Session Title:	1.3 Supporting Students From Priority Groups Through Their University Journey: Academic Attainment, University Access and Successful Transitions
Speaker(s):	Helen Foster | Interim Director of Access Programmes at the Brilliant Club
Chair:	Lucy Nottingham | Higher Education Adviser at the University of East Anglia
Reporter:	Jack Wands | Student Recruitment Manager at City St George's, University of London

Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:	Helen Foster | Interim Director of Access Programmes at the Brilliant Club. Helen leads the access programmes at the Brilliant Club (as opposed to the success programmes) including the flagship Scholars Programme and the Access Projects, including Sanctuary Scholars.
Overview/Aim of session:	The session had three primary outcomes: - Learn more about the programmes offered to young people by the Brilliant Club - Co-develop best practice on programme adaptation for priority groups by taking the Brilliant Club's *Access Projects* as case studies - Learn how to apply these adaptations to own projects
Workshop Content	**Scholars Programme** - The Scholars Programme is the Brilliant Club's Flagship Programme where PhD students deliver university-style teaching to groups of students aged 8-18 - These courses can be predesigned or bespoke-made by the tutor with typically 5 tutorials delivered - Each student writes a baseline assignment and a final assignment and attends a graduation at a partner university, with IAG and campus tours - The programme is branded and developed as an extracurricular activity, not tutoring - UCAS data demonstrates the programme's effectiveness: o 83% of those on programme applied to a

	competitive university compared to 68% in a matched control group
	    o 49% of programme attendees enrolled at a competitive university, compared to 40% in the control group
	- The students also saw their GCSE attainment rise significantly
	
	Access Projects
	
	- Access Projects are bespoke, collaborative programmes aimed at those students who miss out on national programmes
	- The Scholars programme has been adapted for several different groups with case studies described below
	
	Success Programme – Join the Dots
	
	- *Join the Dots* is a new success programme aimed at supporting disadvantaged students once they join university
	- This programme pairs eligible students with PhD students to support with study skills over the first 6 months of university
	- When developing the programme, 3 themes emerged for why students struggle to find success at university:
	    o Academic studies
	    o Sense of Belonging
	    o Financial Pressure
	- It is when these themes overlap that students face the greatest roadblocks and, therefore, are least likely to progress and succeed

Case Studies/Examples:	**Access Projects Examples:**
	
	- Sanctuary Scholars
	    o Adaptation of the Scholars Programme aimed at refugee and asylum seekers
	    o Focused more heavily on higher education immersion, focusing on participants' sense of belonging
	    o Developed with sector experts to focus on challenges refugees and asylum seekers face
	    o The final assignment was significantly more versatile than the standard programme, allowing students to submit a piece of written work, oral presentation, or soundscape/art installation
	- Care-Experienced Scholars Programme
	    o Entirely online with timings dictated by typical virtual school timetables
	    o Bespoke graduation with tailored IAG

	sessions specifically for care-experienced students o Small in first year, with only 3 students completing programme, but hoping to grow based on learnings in Year 1
Scenarios/Roundtable discussions **Red text indicates Helen's response:**	1. What was your most successful WP project? What made it successful and what challenges were faced? a. Strathclyde University scholarships show impact of financial support above IAG – Research continually shows financial pressure affects application, acceptance, and progression b. A family day at King's College London allowed parents and carers to have their questions answered at bespoke sessions – the research is strong on the importance of family support in making HE decisions c. Year 10 and Year 12 summer schools allow young people to *see themselves in the space*. Some of the major challenges are the impact of COVID on CYP confidence, the cost of large-scale programmes, and the difficulty in capturing soft outcomes (e.g. soft skill development) 2. Who do you want to adapt your programmes for? How do you adapt your programmes? a. Anglia Ruskin University adapted their IAG for parents and carers via *[parent power](#)* programmes and inviting parents and carers to GCSE attainment raising celebrations – *sense of belonging* isn't restricted to the prospective student themselves, but their entire network b. Leeds Trinity increased academic engagment by focusing on intersecting WP criteria and moving programmes from on-campus to in-school where it is easier for some students to access -- a major challenge in any adapted programme is to demonstrate ROI to internal stakeholders
Questions and Answers:	There was limited time for questions, but Helen was happy to take any follow-up questions via email, Helen.Foster@thebrilliantclub.org
SummaryKey takeaways:	When adapting programmes for intersecting WP groups, it is important to think beyond merely updating slides and advice. Place, timing, tone, expectations, and measures of success will all differ with different groups. It is by working with experts in specific areas (e.g. refugee

	charities, care-experienced current students, etc.) that you can best adapt WP programmes to capture groups that are often lost in large national programmes. When pitching internal stakeholders for adapting programmes, it is important not to overpromise as these programmes are often more complex/have less clear ROI than national programmes. To get internal support, it is important to highlight the lack of support the adapted programmes' participants otherwise receive from yourself and other providers.