

THE ACCESS PROJECT
**PROGRAMME
FOR SCHOOLS**



The Access Project



Their programme of tutoring and impartial advice is a great example of the sustained, targeted, collaborative and robustly evaluated work we need into the future. Most importantly, it is demonstrably helping young people to unlock their potential by achieving the grades they need to get into the university of their choice.

Chris Milward

Director for fair access and participation.
Office for Students

Our vision is for every young person, regardless of background, to make the most of education, unlocking their potential & creating a fairer society. Through our deep and collaborative partnerships with our partner schools we work to achieve this by supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds to access top universities. We achieve this with a unique combination of tuition and in-school mentoring. Our intervention is sustained and long term. We work with students to make good applications, get the grades and transition to university.

Since The Access Project's inception by a North London Secondary School teacher 12 years ago, The Access Project has grown at pace, working in schools across London, the East and West Midlands and Bradford. In that time The Access Project has invested in both its programme design and monitoring and evaluation. This has meant that we have seen our impact continue to grow, year on year. 5 years ago, The Access Project students were twice as likely as their peers to attend a top third university; our students are now 4 times as likely to secure a place.

We want to ensure that every student on the programme has the best chance to succeed. We are proud of the open channels of communication we establish and our schools consistently renew contracts with us. We would welcome the opportunity to speak to you about a potential partnership and hope the following information helps you to further understand our programme and its impact.



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The results and the value for money speak for themselves, which is why we have extended our contract with The Access Project twice. There is nowhere else our students could get this level of academic support and mentoring.

Andrew Burns

Executive Principal of Ormiston Academies Trust, West Midlands

WHY
WE ARE
NEEDED



Students from disadvantaged backgrounds are **six times less likely** to attend top universities than those from wealthier backgrounds
(Office for Students 2020)



The route to the top 40 to 50 universities in the UK is **difficult to navigate** without a support network



The average attainment gap between students from the most advantaged and most disadvantaged backgrounds is **18 months** by the end of key stage four
(Education Policy Institute 2019)



Students from wealthy backgrounds are still more likely to go on from university to **secure high paying jobs** and occupy positions of influence



Why we are needed

Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are hugely under-represented at top universities. Before COVID, students from wealthier backgrounds were six times more likely to go to top universities in the UK. The EEF predicts that this gap will only widen as the effects of school closures and a lack of online learning and catch up opportunities starts to show.

"... being born disadvantaged means you may have to overcome a series of barriers to ensure you and your children are not stuck in the same trap."

Dame Martina Milburn
Chief Executive of the Prince's Trust

"Nobody in my family has had these opportunities before and I don't want to waste them. I know people from my background don't get these opportunities. I don't want to let my circumstances hold me back"

Aamirah, Year 10
King Solomon Academy, London

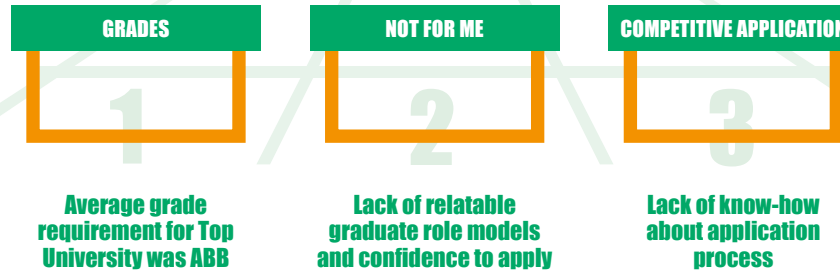
"I see it as our school's mission to encourage our students to break free of their assumptions by giving them both the education and the aspiration they need to exceed even their own expectations, but recognised that the Academy would need specialist input to help those economically disadvantaged students whose academic promise may not be matched by the necessary learning resource or cultural capital at home, which is why we brought The Access Project on board."

Mark Cottingham
Principal, Shirebrook Academy, East Midlands

"The Access Project has broken down the stigma around top universities not being attainable for someone like me. It has given me more direction and is helping me down this path"

Halima, Year 12
Holte School, West Midlands

BARRIERS TO GOING TO UNIVERSITY



The Access Project has identified three main barriers that students from disadvantaged backgrounds must overcome to progress to a top third university.

1 Lower academic grades than they are capable of achieving:
Disadvantaged young people typically do not have the same support at home as their more privileged peers. They are unlikely to have a quiet study space, books, or access to a computer to study independently. As a result, they can achieve lower grades than their peers.

2 See university as “not for me”:
Typically, the young people we work with will be the 1st generation in their family to go to university; they will have few academic role models. University is not something many see for their own future, despite being as capable as their more advantaged peers.

3 Not making competitive applications:
Without a high-quality application, students stand little chance of placing at a top-third ranked university. They need guidance to work on the skills and experiences that will make their application memorable, relevant and worthy. They need the self-belief that those experiences are what universities are looking for.

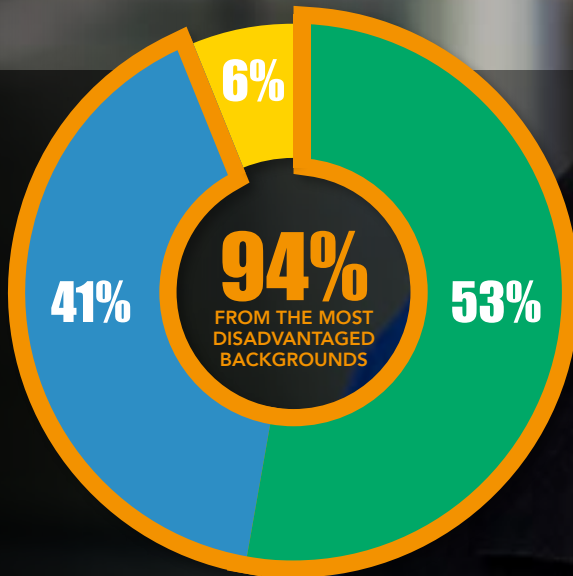
Who we work with

We work with a selected cohort of disadvantaged students in your school.



The Access Project is committed to working with students who are least likely to be represented at top universities in the UK. **In 2018/19 94% of The Access Project's students came from the most disadvantaged backgrounds.**

We aim to support students on free school meals, those in care or care leavers, pupil premium pupils or those young people in an area of low access to Higher Education.



KEY



PRIORITY PLUS

Free School Meals

OR

In LEA Care/ Care leaver

OR

Pupil Premium and living in an area of low access to HE



PRIORITY

Pupil Premium

OR

Living in an area of low access to HE



NONE

Does not meet formal disadvantage criteria



**The service the University Access
Officer offers is absolutely brilliant.**

Claudette Bailey-Morrissey
Student Aspirations Project Manager,
Central Foundation Girls' School, London

The programme: University Access Officers

A skilled University Access Officer (UAO) is placed in school two days per week. The UAO runs the programme: recruiting students, matching them with an academic tutor, and delivering all of our bespoke in-school support. They work closely with the school to ensure that the right students are accepted onto the programme, and that the programme complements existing school support around university admissions. They facilitate the relationship between the tutor and the student and closely monitor progress and attendance. UAOs spend one day per week

with The Access Project, receiving training and updates around the latest developments in university admissions and will share these insights with school staff.



In school my University Access Officer is always there to make me feel happy and comfortable with tutorials and my journey to university.

Beth
Shirebrook Academy, Year 10, East Midlands



The programme: Tutoring and Mentoring

Tutoring

Each student on the programme is matched with an academic tutor who they meet for an hour a week. As well as providing tuition our tutors work at some of the most recognised and prestigious organisations in the UK. This allows our students to gain valuable insight into the workplace and exposes them to people and situations that they would otherwise be unlikely to experience.

- ✓ Our tutors are DBS checked and have passed Level 2 Safeguarding training
- ✓ All tutors either have an A Level or degree in their tutoring subject or relevant field
- ✓ The Access Project collects teacher feedback and provides resources to tutors to ensure tutorials are targeted and impactful
- ✓ Tutoring is either conducted online through our bespoke platform or face-to-face. Face-to-face tutoring is currently paused and the programme moved online in 2020, tutorials are conducted using our bespoke platform

Mentoring

The Access Project's intensive mentoring programme is designed to increase students' motivation, knowledge, independence and academic self efficacy. Each student interaction is designed to meet specific outcomes that sit under one of these four goals. Our mentoring programme is constantly monitored. Each year our programme undergoes a comprehensive review and is adapted to meet the needs of our students.

We support students with the following:

- ✓ Revision skills
- ✓ Making good A Level choices
- ✓ Applying for and completing extra and super curricular opportunities
- ✓ Making a good application to university
- ✓ Transitioning to university



“

Now I am at Oxford, having regular check-ups from The Access Project with how we are doing at university is really useful. They make sure that the little things aren't getting to you and we can form part of a community at university and not feel lost or alienated. If I was ever concerned, I know I could always contact The Access Project on whatever issues I had.

Eduardo Estevez

Former student at Globe Academy,
University of Oxford, Biological Sciences

”

CASE STUDY

Nafees, Chelsea Academy, Year 12, London



Tell us about you

I live in Ladbroke Grove, West London and have been a student at Chelsea Academy since Year 7. I live at home with my parents who are both unemployed and my younger brother who is in Year 9. I have been on The Access Project since Year 10 being tutored in Spanish and now Maths.

Tell us about your experience on The Access Project

There are a lot of people who pay a lot of money to have support like tutoring but being able to get it for free is an amazing opportunity. The tutoring really helps you with the subjects you struggle with and I ended up going from a 3 to an 8 at GCSE and learned to love it. My tutors have always been passionate about helping me.

Without The Access Project I wouldn't have these options or knowledge about university and my future. I can always go to my UAO who is in school if I have any questions.

Tell us about your hopes for the future

After getting involved with The Access Project's Oxbridge society I am now thinking about applying to study Engineering there. I think with all the support we get from The Access Project will guide me through this and get me on this path.

In addition to our core programme we offer:



BESPOKE TRIPS

to universities



WORK EXPERIENCE

opportunities and exposure to careers through a tutor immersed in the professional world



EVENTS

dedicated to a greater understanding of careers and a regular newsletter containing enrichment opportunities



EXTRA CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

for students applying to study at Oxford and Cambridge, and those applying for Medicine courses

Supplementary Provision

University trips

We run bespoke trips to top universities to encourage students to see themselves belonging at elite institutions, and support them once they are there through an alumni network of students from similar backgrounds.

Work experience and career exposure

Work experience placements are often gained through a student's personal or familial networks. Through our extensive partnerships with businesses we have been able to offer students the opportunity to level the playing field, ensuring they have extracurricular experiences to write about when making university applications and improving their soft skills. Work experience partners have included: The Civil Service, Linklaters, Royal London Hospital, Money & Mental Health Policy Institute, CDC Group.

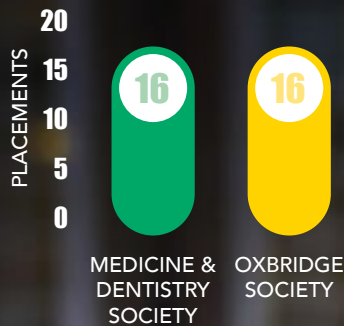
Events

In addition to this we run events dedicated to a greater understanding of careers and send students a termly newsletter containing enrichment opportunities.

Societies

To help students applying to the most elite institutions or courses we run the 'Oxbridge' and 'Medicine and Dentistry' societies. We run a series of events each year, delivered in partnership with sector experts. Time is spent preparing applications, on mock interviews, admissions test preparation, university visits and networking with graduates.

Society Placements 2019-20



Academic support is only a part of what The Access Project provides, it also gives students a chance to improve their cultural capital and commercial awareness. Everything from my tutors' jobs, the offices they were based at and their experiences at work motivated me to work hard on my studies.

Fatos is a Mergers and Acquisitions Technology Consultant at KPMG. Following the The Access Project programme she studied Spanish at the University of Bristol, as soon as she graduated she started volunteering as a tutor. Fatos became a The Access Project trustee in 2018.



University Impact

We have a strong track record in using our: unique programme to help bright young people from the most disadvantaged backgrounds get into the country's leading 40-50 universities



The Access Project students are

4x as likely

to go to a top university than similarly disadvantaged peers, analysis by UCAS shows



4x

61%

COMPARED TO

15%

When we say our students are four times as likely to place at a top third university this is because the UCAS data shows that **61% of The Access Project's students place at Top Thirds** compared to 15% of students from similarly disadvantaged backgrounds

The Access Project helps more students access top universities every year

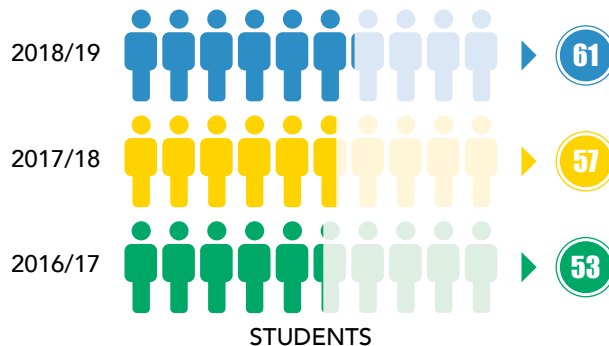
In 2018/19

61% of our students placed at Top Third institutions

Up from

57% the year before and

53% in 2016/17



“The tutors who support ‘Central’ girls are having a huge impact not only on improving student grades but also on raising their self esteem and confidence. The legacy of The Access Project tutor will be felt by these students in the short term as they reach their aspirational grades, but really understood and recognised in the long term as these students start careers in places they never though they could access or even dreamed existed.

Esther Holland

Headteacher, Central Foundation Girls' School, London



“

I would never have received the brilliant one-to-one help I've had without The Access Project. At times it isn't possible to tailor classroom support but The Access Project's support is designed to work just for me which has made me a lot more confident in my abilities.

Ben studied for his GCSEs with The Access Project at Shirebrook Academy in the East Midlands. In 2020, he achieved the best results in his year, gaining eight 9 grades and one 8.

GCSE Impact

According to analysis by FFT Education Datalab:

GCSE students who work with The Access Project for 2 years make

five months more progress

in their tutored subject than similarly disadvantaged peers

Pupils who attended a high number of sessions at GCSE (21+ sessions) make seven months more progress in their tutored subject than similar peers, that's over a grade more



Male students

on The Access Project at GCSE make

six months more progress

than similar peers in their tutored subject, nearly a grade more progress



Female students

with The Access Project are estimated to make

four months more progress

in their tutored subject at GCSE than comparable peers



The Access Project has a significant impact on the performance of male students at GCSE

A Level Impact

According to analysis by FFT Education Datalab:

A Level students who have
23+ tutorials
 with The Access Project make
six months more progress
 in their tutored subject than
 similarly disadvantaged peers



The Access Project students make
three months more progress
 on average in their tutored subject if they are
tutored over two years. That's around
a third of a grade



Year 13 The Access Project pupils
attained higher scores
across their best three A-Levels than pupils
 in a matched control group, of around a
quarter of a grade
 per subject



“

The Access Project has pushed our pupils in Years 10-13 to aim for high grades and top universities and allowed them to develop sustained, high quality tutorial partnerships which have inspired them to aim high.

Max Haimendorf OBE
Principal, King Solomon Academy. partnerships

IMPROVED
CONFIDENCE &
MOTIVATION



**Over the past two years
students have told us that:**

The Access Project has
helped me become more
confident

89%
agree

The Access Project has
helped me become more
independent

89%
agree

Improved confidence & motivation

The programme also helps create a culture of independence and increases confidence amongst students, honing their soft skills so that they are prepared to be the best they can when trying to enter the most prestigious learning institutions in the UK. These soft skills are then transferred to their time at university and into the world of work.

Many of our students can initially lack confidence and feel red brick universities are not places for them. The Access Project helps restore their faith and improve their self-efficacy giving them the belief they can do it. Our University Access Officers give bespoke, practical advice and guidance to students, helping them to understand all of their options and be inspired and excited by the career prospects available to them.

Since joining The Access Project I feel more **motivated** to aim for a top university

88% agree

The Access Project has given me a **better understanding** of how to get to a top university

90% agree

I feel more **positive** about my future since being on The Access Project

89% agree



The Access Project has opened a lot of doors for me, the one of most significance being self-belief. It moulds us into the best version of ourselves.

Aklema
Holte School, Year 12, West Midlands



“

The Access Project has changed my life dramatically. Before being part of The Access Project the only places I went were to school and my karate lesson, which I only went to on occasion as I wasn't confident in myself to go. Since joining The Access Project, I have had the confidence to travel to new places due to tutoring, pursue my passion in acting, attend more karate lessons and have even started to teach the beginner lessons with the other teachers. In addition, thanks to The Access Project I have found a stronger motivation to work hard and to learn more outside the curriculum of GCSEs and apply it to my exam.

Callum

Year 11, Woolwich Polytechnic School, London

The Access Project's Covid Response

At the start of the pandemic The Access Project took the bold decision to move both the mentoring programme and academic tutoring online. The young people we support face huge barriers on their journey through the education system. Those barriers are even more daunting now in light of the pandemic. Recent analysis by the Education Endowment Foundation found that school closures are estimated to widen the attainment gap between disadvantaged students and their peers by up to 75% (June 2020).

Moving the programme online ensured that we continued to help the most disadvantaged students close the gap on their more advantaged peers.

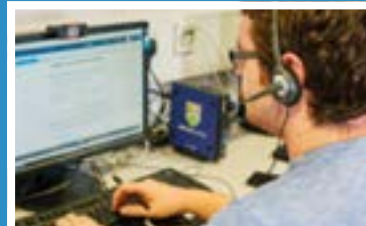
The Access Project committed to not only delivering all provision as planned but increased the level of 1:1 pastoral support we provided to students. With the support of schools & volunteers during lockdown we provided more than 5,600 hours of tuition and mentoring to our students. We are sector leading and have shared best practices with other organisations working in this space.

A key challenge of moving the programme online was students' access to digital technology. Through our business partnerships we are able to provide students across the programme with laptops, Microsoft Office subscriptions and headsets to drown out noisy siblings.

In addition we were on hand to support students on results day and for the following 2 weeks, providing understanding and guidance to our students in relation to the governmental U-Turn.

In order to provide the best possible experience for students we made the decision to continue online tutoring during the academic year 2020-21. We believed that this would guarantee reliable delivery in challenging times. We set about a tendering process for a new online provider, mapping out our needs and feeding in all those years of tutor and student feedback. Our online delivery providers Infiniti Platforms, a high quality, custom built platform on which students and tutors can hold their tutorials, with a dedicated support team on hand should they require any assistance.

- ✓ **OVER 4500 HOURS OF ONLINE TUTORIALS**
- ✓ **1121 ONE-TO-ONE SESSIONS**
- ✓ **1003 CHECK-INS AFTER SCHOOLS CLOSED**
- ✓ **96 SCHOOL WORKSHOPS (INCLUDING 28 PARENTS' EVENINGS)**





**Thank you for doing all
this for our students.**

J.Taylor
Principal, University Academy Engineering, London

Thanks to the following schools:

Ark Globe Academy

Ashfield School

Central Foundation Boys' School

Central Foundation Girls' School

Chelsea Academy

The, City Academy Hackney

City of London Academy Highbury Grove

City of London Academy Islington

Colmers School and Sixth Form

George Green's School

Haggerston School

Holte School

Hornsey School for Girls

Kensington Aldridge Academy

King Solomon Academy

Lilian Baylis Technology School

Lister Community School

Moseley School

Norwood School

Oasis Academy Enfield

Oasis Academy Hadley

Ormiston Forge Academy

Shirebrook Academy

St George's Roman Catholic School

St Thomas More Catholic School

University Academy of Engineering South Bank

Urswick School

Waverley School

West Nottinghamshire College

Wood Green Academy

Woolwich Polytechnic School



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Thanks we are looking forward to continuing the wonderful relationship we have with The Access Project.

Cathal Gregory

Headteacher, St George's Catholic School London





The Dock, Tobacco Quay,
Wapping Lane, London E1W 2SF

www.theaccessproject.org.uk