sm/Downloads/higher_education_academy_aimhigher_makes_you_realise_what_you_can_actually_accomplish_a_longitudinal_study_of_aimhigher_nottingham_city_and_nottinghamshire_learners_-_2014-09-24.pdf">file:///C:/Users/sm/Downloads/higher_education_academy_aimhigher_makes_you_realise_what_you_can_actually_accomplish_a_longitudinal_study_of_aimhigher_nottingham_city_and_nottinghamshire_learners_-_2014-09-24.pdf</a></p>
<p><i>We were treated like adults - Development of a pre-medicine summer school for 16 year olds from deprived socioeconomic backgrounds: Action research study.</i> Greenhalgh, T., Russell, J., Dunkley, L., Boynton, P., Lefford, F. And Chopra, N. <i>British Medical Journal</i>, 332(7544), 762-6. 2006</p>

[Http://www.bmj.com/content/332/7544/762](http://www.bmj.com/content/332/7544/762)

6 Towns Pre and Post Activity Evaluation

Donna Copley, 2010 [Https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/AHSST-Towns-Pre\\_and\\_Post\\_Activity.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/AHSST-Towns-Pre_and_Post_Activity.pdf)

**Next steps for evaluation**

With one quasi-experimental study conducted in a UK context indicating positive impact, this intervention would benefit from a fully randomised trial. It would also be useful to know more about the value of the different components of residential schemes.

## TEACHER ENGAGEMENT SCHEMES

*A medium cost intervention with positive impact indicated through some studies. Parental engagement also cited among other, robust studies as a key element of effective interventions.*

### Definition

This is an intervention providing teachers with up-to-date information about university applications. This could develop into a long-term partnership between a university and a school that aims to ensure high-attaining pupils gain admission to university, or it may include annual events for teachers, such as: residentials, professional development days, conferences, or online tools.

### Example

[Sutton Trust Teacher Summer Schools](#)

### Estimated cost

This could be a low, medium or high-cost intervention depending on the nature of delivery.

### Quality and volume of evidence

One study using administrative data to show statistical relationships found teacher engagement to positively correlate with student university access.

*Engaging Robots: Innovative Outreach for Attracting Cybernetics Students.*

Mitchell, R., Warwick, K., Browne, W.N., Gasson, M.N., and Wyatt, J.

IEEE Transactions on Education, 53 (1), 105-113. 2010

[http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/login.jsp?tp=&arnumber=5233834&url=http%3A%2F%2Fieeexplore.ieee.org%2Fxppls%2Fabs\\_all.jsp%3Farnumber%3D5233834](http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/login.jsp?tp=&arnumber=5233834&url=http%3A%2F%2Fieeexplore.ieee.org%2Fxppls%2Fabs_all.jsp%3Farnumber%3D5233834)

### Next steps for evaluation

Whilst there is little evidence in this area, a randomised controlled trial could be easily conducted at a reasonably low cost by delivering the intervention and randomising by school and by engagement type.

## TUTORING

*A high cost intervention with positive impact indicated through robust studies.*

### Definition

One to one or small-group academic support provided to raise attainment in a particular subject area outside of normal lessons. Tutoring should be delivered regularly by a trained tutor with adequate subject knowledge. This is an attempt to readdress low attainment, a major barrier to higher education access for non-privileged students.

### Example

[The Access Project](#)

### Estimated cost

A high-cost intervention

### Quality and volume of evidence

Seven meta-analyses of experimental research and two descriptive studies find that improving access to university is closely linked to improving student attainment in key areas.

The Brilliant Club's Interim Impact Analysis 2012/13 <a href="http://www.thebrilliantclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/The-Brilliant-Club-Interim-Organisational-Impact-Report.pdf">http://www.thebrilliantclub.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/The-Brilliant-Club-Interim-Organisational-Impact-Report.pdf</a>
<i>A qualitative evaluation of the IntoUniversity programme.</i> White, K., Eames, A. and Sharp, C. (2007), National Foundation for Educational Research (2007). <a href="http://www.nfer.ac.uk/nfer/publications/EIU01/EIU01.pdf">http://www.nfer.ac.uk/nfer/publications/EIU01/EIU01.pdf</a>
EEF evaluation of seven meta analyses <a href="https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/One_to_one_tuition_Technical_Appendix.pdf">https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/uploads/pdf/One_to_one_tuition_Technical_Appendix.pdf</a>

### Next steps for evaluation

With little evidence of impact in relation to higher education access, initially a longitudinal pilot study would be recommended, to understand in what areas tutees might benefit most and what kind of tutoring works best (e.g. one-to-one, older successful peer already at university, online, school-based).