



24 leading universities
working together with
schools and colleges

The importance of teachers

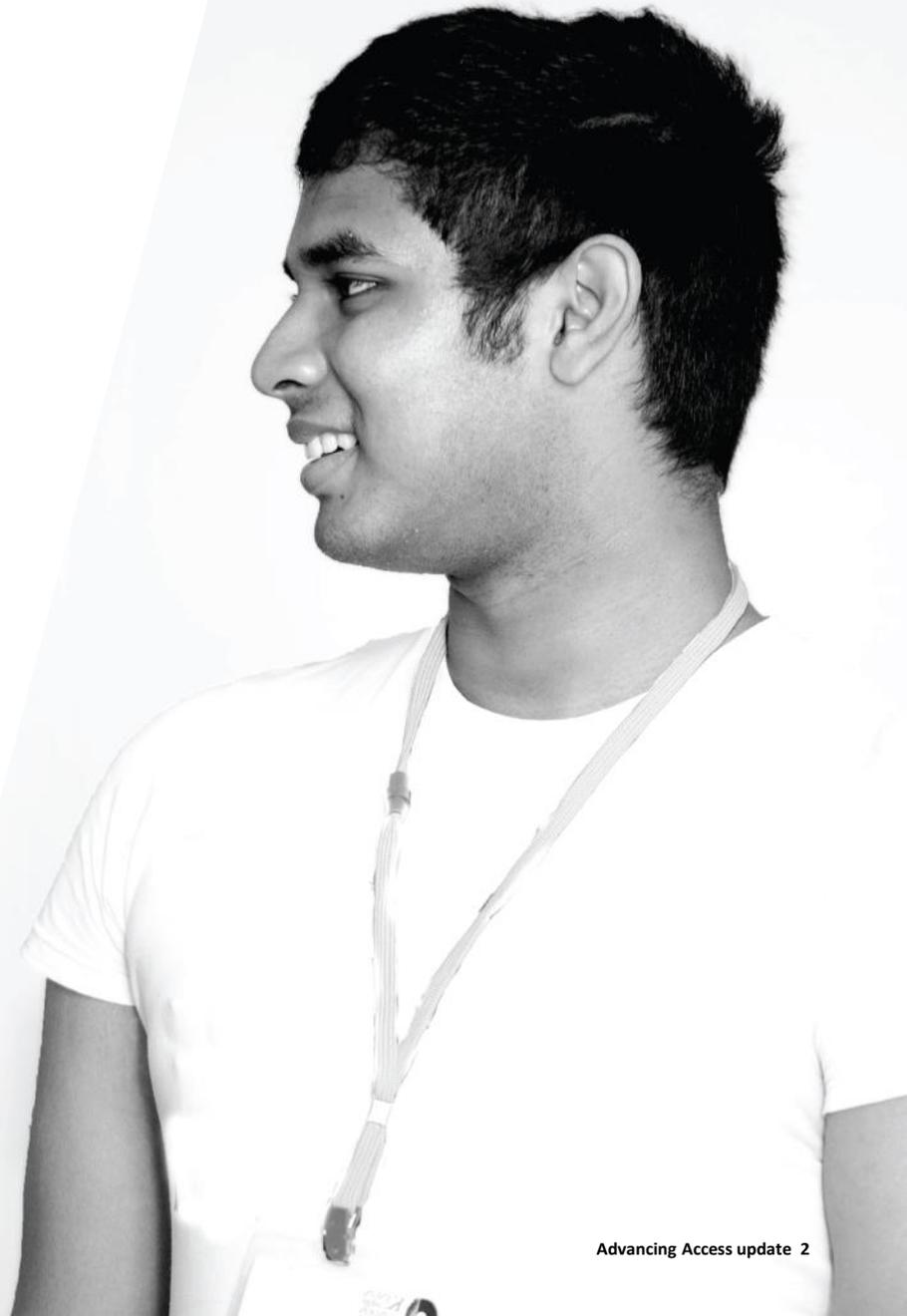
Paul Martin

16 / November / 2018



Coming up...

- The Government's new careers strategy – what role will teachers play?
- Attainment, aspiration and progression to university
- What is at stake? – higher education and social mobility
- What can teachers do to influence student decision-making?



The Government's new careers strategy

- The Government is developing a new careers strategy and new statutory duties have come in to force this year
- Schools will have to do more to inform pupils about technical qualifications and apprenticeships, have a named Careers Leader and offer young people more encounters with employers and universities
- By 2020, every school should be aiming to meet the eight "Gatsby Benchmarks" – a Government approved framework aimed at driving up the quality of careers provision in schools

The Gatsby benchmarks

1. A stable careers programme
2. Learning from career and labour market information
3. Addressing the needs of each student
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers
5. Encounters with employers and employees
6. Experiences of workplaces
7. Encounters with further and higher education
8. Personal Guidance

Source: Gatsby Charitable Foundation

Determinants of university access

- Researchers agree that the best way to enable young people to progress to university is to attain well at school
- The correlation between attainment (including at KS4) and university access is very strong, and this correlation is even stronger for certain subjects
- Most students who get high A level grades progress to selective universities, even if they're from disadvantaged backgrounds...

For students achieving at least AAB with two facilitating subjects...

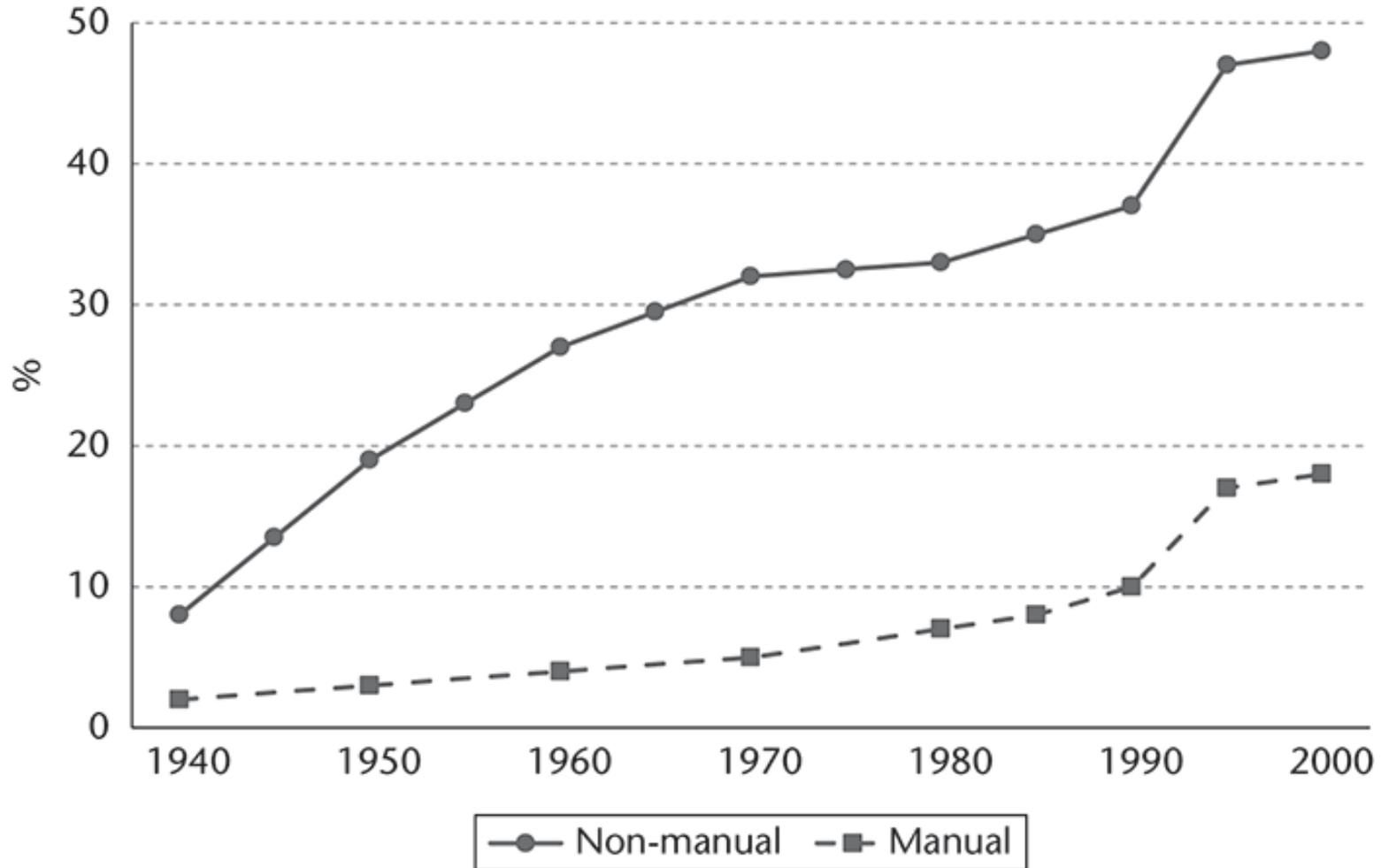
90%

...of students from the most advantaged 20% of families progress to a high status university

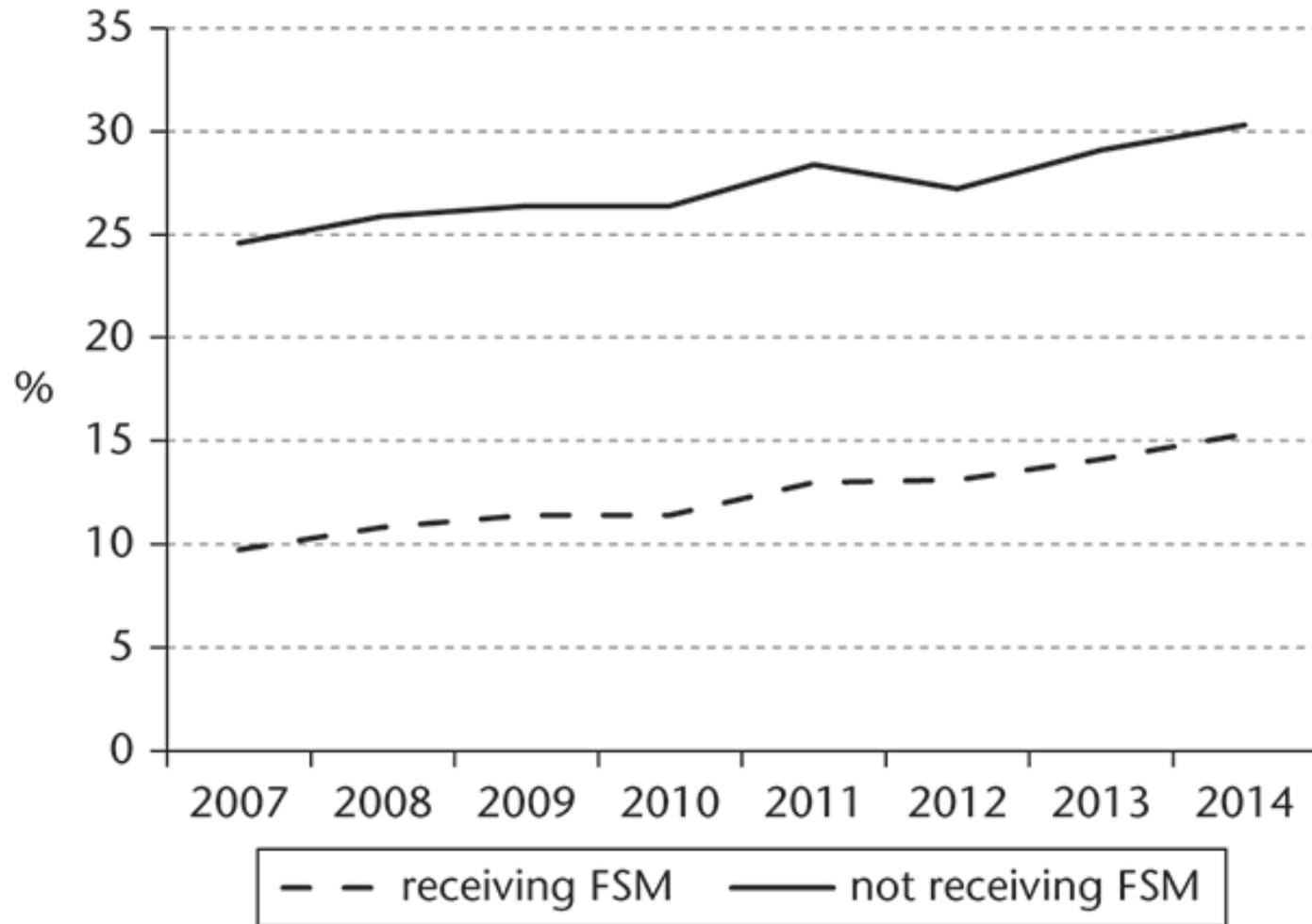
86%

...of students from the least advantaged 20% of families progress to a high status university

Good news and bad news on the access gap



Good news and bad news on the access gap





Department
for Education

Encouraging People into University

Research report

March 2017

Michael Sanders, Raj Chande, Eliza
Selley – Behavioural Insights Team

Research on teacher behaviour

Articles

Gatekeepers or facilitators: the influence of teacher habitus on students' applications to elite universities

Caroline Oliver  & Nigel Kettley

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 Full Article

 Figures & data

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 Citations

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Abstract

Low application rates of state school students to elite universities have been identified as a factor in their limited participation in elite universities. This article explores the role of teachers in state schools and colleges in guiding higher education (HE) choice. Drawing on qualitative research with teachers and students in six institutions, we identify differential practices that corroborate explanations of an 'institutional habitus' shaping students' likely pathways to HE. However, we suggest that attention is paid to teacher habitus, demonstrating how teachers' political and ethical dispositions as well as their social capital are potential factors shaping students' decision-making about HE, and elite university applications in particular.

Keywords: applications, Bourdieu, elite universities, higher education, teachers

Gatekeepers...

“...these teachers were not necessarily less consciously considering their roles or merely reproducing expected outcomes. They were equally reflexive in relation to class habitus but did so by **focusing on the potential of their students completing their courses at university rather than purely participating**. These teachers conceived of their role as guardians, to keep students ‘safe’ from potentially alienating and uncomfortable experiences that might, in their view, ultimately disrupt their learning. Teachers at Kingsgate, Jackport and Queenscourt were **sympathetic to students’ attitudes that they might not ‘fit in’ at elite universities**. They themselves had limited networks in these institutions and were less confident in the advice that they could offer to students. Feeling less comfortable themselves in their dealings with these institutions, the teachers **felt sympathy with the potential dangers of students being ‘out of place’** and therefore did not always challenge this view. Their limited promotion of elite universities was an affective response, arising from concern about their students’ ‘happiness’, welfare and ultimately their potential to complete the course. As such, **their students were encouraged less to challenge expected pathways** by considering elite universities.”

Facilitators...

“This group of teachers were driven by a social justice agenda to increase participation rates of their students at elite universities. They **held the conviction that the *status quo* was unjust** and they were instrumental in trying to change existing outcomes. The facilitators engaged in practical attempts to encourage non-traditional students to consider options beyond the habitual and **challenged the inferiority ingrained in their students’ habituses**. These teachers **offered alternatives to overcome students’ inclinations to remain local** and acted as their advocates when making applications to elite universities. Often this was reinforced by their possession of social capital, as they were able and willing to **exploit past experiences and current networks** for their students’ benefit, to improve students’ personal statements and interview practice and to bridge the perceived social distance between school and elite institutions.”

What have the behavioural insight team taught us about teacher and student behaviour?

- Students from disadvantaged homes are less likely to have parents who attended university, meaning that your advice as a graduate becomes all the more important
- 'Network nudging' is an extremely powerful tool for influencing behaviour
- Exposure to relatable role models helps
- Algorithmic decision making tools can reduce bias
- Involve parents – emails to students can be accompanied by a text message to parents
- It's crucially important to have conversations about the pros and cons of moving away from home
- Keep an eye on both KS4 and KS5 destination data

Don't forget about Advancing Access!

- Four strands of CPD resources online, including guidebooks, information sheets and resources for use by teachers and students
- Virtual Conferences where you can take part in webinars and speak to representatives from all 24 Russell Group universities
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- University of Sheffield / University of Southampton / University College London / University of Warwick / University of York