

Supporting students from priority groups through their university journey: academic attainment, university access and successful transitions.

Helen Foster, Interim Director of Access Programmes



Outcomes of session



Learn about the different programmes that the Brilliant Club offers and their impact



Consider how best to adapt programmes to work with priority groups



Apply learning from today's session to your own projects.

What are you bringing to today's session?



Name

Area of work

What are you hoping to get out of today's workshop?

The Scholars Programme

Overview



What is it?



**5 Group
Tutorials delivered by
PhD Researcher**

**Challenging Final
Assignment**



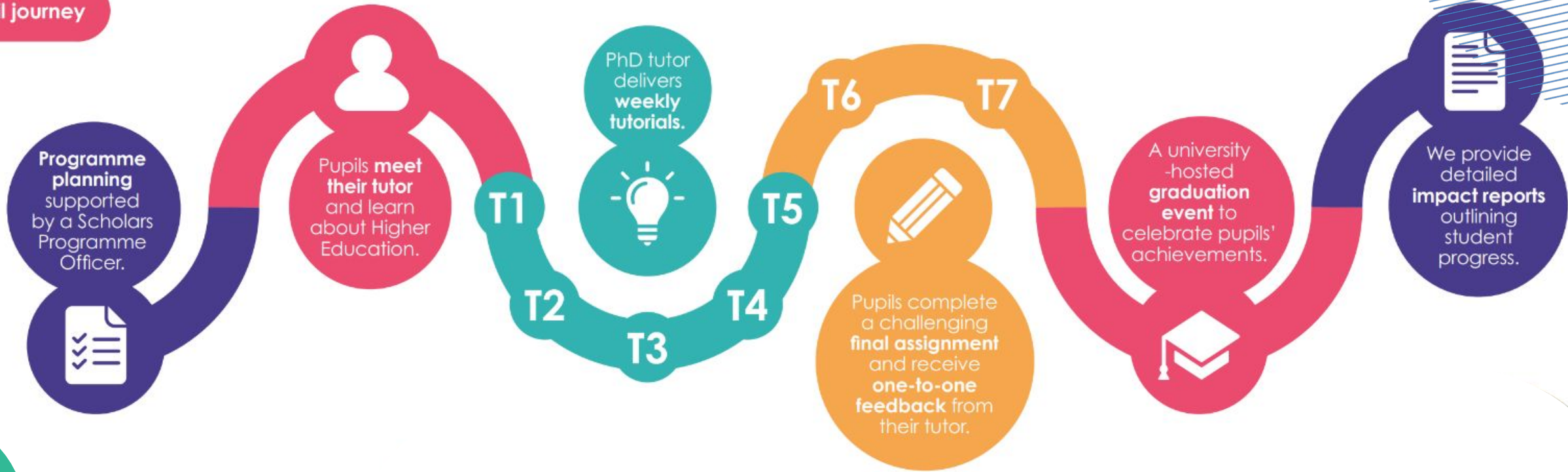
Feedback



Graduation



Pupil journey





The Scholars Programme Impact

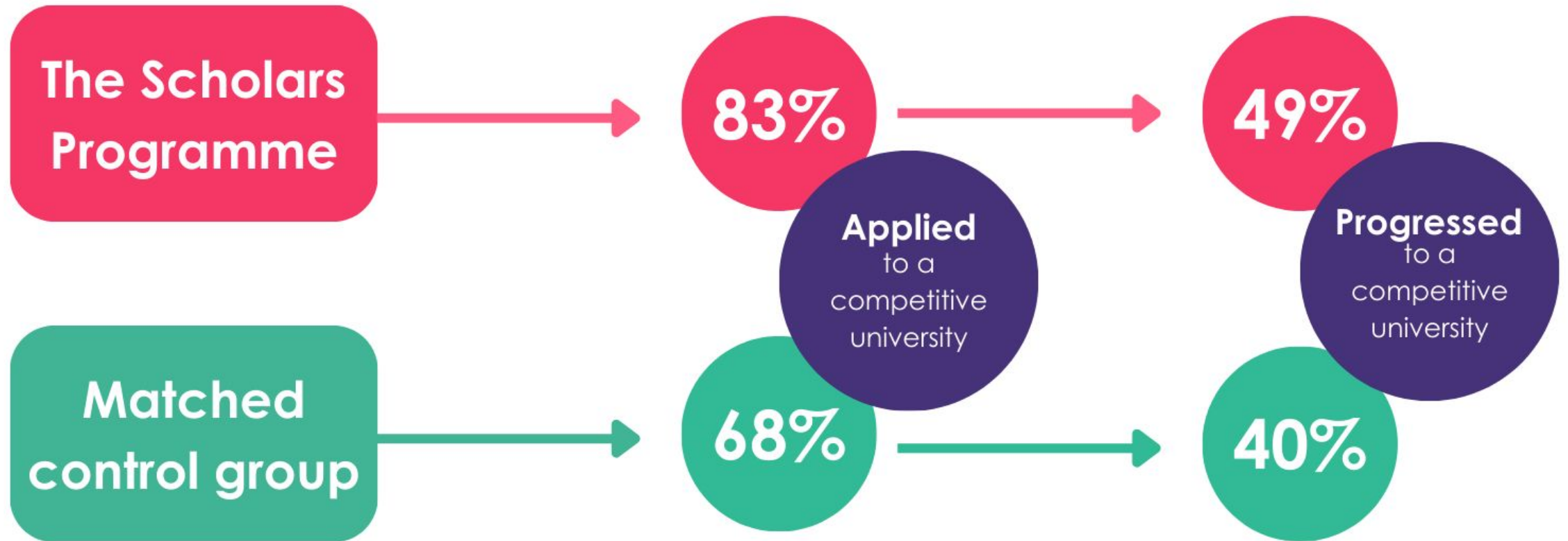
We have used UCAS' outreach evaluator service to understand the impact of The Scholars Programme for the past eight years



- This year's UCAS analysis is based on 955 Year 12 students who took part in The Scholars Programme in 2020/21.
- Through UCAS, we are able to track the university applications of students who took part in The Scholars Programme and understand whether they are more likely to progress to a competitive university compared to students who did not take part in the programme.
- The students in the comparison group are matched with our Scholars Programme graduates on a number of key variables, including ethnicity, postcode and GCSE attainment.
- This type of evidence is considered one of the most robust evaluation methods for understanding causal impact. However, the evaluation was impacted by the pandemic and as a result the findings should be viewed as a snapshot and not compared to previous years.

UCAS

Year 12 students who complete TSP are statistically significantly more likely to apply to a competitive university than students from similar backgrounds, and as a result they also progress at a higher rate.



IMPORTANT: This UCAS evaluation, and specifically the creation of the matched control group, was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore, caution should be taken when generalising the findings outside of this context.

Scholars Programme students have higher GCSE attainment and higher rates of progression to university.

Scholars Programme students

Students from similar backgrounds

Attainment

Students awarded a 9-5 in GCSE maths and English.



Students were from the same schools and had similar prior attainment at Key Stage 2.

Application

Students who applied and progressed to a competitive university.



Progression

Students who applied and progressed to a competitive university.



Students were from similar socio-economic backgrounds and had similar prior attainment at GCSE.

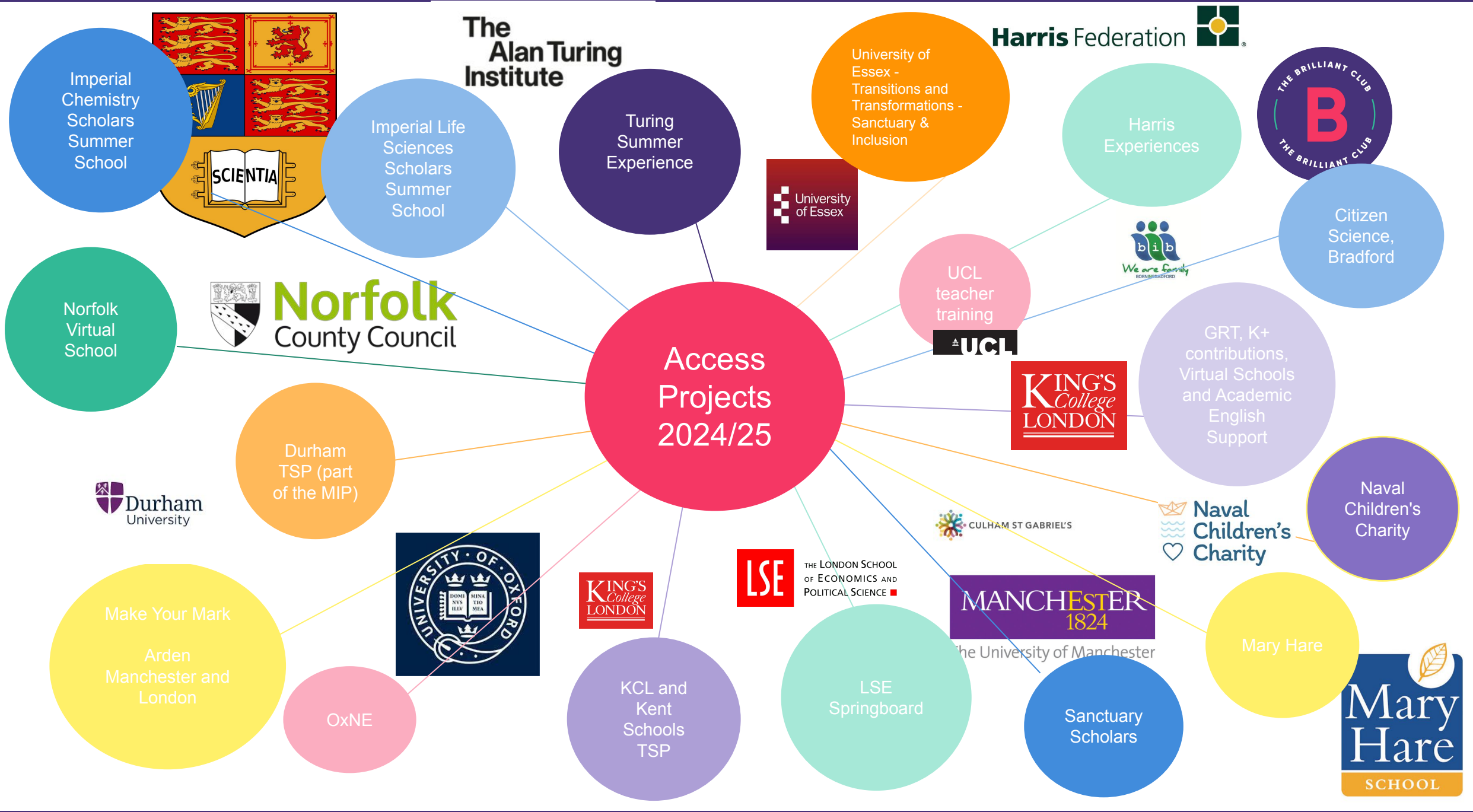
What are you bringing to today's session?



- What has been your most successful Widening Participation project that targets a specific group?
- What made it successful?
 - What were the things you needed to consider prior to launch?
 - What challenges did you face?
 - What did you learn?

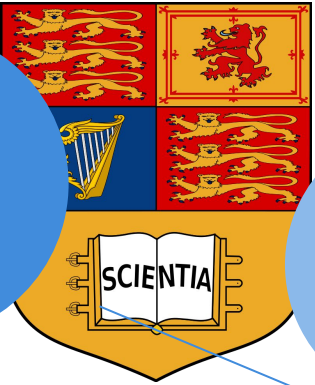


Adaptation of the Scholars programme



Access Projects 2024/25

Imperial Chemistry Scholars Summer School



Imperial Life Sciences Scholars Summer School

The Alan Turing Institute
Turing Summer Experience

University of Essex - Transitions and Transformations - Sanctuary & Inclusion



Harris Federation

Harris Experiences



Citizen Science, Bradford



Norfolk Virtual School

Norfolk County Council

UCL teacher training



GRT, K+ contributions, Virtual Schools and Academic English Support



Durham TSP (part of the MIP)



Naval Children's Charity

Naval Children's Charity

Make Your Mark
Arden Manchester and London



OxNE



KCL and Kent Schools TSP

LSE
THE LONDON SCHOOL OF ECONOMICS AND POLITICAL SCIENCE

LSE Springboard



MANCHESTER 1824
The University of Manchester

Sanctuary Scholars

Mary Hare





What is Sanctuary Scholars?

- A 'rotational' programme based around a Big Question
- The Big Question is developed by three PhD tutors focusing on an intersection of each of their research topics.
- KS4 Students
- Each tutor functions as a lead tutor for a school and a subject lead across all schools involved.
- Five tutorials in person across five weeks.
- Versatile Final Assignment – Written work, oral presentation, audio **soundscape**, art installation etc.
- Launch and Graduation event at HE Institution
- Focus on Sense of Belonging at HE



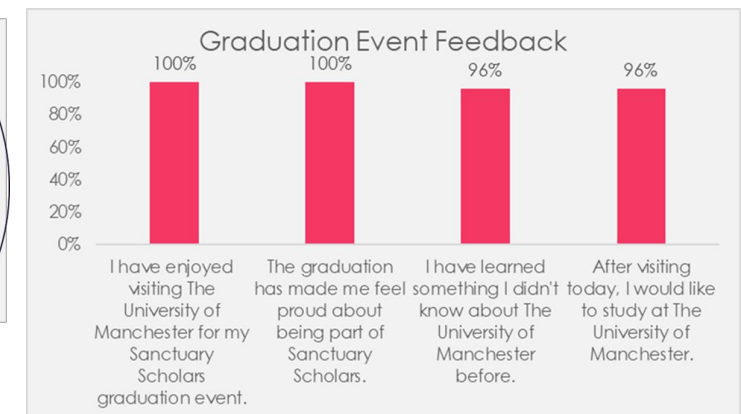
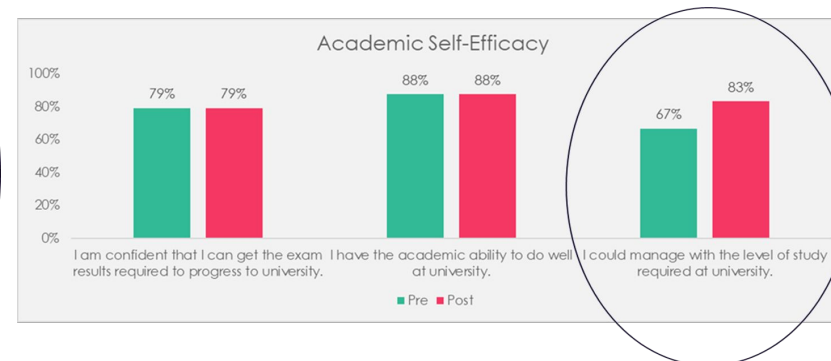
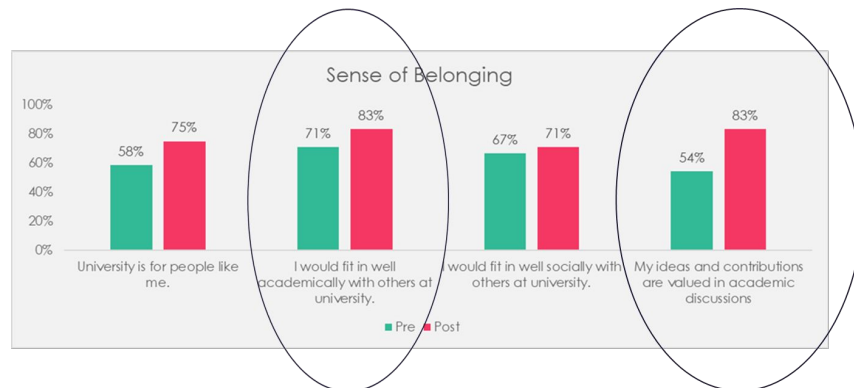
How did we go about adaptations?

- Consulted with sector leading experts (Refugee Education UK, Refugee Action, WeBelong, City of Sanctuary Network, Prof. Jo McIntyre)
- Developed two additional tutor training modules - one on Refugee Education and one on Trauma-sensitive teaching.
- Adjusted final assignment to be 'place-based' through a Soundscape - research suggests that this method supports sense of belonging for students with experience of displacement.



Impact Data Headlines

- A Large increase in sense of belonging in relation to HE institutions.
- Increased sense of Academic self-efficacy
- Raising aspirations to attend the partner university.



Adaptation of the Scholars Programme to work with Priority Groups



- Who are you looking to work with in widening participation activities this year?
- What might you need to consider when adapting a programme to ensure an equitable experience?
- Do you have examples of best practice that you can share?

Care Experienced participants



Pilot project with Norfolk Virtual School, based on the structure of The Scholars Programme



Delivered entirely online in after-school slots (4pm)



Bespoke graduation at UEA



Building on the project in the 24-25 academic year to include mentoring and a KS2 programme

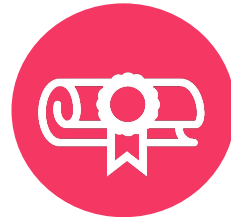
Virtual Schools – What adaptations did we make?



Design adapted and bespoke training given to optimise the course for delivery online



Supported the tutor to adapt content to accommodate a broader age group than normal (Year 9 to Year 11)



Worked with UEA to give the students specialist IAG and a special graduation



Focussed on Norfolk Virtual School's key target, academic writing skills

Virtual Schools – What were the key outcomes?



Three students submitted Final Assignments, of which **two received a 1st** and the third a **2.i**, with an average progression from Baseline to Final Assignment of a fantastic 26 marks.



At the end of the programme, 100% of students who completed the survey agreed that they had the academic ability to do well at university and they would fit well academically and socially when they were there.



I learnt a lot of skills [... and] now I know how to write an essay



Participant, KS4, Norfolk Virtual School

I was very impressed with the tenacity of The Brilliant Club to continue to find solutions and make the project happen. I feel that the content and professionalism was exceptional.
Norfolk Virtual School

Virtual Schools – What's next?



Bespoke mentoring for the KS4 students to continue their development



Running an Autumn project for KS2 students



Seeking to grow this work with other partners



Continuing our research into what this group needs



Join the Dots

Meet Sarah...





Right now, students from the **least advantaged** backgrounds have a **2 in 100** chance of accessing the most competitive universities, compared to **28 in 100** of the **most advantaged**.



This disadvantage doesn't disappear when they enter university.



This affects an individual beyond their time at university and impacts society as a whole.

Disadvantaged students are therefore

14x

more likely to miss out on life-changing higher education.

DISADVANTAGED STUDENTS ARE

20%

MORE LIKELY TO MISS OUT ON A 1ST OR 2:1 GRADE AT UNIVERSITY

University graduates are more likely to access professional careers and have higher rates of life satisfaction. On average, they will earn **£10,000** per year more than their peers.



We believe it is fundamentally unfair that a young person should miss out on these opportunities simply because of their background.

HEPI Student Academic Experience Survey 2024

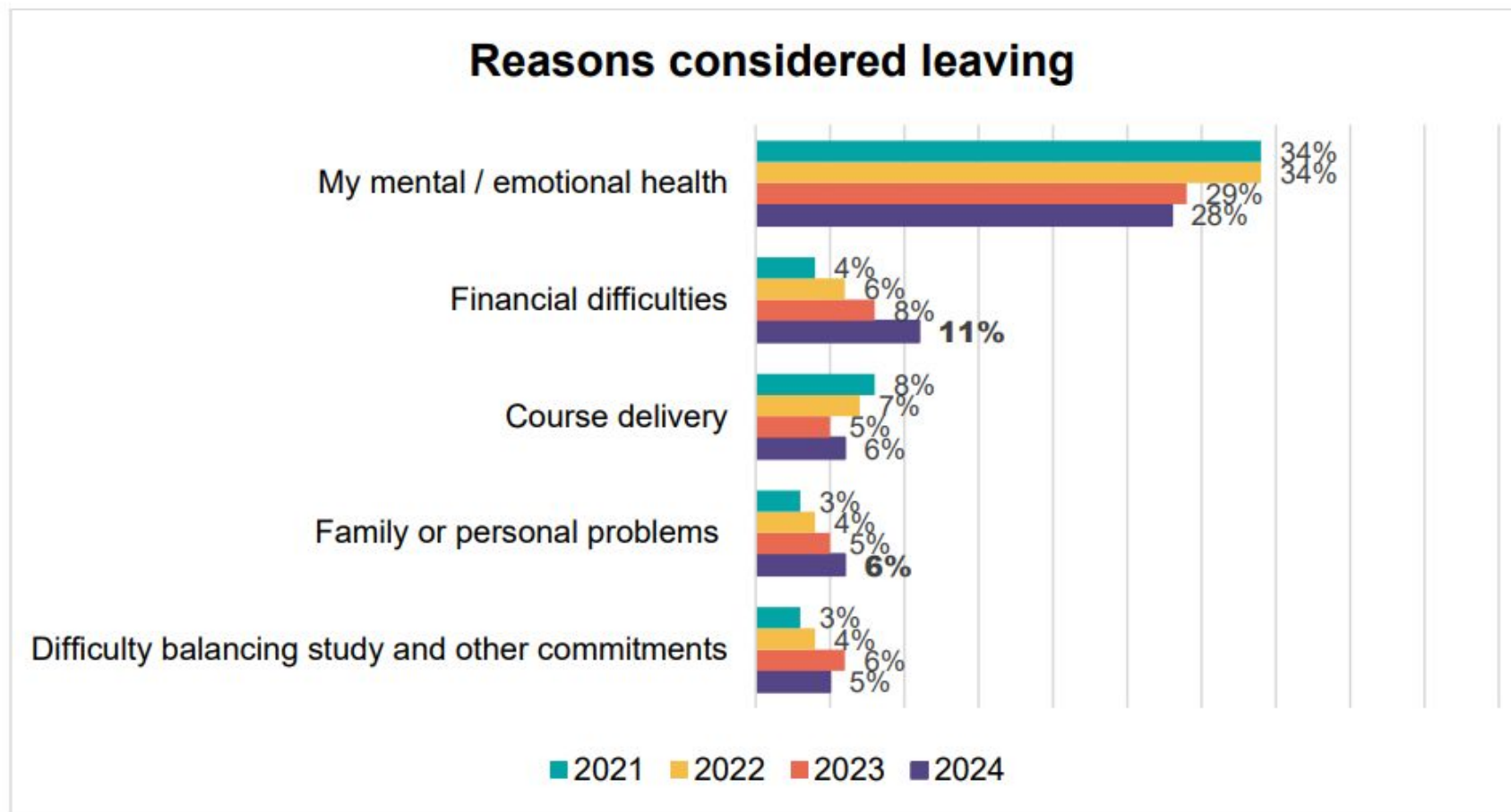


Chart displays top five mentions. Ranked in order of 2024 results. Chart based on all students who had considered leaving.

Roadblocks or Roadmaps: Navigating the University Journey







In collaboration with

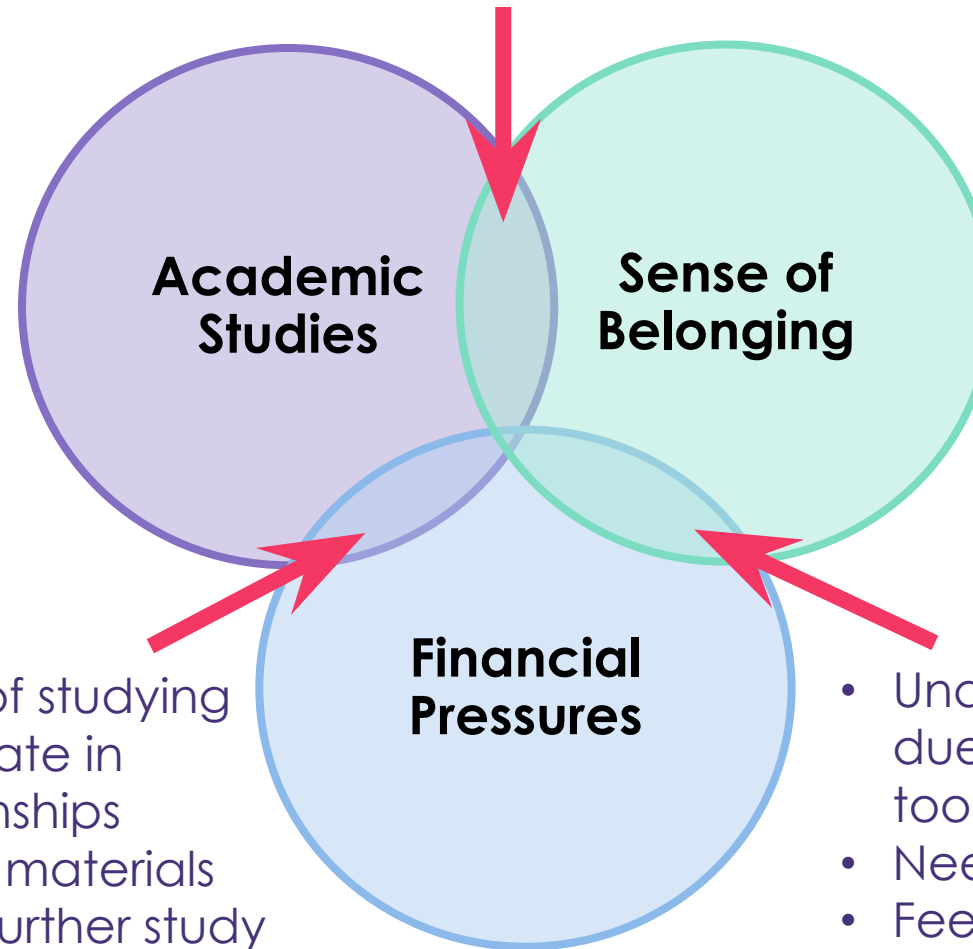
**Bridge
Group**
research
action
equality

Why did we decide to conduct this study?



-  Less advantaged students are more likely to drop out of their course and less likely to achieve a 2:1 in their studies.
-  Academic studies, sense of belonging, and financial pressures has been shown to impact student success in higher education. However, there is a lack of research explicitly exploring the connection between academic skills, sense of belonging, and financial barriers.
-  Much of the existing research on student success outcomes stems from studies conducted in the US with less evidence from UK contexts.
-  This research study addresses these gaps by collecting data from university students in the UK and examining the importance of outcomes related to student success across the undergraduate lifecycle stage.

- Doesn't feel academically confident
- Doesn't participate in academic or social activities to do with their studies



- Paid jobs instead of studying
- Unable to participate in volunteering/internships
- Expense of course materials
- Unable to pursue further study

- Unable to participate in socialising due to paid work, or because it is too expensive
- Needs to live far away from campus
- Feels a socioeconomic gulf between themselves and peers



Our approach

**Uni
Prep**

**Results
Day**

**Launch
Event**

**Uni
Support**

Oct - Aug

Aug

Oct

Oct - Feb

Live
sessions

Self-paced
sessions

Matching
with PhD
Coach

1:1
student &
PhD Coach
sessions

In-person
peer group
sessions

In the long term, we're measuring...



**Continuation
Rates**

**Degree
Outcomes**



...but we need to measure intermediate outcomes to know if it's working



Academic Self-Efficacy

- One of the highest correlators of attainment at HE
- Linked to higher persistence and retention

Study Strategies

- Students are more likely to practice self testing, less likely to cram and more likely to plan
-
- These are all associated with higher attainment

Sense of Belonging

- Associated with increased academic motivation and enjoyment in studies

1:1 Sessions with PhD Coach

Peer Group Sessions



TASO Transforming Access
and Student Outcomes
in Higher Education

Rapid review:

Intermediate outcomes for higher education access and success

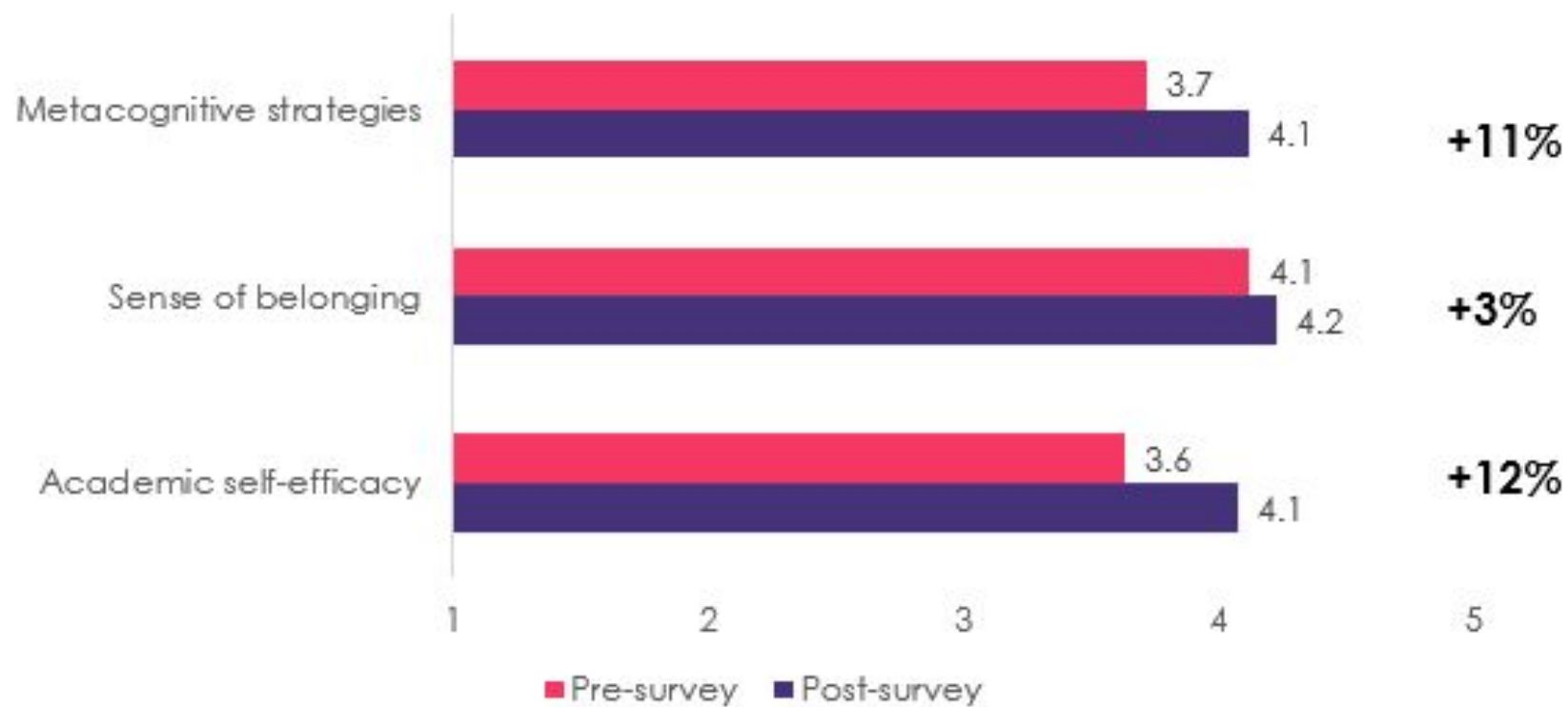
Authors: Hannah Thomson, Lauren Bellaera, Sonia Ilie, Konstantina Maragkou

November 2022





Intermediate Outcomes for 2023-24 Join the Dots Students





The University of Manchester





Learnings



Key Findings

- Academic success, sense of belonging and financial pressures are interconnected
- Students from less advantaged backgrounds are more likely to drop out and less likely to secure a 2:1 or higher
- Students from less advantaged backgrounds feel less well equipped for university study and are more impacted by financial pressures than their more advantaged peers
- Supporting students to make the transition from school to university, and building the study strategies, academic self-efficacy and sense of belonging to take them beyond first year, is critical to their longer-term outcomes

Learnings



What will you take away from this session and apply to your own practice?

[Roadblocks-or-Roadmaps.pdf](#)

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Join
the
club



thebrilliantclub.org