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**Amber: Ambitions Evaluation
and Research
Evaluation of the South
Bristol Youth Ambitions
Programme
(Phase 1 and Phase 3): Interim
Report, September 2016**

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SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

Amber: Ambitions Evaluation and Research

Evaluation of the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme (Phase 1 and Phase 3): Interim Report, September 2016

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Executive Summary

1. Introduction

1.1 This interim report outlines findings from the first academic year of the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme evaluation. The Ambitions Programme is a widening participation programme provided by South Bristol Youth, the University of the West of England, and the University of Bristol, to encourage pupils from six schools in South Bristol to consider participation in Higher Education (HE) as a possibility for the future. Selected pupils take part in a range of activities during Years 8, 9, 10 and 11, to help them find out more about university and consider possible careers. This evaluation focuses on provision for pupils in Year 8 and Year 10.

1.2 Aims of the Ambitions Programme are based around four key areas:

- Participation in HE;
- Supporting young people's decision making about their future;
- Working with parents/carers around supporting their children to make informed choices about their future;
- Supporting schools to take up WP opportunities offered to pupils from a range of organisations.

1.3 The six schools who form part of South Bristol Youth and whose pupils participate in the Ambitions Programme all have catchment areas with above-average numbers of pupils coming from areas of deprivation (in the lowest 20% on different deprivation indices). Two of the schools in particular have an overwhelming majority of pupils from this type of area.

1.4 The evaluation uses a wide range of methods to understand how well South Bristol Youth is meeting its aims. These include: analysis of data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, on trends in HE participation in South Bristol; analysis of pupil attainment, attendance and behaviour data; analysis of pupil and parent attendance at Ambitions Programme events; surveys with pupils and parents; and interviews and focus groups with Ambitions Programme stakeholders including those who deliver the programme, pupils, parents, and school staff.

2. HESA Data Analysis

2.1 Analysis of HESA data shows that the percentages of young people from South Bristol participating in HE was far below the national average (15.7% compared with 35.5%), and this gap is not closing. Participation rates varied considerably across the South Bristol wards. Although GCSE results in South Bristol are low in comparison to the national average, HE participation is still lower than would be expected when GCSE results are taken into account.

2.2 The University of the West of England is the most popular university for young people from South Bristol, attended by 24% of those who progressed to HE. Of the top ten most popular universities, nine were in Wales and the South West, highlighting that the majority of young people choose universities that are close to or easily accessible from home. Compared with the National Average, a higher proportion of young people from South Bristol who attended HE lived at home during term time (30% compared to 26% nationally).

2.3 The percentage of HE entrants from South Bristol wards going to a Russell Group (RG) university was 21% compared with a national average of 28%. This figure varies widely between wards. The most popular subjects studied were creative arts and design, biological sciences, business and administration, and social studies (8.0%).

2.4 A third (33%) of HE entrants from South Bristol had a parent or guardian with HE qualifications (compared with the national average of 43%), although this varied widely across wards.

3. Analysis of Student- and School-Level Data

3.1 To date we have not yet received data from some schools on pupil attendance, attainment, and behaviour, so have not yet been able to carry out this analysis. This is despite all schools agreeing to the content and timescale of data collection.

4. Perspectives of South Bristol Youth Delivery Team

4.1 Amy Hayhurst's role as Widening Participation Officer for South Bristol Youth is crucial for the effective delivery of the Ambitions Programme. She is excellent at building and maintaining relationships with all stakeholders, and at logistical organisation which enables the programme to run. This was mentioned by university staff and school staff.

4.2 Involvement and commitment of schools to the Ambitions Programme is crucial for it to run effectively. This includes: allowing time off timetable for pupils; prompt communication with the South Bristol Youth team especially around dates and times for scheduling; ensuring that pupils arrive promptly at sessions; resource in terms of teachers attending sessions; and provision of data as agreed to the evaluation team.

4.3 Student Ambassadors play an important role in delivery of the Ambitions Programme, occupying a position between a peer and an adult which enables pupils to feel confident in asking them questions about university. However, some Student Ambassadors felt that they wanted to be better-prepared for some sessions which they delivered.

4.4 The attainment of pupils from South Bristol is a key issue for the University of Bristol: this needs to be addressed so that pupils are able to have realistic ambitions of attending this university.

4.5 The delivery team spoke about their aim to make the programme sessions different from school, although reports from pupils suggest that this was not achieved in some sessions, particularly the school-based ones.

5. Attendance at Ambitions Programme Events

5.1 Attendance data were not complete for all schools for some of the events, so data presented were not always accurate. Events held during the school day were generally well-attended by most schools. However, events held in the evening, school holidays, particularly those which parents were invited to, were very poorly attended, highlighting the need for mechanisms to support parental engagement in the programme.

6. Perspective of Participating Pupils

6.1 Pupils fell into four main groups: those who are future-focussed and are already considering HE, and are engaging well with the Ambitions Programme; those who have some idea of what they might like to do in the future and are likely to continue with full-time education post-16 and possibly progress to HE, and are engaging well with the Ambitions Programme; those who at present do not see a future that they think requires HE but have given some thought to possible jobs, and engage with the programme activities that are fun and active; and those who do not know what they are planning to do and have little direction, and on whom the programme has little immediate impact. These pupils have different needs from the programme.

6.2 The events that took place out of school and involved different interactive activities were generally well-received. Pupils also appreciated the opportunity to visit universities to understand what they were like, and to interact with Student Ambassadors. Events that involved sitting and listening, particularly after-school events, were not well-received by pupils, and some were seen as not well-organised. In-school events were poorly recalled, suggesting that they merged into the general day-to-day life of lessons. Attending to pedagogical aspects of the programme could be helpful.

6.3 Meeting pupils from other schools is seen as a benefit of the programme, although pupils felt that this could be better organised at times (such as grouping together pupils with similar interests), especially as not all are confident enough to deal with some situations effectively.

7. Parents' Perspectives

7.1 Parents were largely supportive of the idea that all young people should be able to go to university, and of the idea that their child might go. While some parents believed that their children had been chosen for the programme because they had the potential to go to university, others were not sure why their child was participating. They could, however, see benefits for their children such as improved confidence and being more willing to discuss university as an option.

7.2 Parents had attended few programme events but those who had been enjoyed the celebration event (Year 8 pupils) or graduation ceremony (Year 10 pupils). Transport to events, and not having enough advance notice, were among reasons given for not attending sessions.

7.3 Parents said that they wanted advice about supporting their child's decision making about university. While the majority said that they could ask staff from South Bristol Youth, a teacher or other staff at their child's school, and family or friends, very few have actually discussed university with school.

7.4 Attainment and the availability of post-16 educational opportunities were discussed by parents as potential barriers to HE participation for their children.

7.5 Parents discussed that if their child went to university, there would be a tension between their child moving out of home and gaining independence, or staying at home because it was better financially. This was discussed in relation to the location of university.

8. The Perspective of School Staff

8.1 School staff were very positive about the Ambitions Programme, believing that it helped develop pupils' confidence in considering university as an option, and also developing their social skills.

8.2 Selection by school staff of pupils for the Ambitions Programme varies widely between schools. All schools choose pupils who would be first in their family to attend university, and have the potential to attend. However, some schools do not choose their "gifted and talented" pupils as they either are involved in other programmes or are believed not to be in need of additional support. Some schools choose C/D borderline pupils because they believe that participation in the programme will encourage pupils to work harder for their GCSE examinations.

8.3 School staff discussed the need to engage parents in the Ambitions Programme, as parents are one of the key influences for young people's decision making about university and it is important that they are informed. This also highlighted the importance of teachers being able to support young people's decision making about progression to HE, as not all parents are informed about university.

8.4 The reluctance of young people to move away from South Bristol, and the lack of post-16 academic provision in South Bristol were both cited as barriers to increasing HE participation among young people.

8.5 There was a tension between teachers wanting pupils to have high aspirations, and wanting them not to "over-aspire" to HE courses or careers which were beyond their academic ability. This highlights the importance of schools having conversations with young people about the range of jobs and careers that are available within a particular field, for example veterinary science or medical sciences.

8.6 Some schools feel inundated with support from a range of providers, which highlighted the need for coordination between South Bristol schools and provision of widening participation initiatives.

9. As a continuation of the Executive Summary, we point to Chapter 11, which includes the recommendations of the evaluation.

Chapter 1: Introduction

South Bristol Youth is a charity whose focus is providing opportunities to support the development and future lives of young people in South Bristol. The charity is a consortium of six secondary schools in South Bristol, Bristol City Football Club, The Park in Knowle West, the University of the West of England, and the University of Bristol. One of the programmes provided by South Bristol Youth is the Ambitions Programme, which is a widening participation programme for pupils in years 8 to 11 in the six member schools. Over a period of 4 years, pupils take part in a variety of activities informing them about what university is like, how it relates to different career options, and how they can get into university.

This evaluation focuses on Phase 1 (for Year 8 pupils) and Phase 3 (for Year 10 pupils) of the Ambitions Programme which are delivered by the University of the West of England (UWE), and the University of Bristol (UoB) respectively. Around 30 Year 8 pupils from each school are selected to participate in Phase 1, and around 20 Year 10 pupils from each school are selected to participate in Phase 3. Each phase includes a range of core programme activities for participating pupils, and Phase 3 includes further optional activities, detailed in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme Phase 1 and Phase 3 Activities

Phase 1 Core Activities (Year 8 pupils)		
Date	Activity	Location
<i>December 2015</i>	Team Building Day	UWE
<i>January 2016</i>	What is University?	School
<i>February 2016</i>	Information Evening for Parents and Carers	Bristol City Football Club
<i>March 2016</i>	Future Choices	School
<i>March 2016</i>	Campus Visit	UWE
<i>May 2016</i>	Where am I now?	School
<i>June 2016</i>	Evening Celebration Event	UWE
Phase 3 Core Activities (Year 10 pupils)		
Date	Activity	Location
<i>November 2015</i>	Team Building Day	Goblin Combe Outdoor Education
<i>December 2015</i>	Campus Visit	UoB
<i>January 2016</i>	Learning Styles (Evening)	Bristol City Football Club
<i>February 2016</i>	Future Options (Evening)	Bristol City Football Club
<i>February 2016</i>	Information Evening for Parents and Carers	Bristol City Football Club
<i>March 2016</i>	Sports/Societies Taster Day	UoB
<i>April 2016</i>	Academic Taster Lectures	UoB
<i>June 2016</i>	Graduation	UoB
Phase 3 Optional Activities (Year 10 pupils)		
Date	Activity	Location
<i>March 2016</i>	Oxford University Visit	Oxford University
<i>March 2016</i>	University of Reading Visit	University of Reading
<i>April 2016</i>	Cardiff Metropolitan University Visit	Cardiff Metropolitan University
<i>July 2016</i>	Summer School	UWE

Sessions are arranged by Amy Hayhurst, the Widening Participation Officer for South Bristol Youth, Di Stone, the UWE Lead for Ambitions Phase 1, and Tom Prince, the UoB Lead for Ambitions Phase 3. Amy is present at all the sessions but they are delivered by the University Lead and by Student Ambassadors from the relevant university.

The first task undertaken by the evaluation team was to work with South Bristol Youth to develop a Theory of Change, which outlines the aims and related outcomes of the Ambitions Programme, alongside the expected mechanisms which will support these outcomes. The aims and outcomes focused on four main areas¹:

- Participation in HE;
- Supporting young people's decision making about their future;
- Working with parents/carers around supporting their children to make informed choices about their future;
- Supporting schools to take up WP opportunities offered to pupils from a range of organisations.

The specifics of each of these aims and outcomes are detailed in Table 1.2, below.

Table 1.2: Aims and expected outcomes of the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme

Participation: To increase the number of young people in South Bristol participating in Higher Education

<i>Aims</i>	<i>Expected Outcomes</i>
a) Support young people who previously would not have considered HE but have the potential to enter HE, to consider it as an option for themselves (including UoB and UWE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More young people in South Bristol applying to (and participating in) HE

Young People: To support young people to make informed choices about their future

<i>Aims</i>	<i>Expected Outcomes</i>
a) Support young people who previously would not have considered HE but have the potential to enter HE, to consider it as an option for themselves b) Inform young people about grades and subjects that are needed to access HE, including relevant outreach programmes which may lead to contextual offers c) Give young people and their families experiences of HE d) Enable young people to meet individuals who are in roles that they would not normally encounter in their immediate locality e) Challenge common myths of HE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people considering HE, including UoB and UWE, as an option for their future • Young people being able to relate their GCSE and post-16 participation choices to their future pathways • Young people being able to relate their GCSE and post-16 performance to their future pathways • Young people understanding that there are differences between universities in terms of entrance requirements, subjects offered, curriculum content, teaching methods, contact time, physical layout of the university and so on. • Young people recognising potential barriers to future participation and understanding ways they may be overcome

Parents: To work with parents/carers about ways they can support their children to make informed choices

<i>Aims</i>	<i>Expected Outcomes</i>
a) Challenge common myths of HE b) Provide parents and carers with information about a wide range of aspects of HE c) Encourage parents/carers to ask questions about the options available to their child	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents participating in SBY activities • Parents considering HE as an option for their child's future • Parents being included/participating in their child's decision making about the future.

¹ It was not appropriate to include increased academic attainment as a primary aim of the Ambitions Programme, because Ambitions Programme activities do not focus directly on academic work.

- d) Provide a familiar contact (Amy) to answer questions about university at any time (not just when we meet with parents/carers)
- Parents/carers recognising potential barriers to young people's future participation and understanding ways they may be overcome (eg structural issues)

Schools: To support schools to take up all opportunities offered to pupils to participate in WP activities from SBY, UoB, UWE and other local universities, and other organisations.

Aims

- a) Provide additional capacity and support in schools with regard to FE/HE advice
- b) Inform schools of the potential routes into, through, and after university
- c) Inform schools of the WP opportunities available to them from local universities (e.g. UoB, UWE, Western Outreach Network)
- d) Inform schools of any opportunities at university across the UK whereby pupils may be entitled to a reduced offer (e.g. the Access to ... courses, Realising Opportunities, whether any universities take into account contextual factors)
- e) Provide a presence at careers fairs, parents' evenings and other similar events

Expected Outcomes

- Presence/involvement of SBY at school events
- Teachers considering HE as an option for their pupils' futures
- Schools articulating a coherent and full WP/progression approach and rationale for that, inclusion of support for WP/progression in development plan/SIP
- Schools articulating the role that SBY plays in their approach to WP/progression, and reasons for involvement with SBY.

The evaluation was designed to explore these aims and expected outcomes.

Chapter 2: The South Bristol Context

In order to understand the context that South Bristol Youth is operating within, the evaluation team have undertaken an analysis of local area deprivation indices based on the student intake of schools participating in the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme 2015/16. This analysis compares relative levels of deprivation in the catchment areas of these schools. Measures include an Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) and Education, Skills and Training Deprivation. For more information about these indices, please see Appendix 1.

To map the levels of relative deprivation in the SBY school catchment areas, an anonymised list of the neighbourhoods in which pupils live was obtained from Bristol City Council and this was then matched to the deprivation indices. The deprivation indices show which neighbourhoods are the most disadvantaged and which the least.

2.1 Deprivation Indices for SBY schools

Fig. 2.1 is a map showing the location of the six schools participating in the SBY Ambitions programme 2015/2016. As Fig. 1 shows, Ashton Park school is to the North of the South Bristol area (Southville ward) while Bedminster Down (Bedminster ward), Merchants' Academy and Bridge Learning Campus (Hartcliffe ward) are to the South and Oasis Academy John Williams (Hengrove ward) and Oasis Academy Brislington (Brislington West ward) to the South East.

Fig. 2.1 Location of Schools Participating in the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme 2015/16

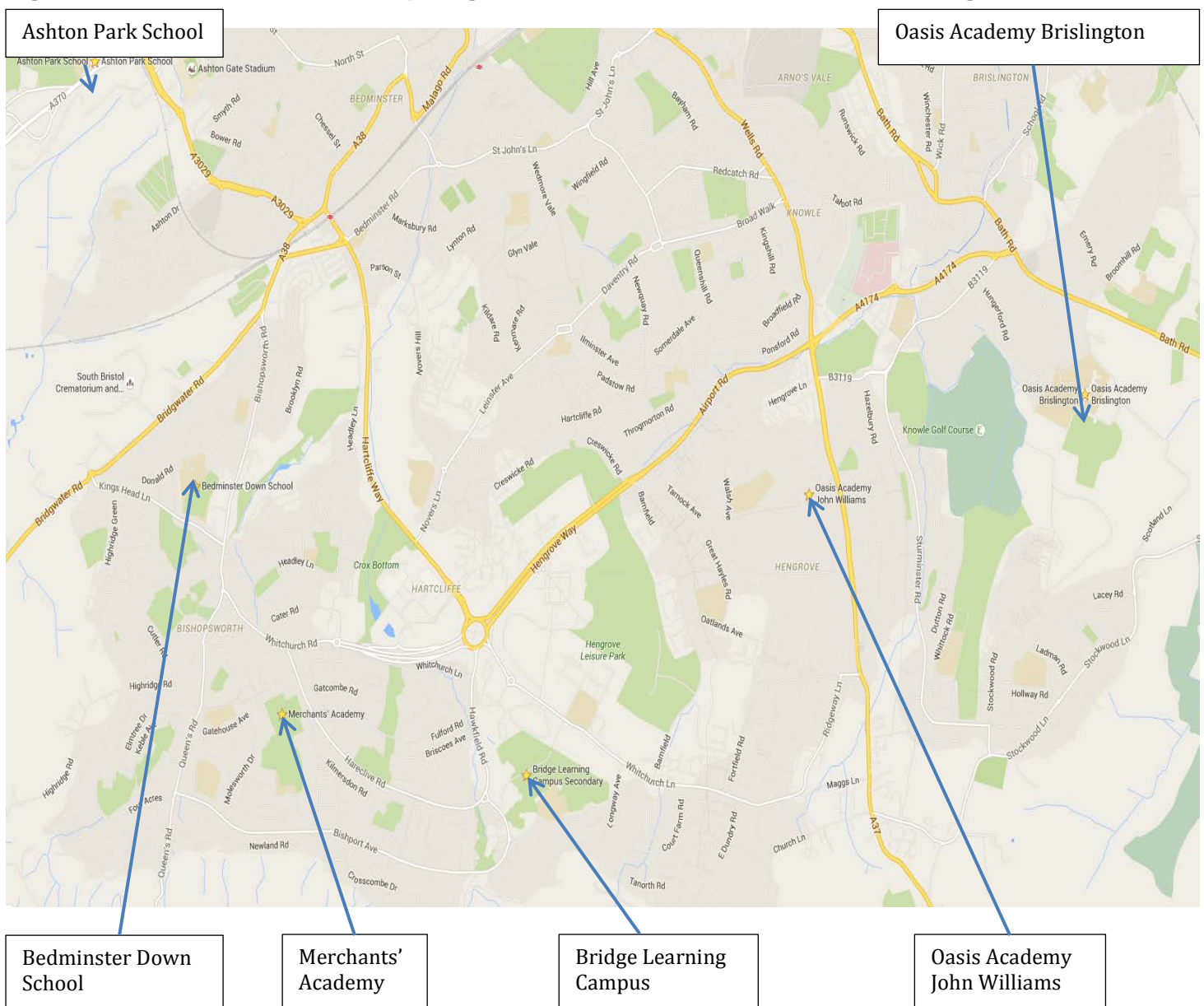
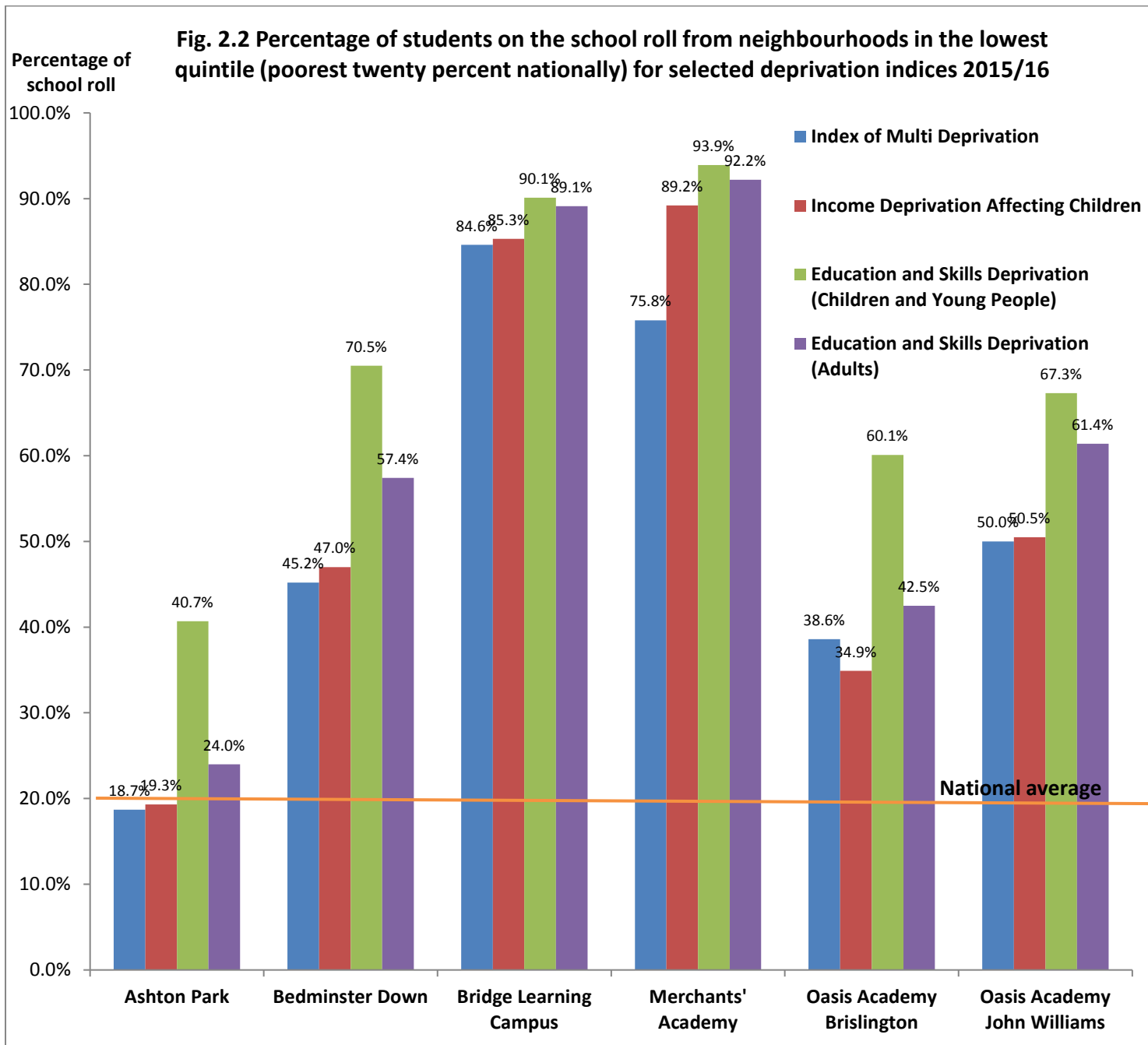


Fig.2.2 shows the proportion of pupils from each school living in neighbourhoods that are in the lowest 20% nationally for deprivation (Quintile 1) on selected indicators.



Nationally, 20% of the population are in the lowest quintile for each deprivation indices but as Fig. 2 shows, the percentage is much higher for pupils attending the South Bristol Youth schools. More than three quarters of the pupils attending Bridge Learning Campus and Merchants' Academy are from the most deprived neighbourhoods on each of four indicators. The percentages for Bedminster Down, Oasis Academy Brislington and Oasis Academy John Williams are around twice the national average rising to three times the national average for Education and Skills deprivation for Children and Young People. Ashton Park School is closer to the national average on IMD, IDACI and Education and Skills (Adult) deprivation but twice the national average for Education and Skills (Children and Young People) deprivation.

Further analysis of the deprivation indices show that for Bridge Learning Campus and Merchants' Academy the intake is heavily skewed towards pupils from the most deprived neighbourhoods, with very few pupils from the least deprived neighbourhoods. Bedminster Down, Oasis Academy Brislington and Oasis Academy John Williams have a slightly more balanced intake but still heavily skewed towards pupils from the most deprived neighbourhoods. Of the six South Bristol Youth schools, Ashton Park has the most balanced intake, although the percentage of pupils from neighbourhoods with the lowest educational

performance for children and young people is still twice the national average. Perhaps surprisingly there are more pupils (36.5%) from neighbourhoods which are the least deprived nationally for Adult Education and Skills. However, this is likely to be a result of the gentrification of parts of Southville and Windmill Hill with an increase in the number of young professional in these areas.

Summary and implications for the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme

The percentage of South Bristol Youth school pupils from the most deprived areas is significantly above the national average. In particular, most pupils are from the most deprived areas nationally for education and skills deprivation. For Merchants' Academy and Bridge Learning Campus over 90% of pupils are from these neighbourhoods, for Bedminster Down it is over 70%, Oasis Academy Brislington and John Williams over 60% and Ashton Park over 40%. This reinforces the need for additional support and resources in these areas to help raise educational achievement. It highlights the importance of the South Bristol Youth programmes in supporting pupils to achieve their potential in challenging circumstances.

Chapter 3: Evaluation Methods

In order to understand how the Ambitions Programme addresses its aims, the evaluation employs a range of methods. These include:

- Analysis of data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency, to understand the South Bristol context in relation to participation in Higher Education and investigate trends in HE participation.
- Analysis of pupil attainment, attendance and behaviour data, to understand whether the progress of pupils participating in the Ambitions Programme differs from the progress of the whole year cohort.²
- Interviews with Ambitions Programme providers and observing Ambitions Programme sessions, to understand the mechanisms through which outcomes are expected to be achieved.
- Analysis of data on pupil and parent attendance at Ambitions Programme events.
- Surveys, focus groups, interviews, and analysis of work completed in the programme by participating pupils, to understand their experiences of the ambitions programme, their thoughts and expectations about university, and how they view their learning and think about their future.
- Surveys and interviews with parents of participating pupils, to understand their attitudes to HE, their experiences of the Ambitions Programme, and how they support their child to think about the future.
- Interviews with school staff to understand how schools approach supporting progression to HE, and how they engage with the Ambitions Programme.

The way in which these methods relate to the theory of change can be seen in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme aims, associated outcomes, and evaluation methods.

Participation: To increase the number of young people in South Bristol participating in Higher Education

<i>Aims</i>	<i>Expected Outcomes</i>	<i>Evaluation Methods</i>
b) Support young people who previously would not have considered HE but have the potential to enter HE, to consider it as an option for themselves (including UoB and UWE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More young people in South Bristol applying to (and participating in) HE 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analysis of HESA data on numbers of young people from South Bristol attending HE over the last 6 years, by ward.

Young People: To support young people to make informed choices about their future

<i>Aims</i>	<i>Expected Outcomes</i>	<i>Evaluation Methods</i>
f) Support young people who previously would not have considered HE but have the potential to enter HE, to consider it as an option for themselves	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people considering HE, including UoB and UWE, as an option for their future • Young people being able to relate their GCSE and post-16 participation choices to their future pathways 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse school data on pupil attainment, attendance and behaviour. We have asked schools for anonymised pupil-level data for all those pupils in Ambitions Phases 1 and 3 for whom we have
g) Inform young people about grades and subjects that are needed to access HE,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young people being able to relate their GCSE and post-16 	

² To date we have not yet received this data from all the schools, therefore we have not yet been able to carry out this analysis. Together with Camilla Chandler-Mant, we have pursued this data collection over several months and are still waiting for data from Merchants' Academy and for clarification on data from Bedminster Down School.

- including relevant outreach programmes which may lead to contextual offers
- h) Give young people and their families experiences of HE
 - i) Enable young people to meet individuals who are in roles that they would not normally encounter in their immediate locality
 - j) Challenge common myths of HE
- performance to their future pathways
- Young people understanding that there are differences between universities in terms of entrance requirements, subjects offered, curriculum content, teaching methods, contact time, physical layout of the university and so on.
 - Young people recognising potential barriers to future participation and understanding ways they may be overcome
- parental and pupil consent, and for summaries of whole-cohort data. This will enable us to understand whether participation in South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme puts young people on a different trajectory in attainment, attendance and behaviour to those in the rest of the school.
- Individual interviews with around 2 pupils (depending on consent) from each year group in each school, about how they view their learning and how they think about their future, using photos the pupils have taken as starting points for discussion.
 - Student survey, about their experiences of the Ambitions Programme.
 - Student focus groups, about their experiences of the Ambitions Programme.
 - Analysis of data on pupil attendance at Ambitions Programme events.

Parents: To work with parents/carers about ways they can support their children to make informed choices

- | <i>Aims</i> | <i>Expected Outcomes</i> | <i>Evaluation Methods</i> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| e) Challenge common myths of HE | • Parents participating in SBY activities | • Parent survey on parental attitudes to and understanding of HE, and child/parent interaction around HE. |
| f) Provide parents and carers with information about a wide range of aspects of HE | • Parents considering HE as an option for their child's future | • Parent individual and group interviews around how they engage with/support their child's decision making about the future and their agency in that. |
| g) Encourage parents/carers to ask questions about the options available to their child | • Parents being included/participating in their child's decision making about the future. | • Analysis of data on parental attendance at Ambitions Programme events. |
| h) Provide a familiar contact (Amy) to answer questions about university at any time | • Parents/carers recognising potential barriers to young people's future participation and understanding ways they may be overcome (eg structural issues) | |

(not just when we meet with parents/carers)

Schools: To support schools to take up all opportunities offered to pupils to participate in WP activities from SBY, UoB, UWE and other local universities, and other organisations.

<i>Aims</i>	<i>Expected Outcomes</i>	<i>Evaluation Methods</i>
<p>f) Provide additional capacity and support in schools with regard to FE/HE advice</p> <p>g) Inform schools of the potential routes into, through, and after university</p> <p>h) Inform schools of the WP opportunities available to them from local universities (e.g. UoB, UWE, Western Outreach Network)</p> <p>i) Inform schools of any opportunities at university across the UK whereby pupils may be entitled to a reduced offer (e.g. the Access to ... courses, Realising Opportunities, whether any universities take into account contextual factors)</p> <p>j) Provide a presence at careers fairs, parents' evenings and other similar events</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presence/involvement of SBY at school events • Teachers considering HE as an option for their pupils' futures • Schools articulating a coherent and full WP/progression approach and rationale for that, inclusion of support for WP/progression in development plan/SIP • Schools articulating the role that SBY plays in their approach to WP/progression, and reasons for involvement with SBY. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviewing school staff to cover: policy, strategy and delivery around WP; support for progression to HE; school engagement with South Bristol Youth; how pupils are selected for the Ambitions Programme; and how the Ambitions Programme fits with the context of other WP provision.

Chapter 4: Analysis of data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) on Higher Education (HE) participation by young people from South Bristol

Using data from HESA, the purpose of this analysis is to:

- examine recent trends in HE participation by young people from South Bristol, including universities attended and subjects studied;
- compare HE participation in South Bristol with that for Bristol as a whole and nationally;
- highlight the implications for widening HE participation in south Bristol and for supporting young people to make informed choices.

A request was made to HESA³ for data on HE participation by young people from South Bristol wards over the last six years (2009/10 – 2014/15), including A-level point scores, universities attended, subjects studied, term time residence (whether students were living at home) and parental education (whether students' parents/guardians have HE qualifications). The aim is to provide a context to the South Bristol Youth (SBY) programme evaluation by examining variations in HE participation at a local level and the university choices students have made.

The data are based on young people attending HE from the twelve wards covered by the SBY programme. This includes nine wards forming the South Bristol Parliamentary Constituency (Bedminster, Bishopsworth, Filwood, Hartcliffe, Hengrove, Knowle, Southville, Whitchurch Park, Windmill Hill) and three adjacent wards in the South East (Stockwood, Brislington East and Brislington West), which can be seen in Fig. 4.1.

Ten of the twelve wards are defined by HESA as “low participation neighbourhoods” i.e. wards that are in the lowest 20% nationally for HE participation (Quintile 1). The exceptions are the two wards to the north of the South Bristol Constituency, Windmill Hill (in the lowest 40% for HE participation) and Southville in the lowest 60%.

It is important to acknowledge that the south Bristol wards are not homogenous and socio-economic differentials are significant. A report by Raphael Reed et al (2007) on young participation in higher education in South Bristol identified three zones representing different economic profiles:

- “a) Northern zone: Bedminster, Southville and Windmill Hill. Nearly all private sector housing, with traditionally affluent working class populations being recently supplemented by public sector professionals, with low unemployment and relatively high levels of qualification.*
- b) Eastern zone: Knowle and Hengrove. Mainly private housing including substantial ‘Right to Buy’, with mixed employment patterns and qualification levels, low unemployment and low benefit dependency.*
- c) Southern zone: Filwood, Bishopsworth, Hartcliffe and Whitchurch Park. Mainly council built housing estates, with low skill and manual employment, poor qualification levels, above average unemployment and high benefit dependency.”⁴*

However, even in the more affluent wards there are pockets of low educational achievement.

³ The most up-to-date data on HE numbers at ward level from HESA is for the academic year 2014/15, however participation rates (as a percentage of young people living in each ward) comes from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the latest data on this are for 2011/12.

⁴ Young Participation in Higher Education: a sociocultural study of educational engagement in Bristol South parliamentary constituency. Lynn Raphael Reed, Chris Croudace, Neil Harrison, Arthur Baxter and Kathryn Last, University of the West of England, Bristol (2007)

Fig. 4.1: Parliamentary wards in Bristol



HE Participation

Table 4.1 shows the percentage of young people participating in higher education from each of the South Bristol wards and the gap between the actual participation rate and “expected” participation rate taking into account students’ GCSE attainment and ethnicity. The data are from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) based on the proportion of the 15 year old cohort at maintained schools who entered higher education at age 18 or 19 between 2007 and 2011.⁵

⁵ Gaps in young participation in HEFCE (April 2016 update)

Table 4.1 Young people participating in HE by south Bristol ward (between 2007 and 2011)

Ward	%Participation rate	Participation percentage gap from expected
Southville	27.5	-4.7
Windmill Hill	21.3	-2.6
Knowle	19.7	-4.5
Brislington West	18.8	-4.5
Stockwood	17.3	-6.0
Bedminster	16.6	-4.5
Brislington East	16.5	-5.1
Hengrove	14.2	-6.7
Bishopsworth	13.1	-6.1
Hartcliffe	8.6	-7.5
Whitchurch Park	8.0	-8.6
Filwood	6.6	-3.9
South Bristol ward average	15.7	-5.4
Bristol City average (all wards)	25.4	-3.5
National average	35.5	

As Table 1 shows HE participation for young people from south Bristol wards over this period is nearly 10 percentage points below the Bristol City average and nearly 20 percentage points below the national average. For three wards the participation rate is less than 10%. The end column in Table 1 shows the difference between the actual HE participation rate and the expected rate based on national trends when GCSE results and ethnicity are taken into account. Participation by young people from most of the south Bristol wards is around five percentage points lower than predicted by their academic attainment at 16. However, even if HE participation was as predicted it would still only be 21% so initiatives to increase HE participation need to focus on raising academic achievement as well as on pupils' aspirations.

Fig. 4.2 shows trends in HE participation from south Bristol wards compared with the national average (from HEFCE (2013) Trends in young participation in higher education). Although there has been some improvement in the percentage of south Bristol young people entering HE a significant gap remains compared with the national average.

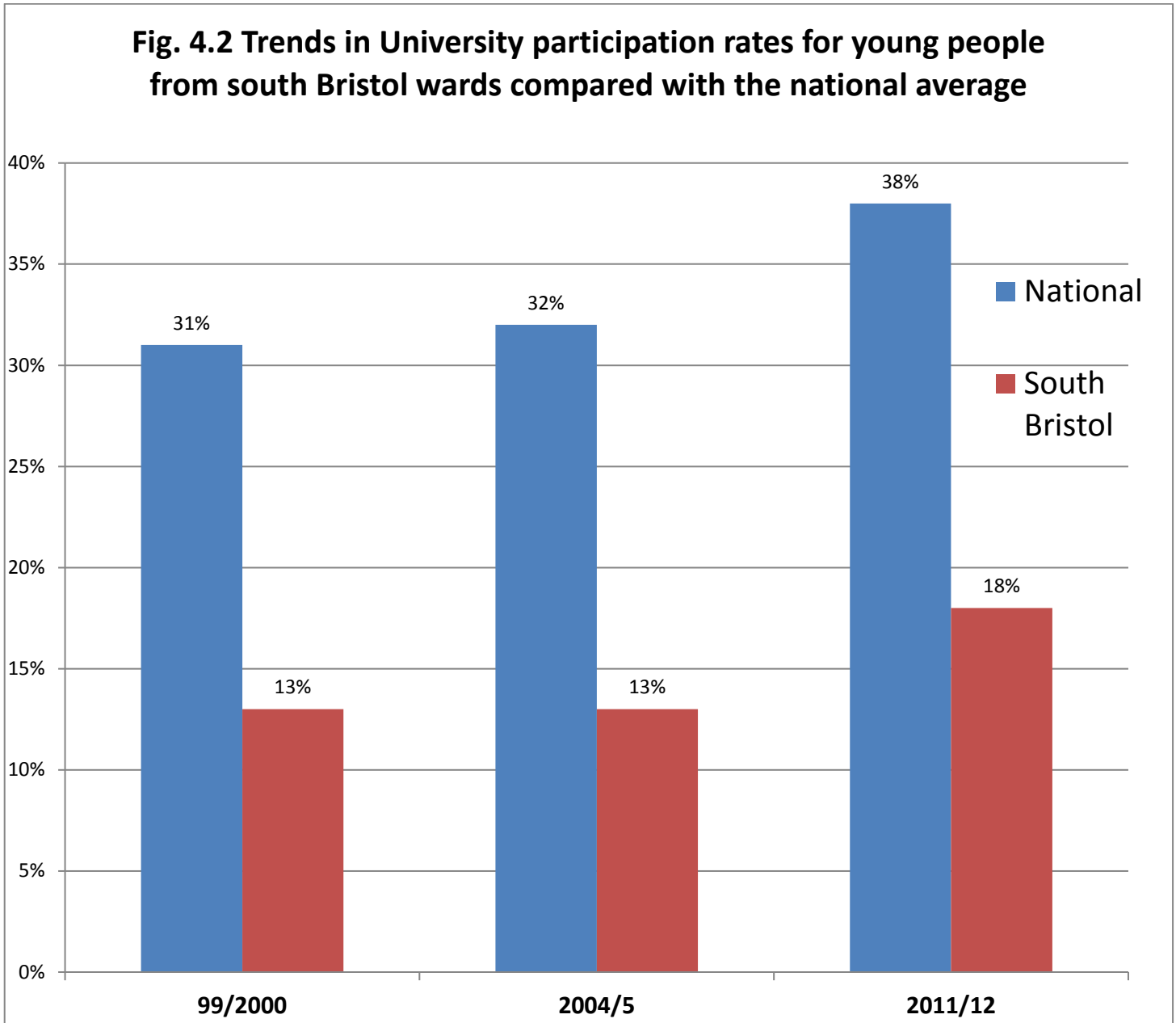
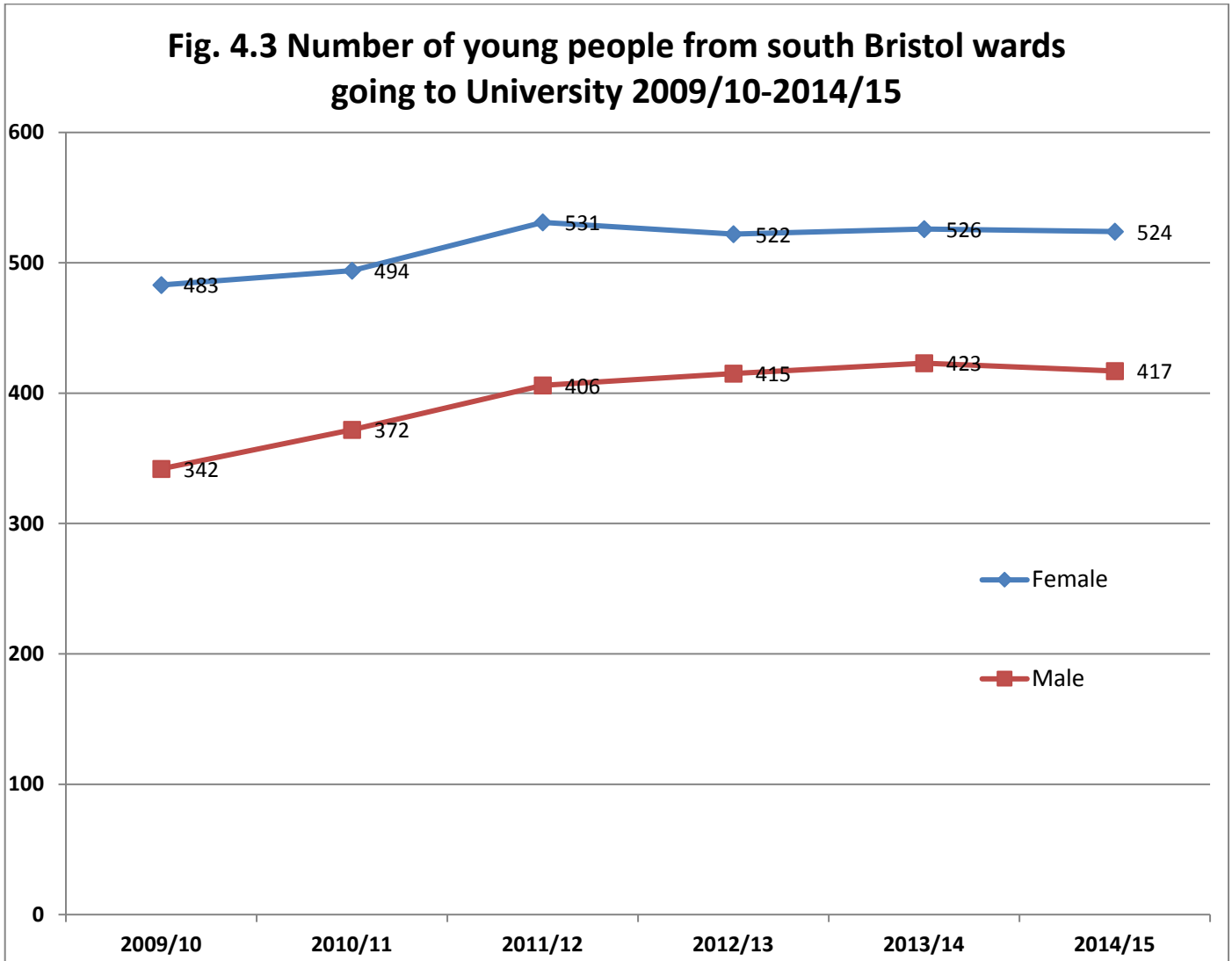


Fig. 4.3 shows trends in the number of young people entering HE from south Bristol by gender. There was a rise in numbers between 2009/10 and 2011/12 but since then numbers have remained fairly static at just under 1000 per year. Numerically, more south Bristol females than males enter HE and this trend has continued year-on-year.



Universities attended

Over the last six years (2009/10- 2014/15), young people from south Bristol attended over a 100 different universities, and Fig. 4.4 shows those with the most entrants. The University of the West of England (UWE) in Bristol was clearly the most popular, attended by nearly one in four (24%) of the south Bristol entrants. In three wards, over a third of HE entries over this period were to UWE (Hartcliffe 36%, Whitchurch Park 35% and Hengrove 34%).

Of the top ten most popular universities, nine were in the South West and Wales, indicating that the majority of young people are choosing universities that are relatively close to, or easily accessible from home. Fig. 4.5 shows that compared with the national average, university students from south Bristol are more likely to live at home (30% compared with 26% nationally) and this is particularly the case for students from those wards with the lowest HE participation rates such as Hengrove, Hartcliffe, Whitchurch Park and Filwood.

Fig. 4.4 Universities attended by 50 or more students from south Bristol wards 2009/10-2014/15

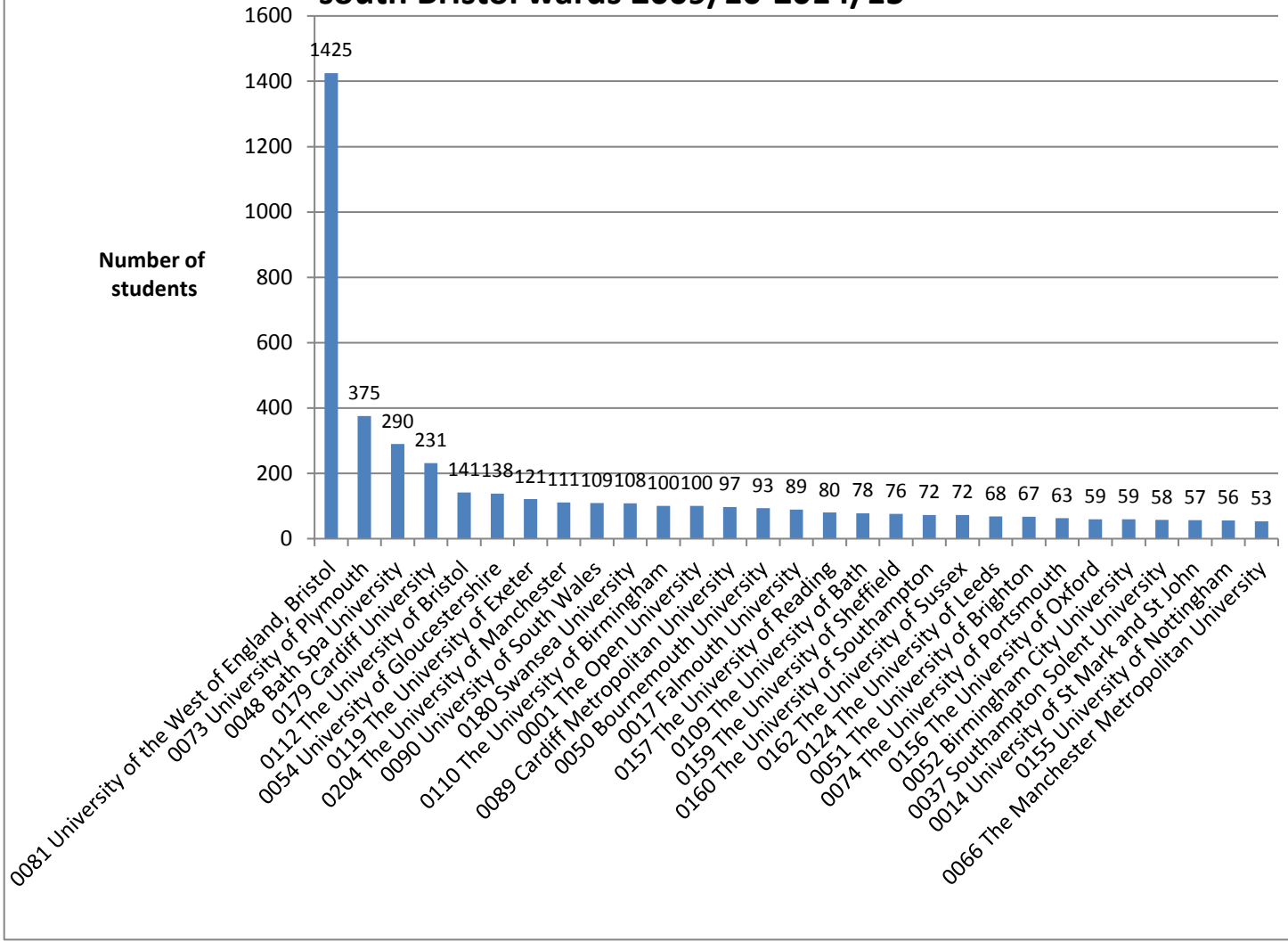
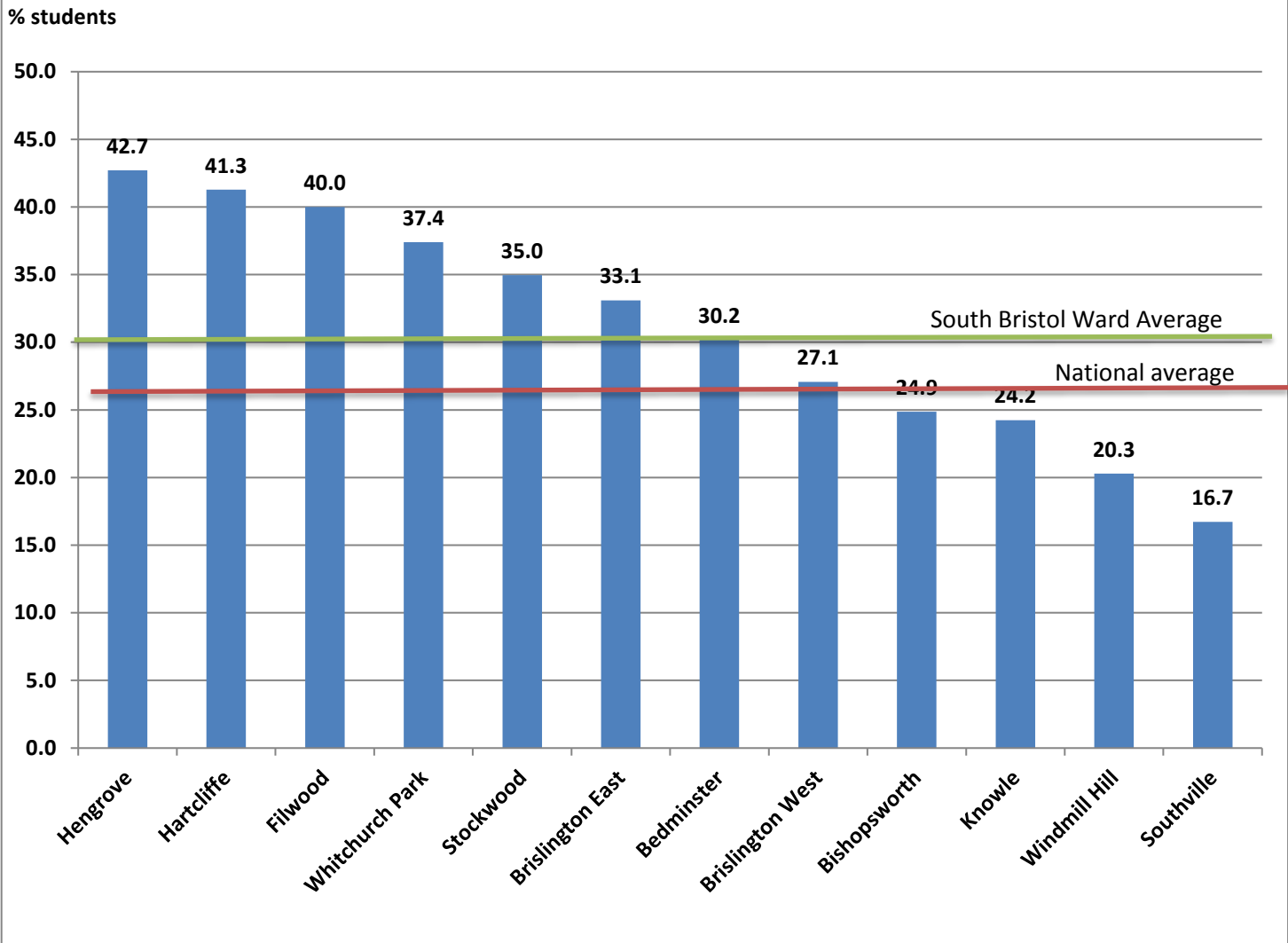
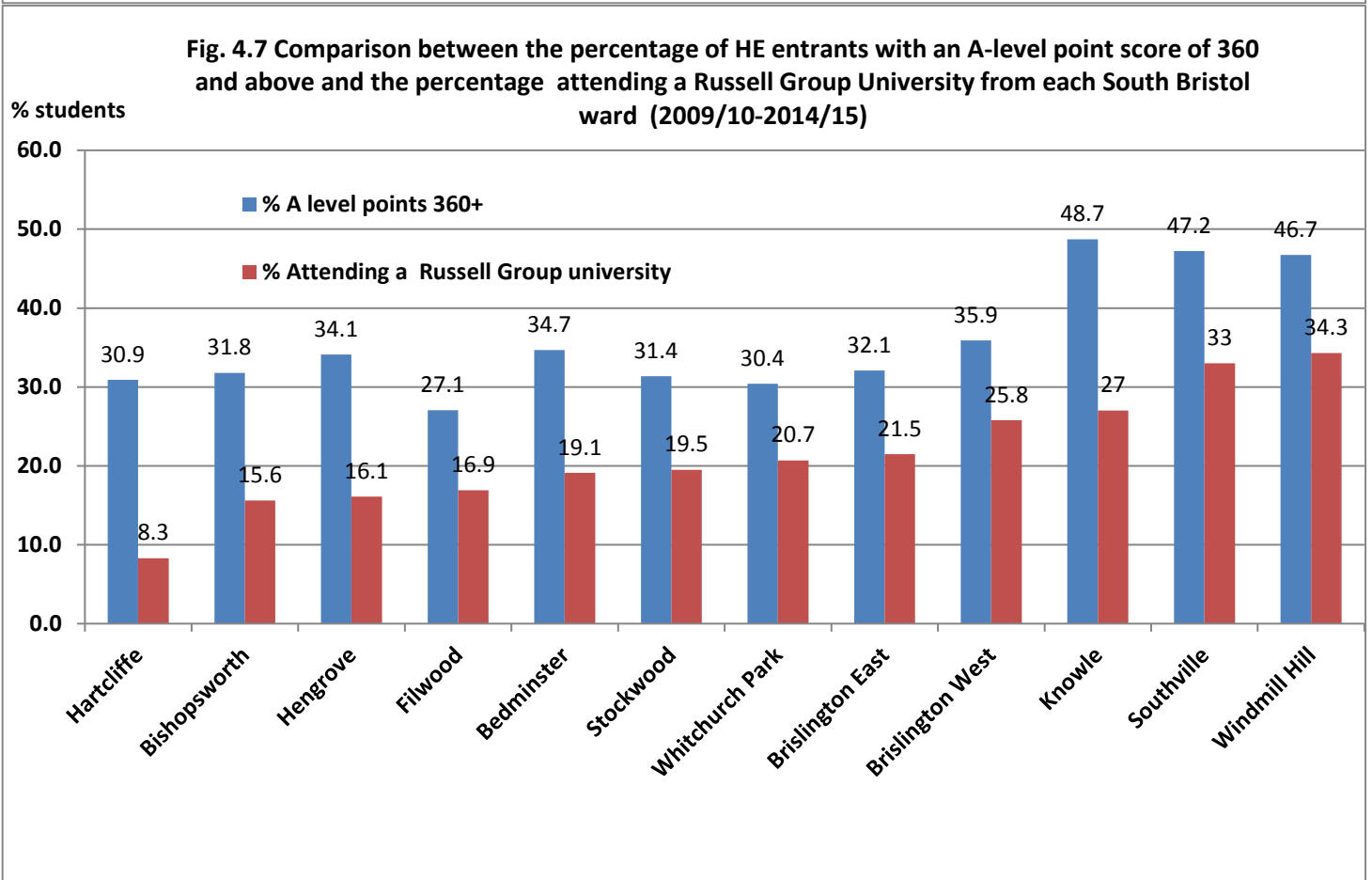
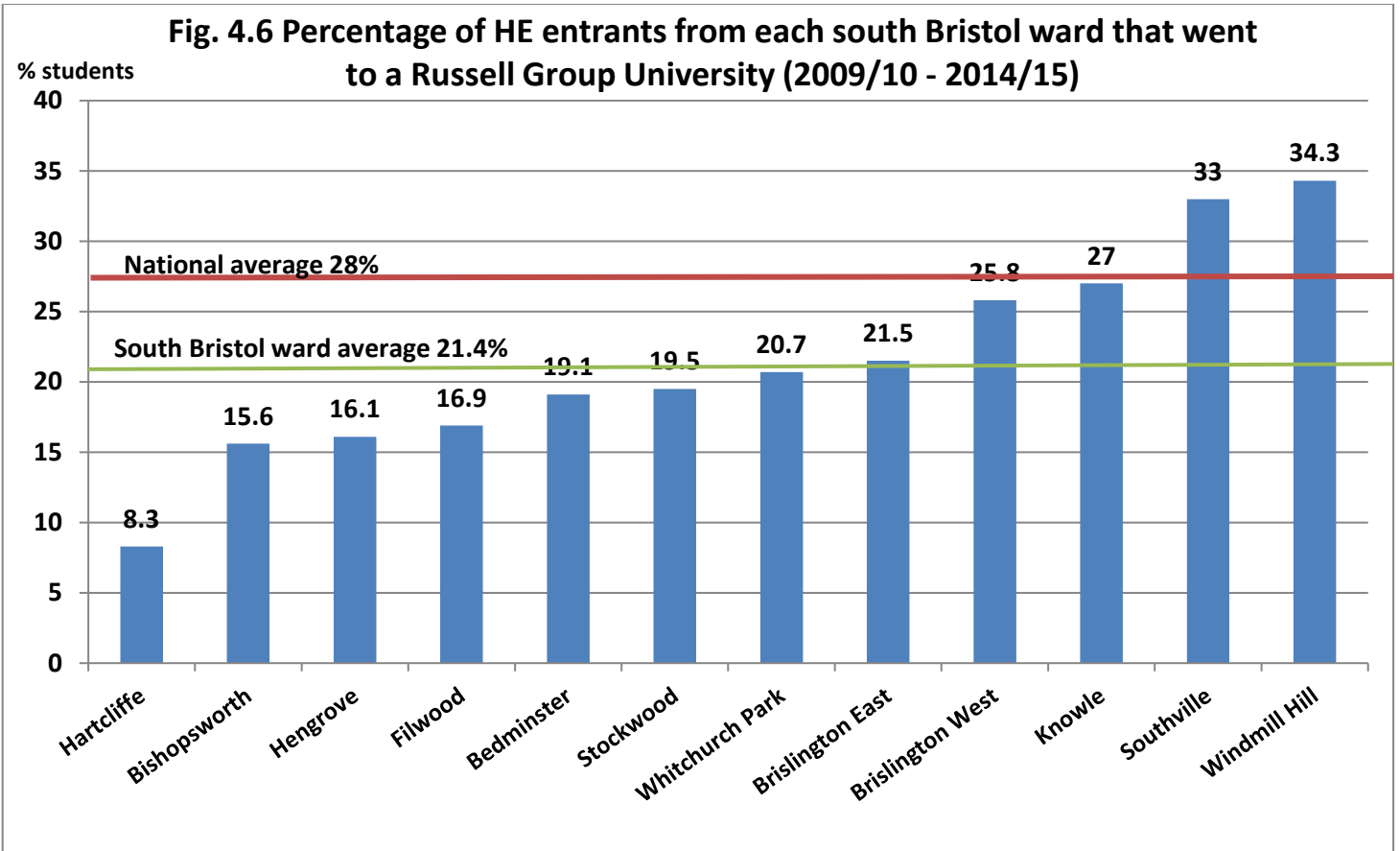


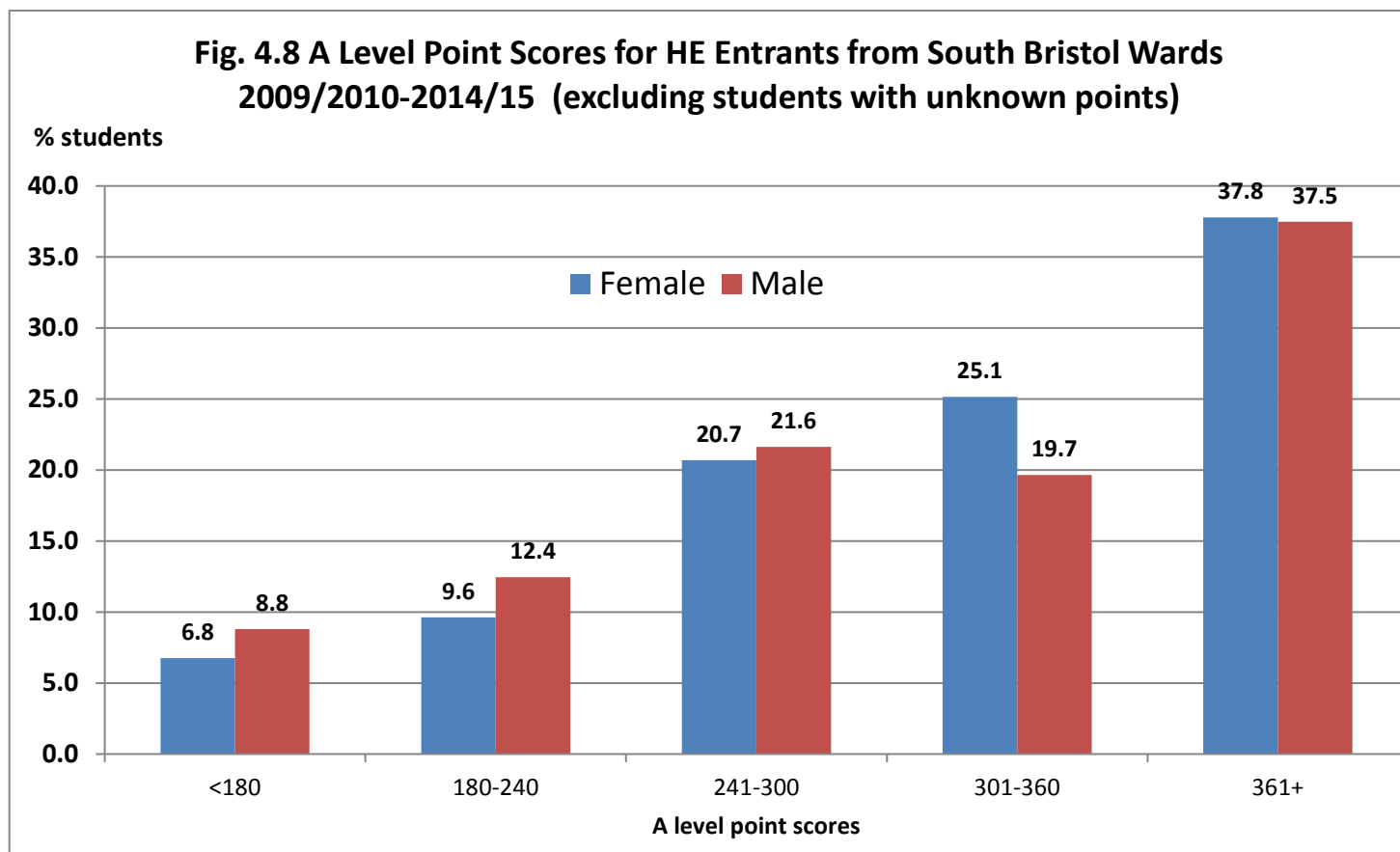
Fig 4.5 Percentage of students attending university from south Bristol wards living at parental/guardian home during term time, excluding not known (2009/10- 2014/15)



Nationally, 28% of young people entering HE between 2009/10-2014/15 went to a Russell Group (RG) University compared with 21% of students from south Bristol. Fig. 4.6 shows there was a wide variation across the south Bristol wards with 34% of students from Windmill Hill attending a RG University compared with just 8.3% from Hartcliffe. Fig. 4.7 shows that this is partly a reflection of the differences in the proportion of students from each ward achieving the higher A-level grades. For example, Knowle, Southville and Windmill Hill had the highest proportion of HE students going to RG universities and also the highest proportion of entrants with an A-level point score of 360 and above (equivalent to 3 A-level 'A' grades). There are some anomalies with some wards having larger differentials between point score and RG entries than others but this may be due to differences in the range of A level subjects taken.



An analysis of the A level point scores achieved by HE entrants from South Bristol shows that there were potentially more students with good enough grades to meet RG entry requirements than actually went to a RG university. As Fig. 4.8 shows, based on a total point score of 360 and above, 37.6% of HE entrants from south Bristol between 2009/10-2014/15 had RG “potential” compared with 21% that went to a RG university. However, the data do not differentiate between subjects taken so it is quite likely that a proportion of those with the higher A-level point scores did not have the facilitating subjects required for some courses by RG universities⁶.

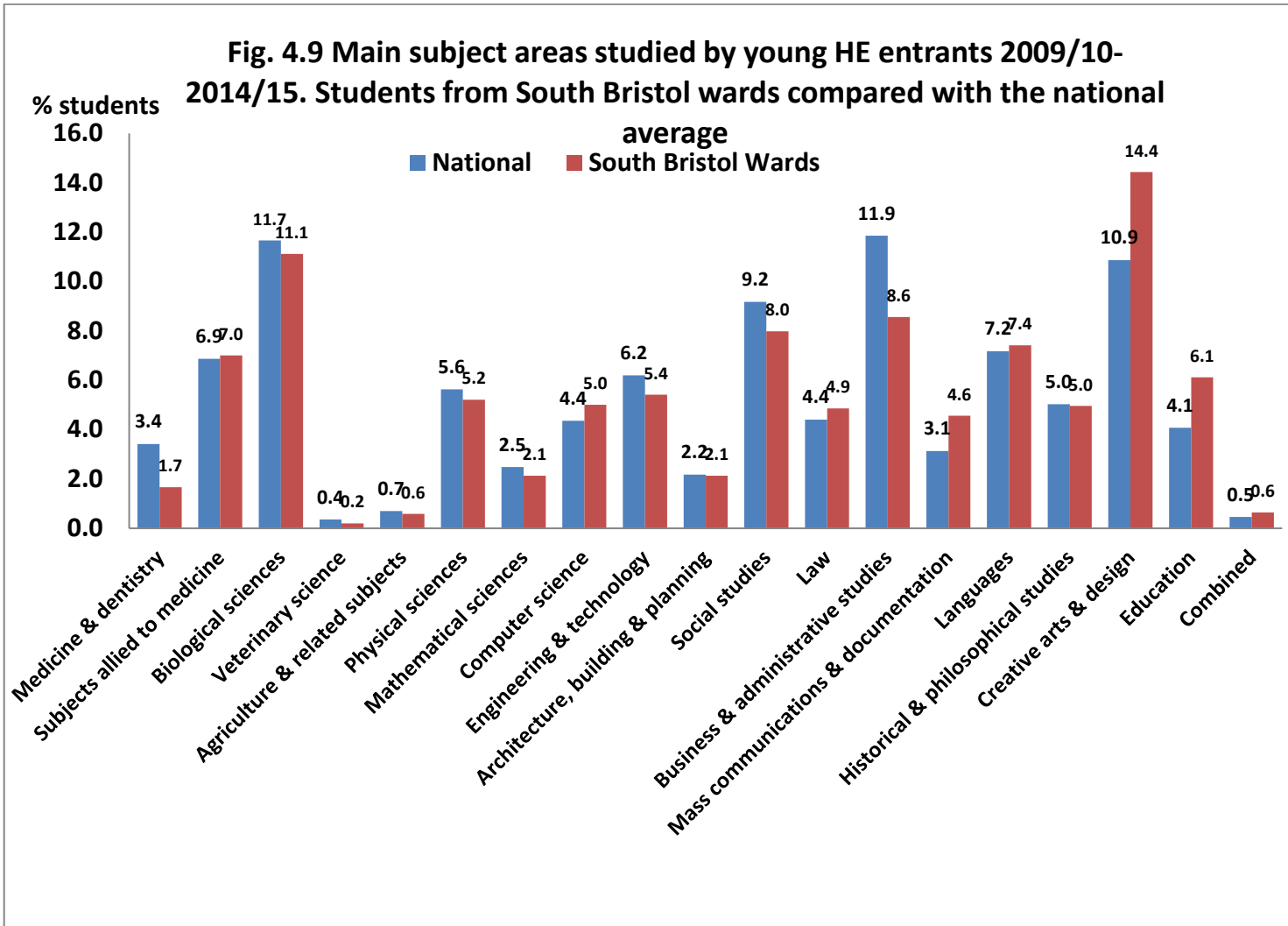


Subjects studied

Fig. 4.9 shows the main subject areas studied at university by students from south Bristol compared with the national average. The subject groupings are based on the Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) used by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) to classify academic subjects. For example, *Subjects allied to medicine* includes nursing, nutrition, pharmacy; *Social studies* includes politics, economics, sociology and social work; *Mass communication and documentation* includes media studies, information services, journalism; *Creative arts and design* includes art, music, dance, drama, photography; *Education* includes teacher training. (Appendix 2 is a full list of the subjects included within each subject area).

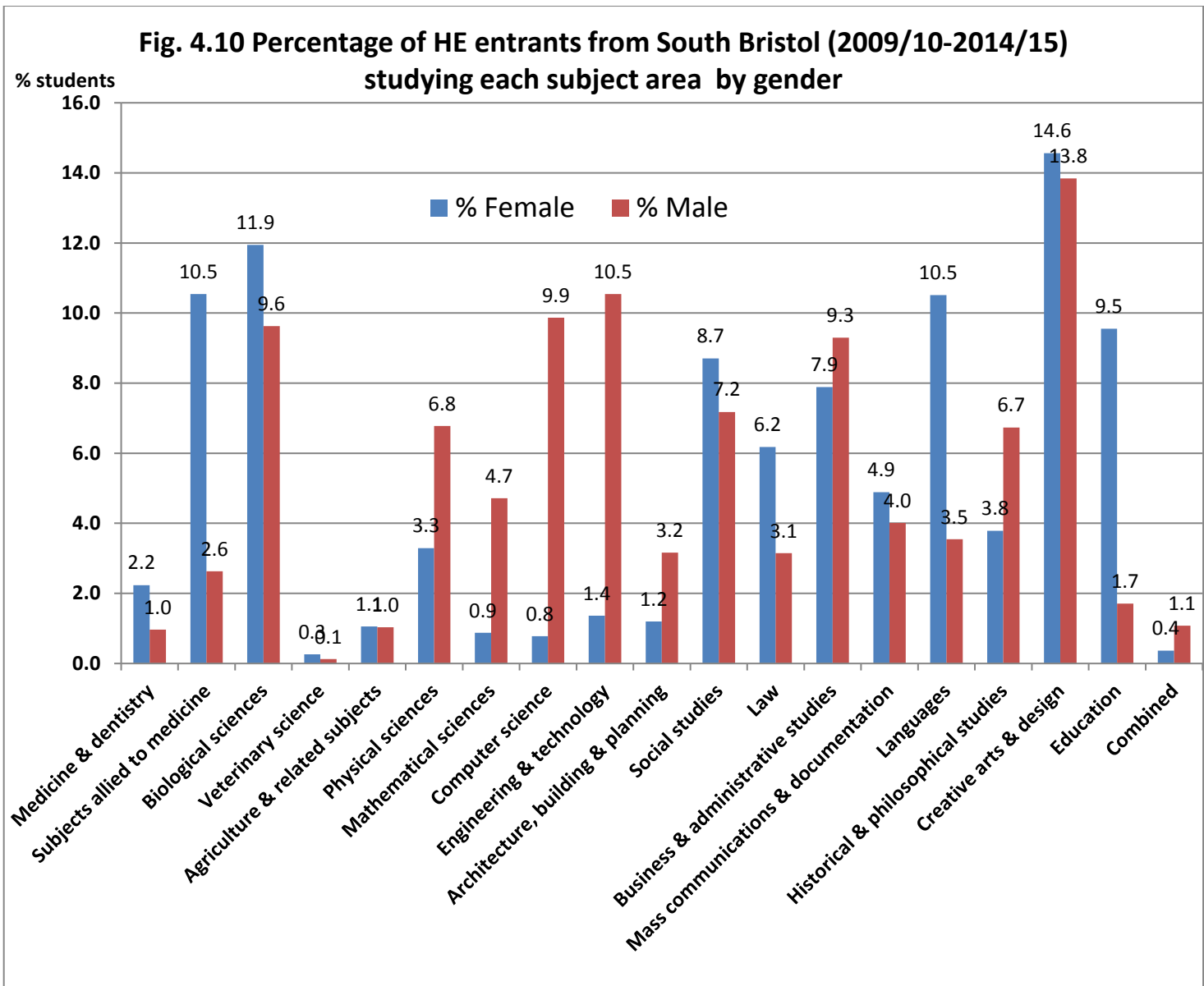
Creative arts and design was the most popular subject area for students from south Bristol, followed by biological sciences, business and administration and social studies. Compared with the national picture, the percentage of students from south Bristol studying medicine and dentistry was half the national average (1.7% compared with 3.4%). The percentage studying business and administration was also below the national average (8.6% compared with 11.9%) while creative arts and design, education and mass communications were above national average.

⁶ The facilitating subjects are Mathematics and Further Mathematics, English Literature, Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Geography, History, Languages.



There was some variation across the South Bristol wards with for example, no students from Filwood, Hartcliffe or Hengrove studying medicine or dentistry over this period compared with 3% from Southville and 4% from Windmill Hill.

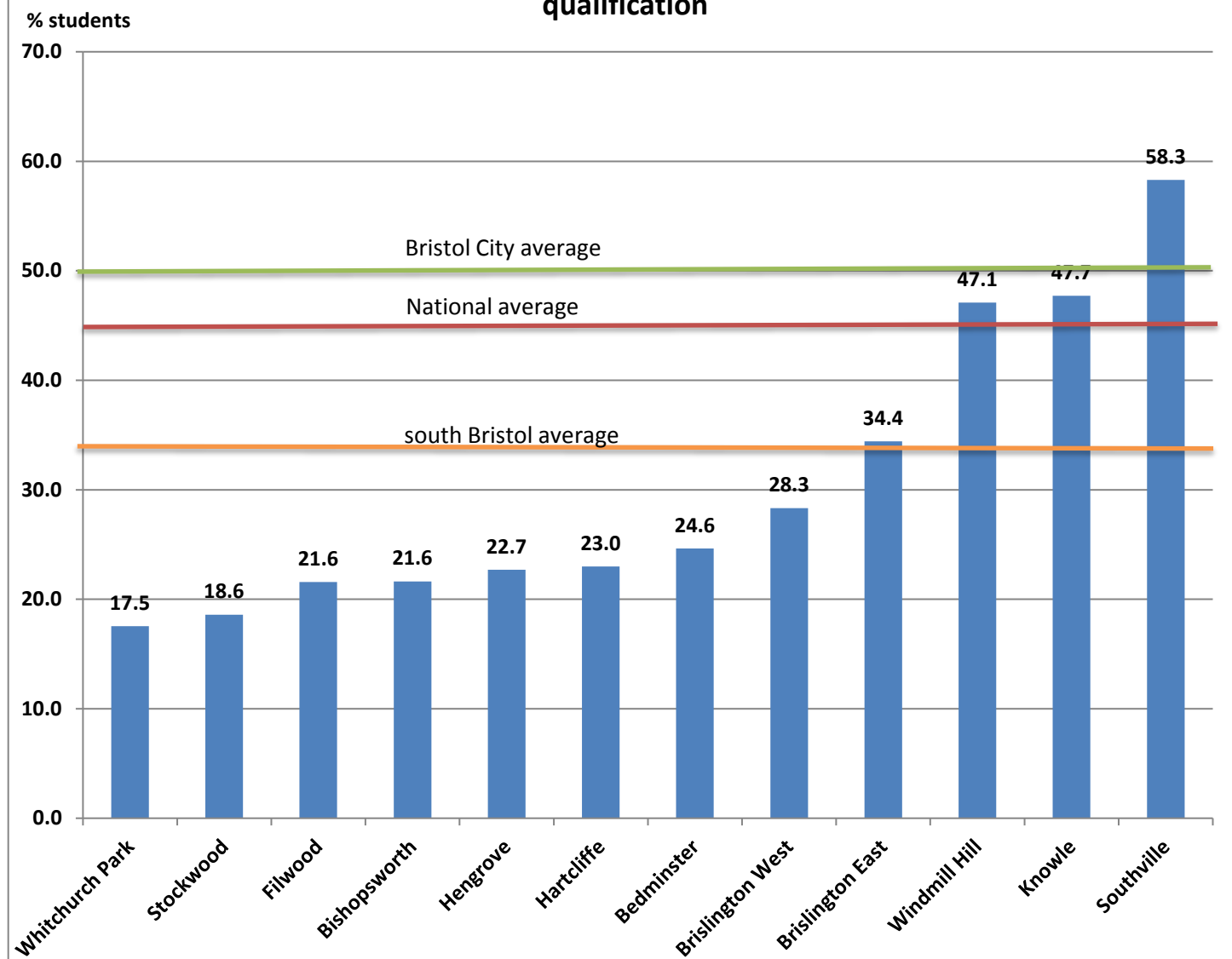
Fig. 4.10 shows that there were significant gender differences in the subject areas studied by HE entrants from the South Bristol wards. While Creative arts and design was the most popular subject area for both male and female students, a much higher percentage of females compared to males studied subjects allied to medicine e.g. nursing (10.5% of females compared with 2.6% of males), languages (10.5% compared with 3.5%) and education including teacher training (9.5% compared with 1.7%). Males were more likely than females to be studying physical sciences (6.8% compared with 3.5%), mathematical sciences (4.7% compared with 0.9%), computer science (9.9% compared with 0.8%) and engineering & technology (10.5% compared with 1.4%).



Parent/guardian experience of HE

Nationally, 43% of young people entering university between 2009/10-2014/15 have parents/guardians with HE qualifications. The percentage for Bristol City as a whole is higher at 49% but lower for university entrants from South Bristol (33%). There are significant variations across the South Bristol wards (Fig. 4.11), with entrants from Windmill Hill, Knowle and Southville twice as likely to have a parent/guardian with an HE qualification compared with most other wards.

Fig. 4.11 Percentage of students from South Bristol Wards attending University (2009/10-2014/15) having a parent/guardian with an HE qualification



Type of school attended

The large majority of young people entering university from the South Bristol wards between 2009/10-2014/15 were state school educated (91%). This is slightly higher than the national average (89%) and a lot higher than the Bristol City average (76%).

Summary and implications for the SBY Ambitions Programme

- (i) Between 2007 and 2011 the percentage of young people from South Bristol wards participating in HE was 15.7% compared with a national average of 35.5%. Significant variations were evident across the South Bristol wards ranging from a participation rate of less than 10% in Hartcliffe (8.6%), Whitchurch Park (8.0%) and Filwood (6.6%) to over 20% in Windmill Hill (21.3%) and Southville (27.5%). Apart from Windmill Hill and Southville, all the other South Bristol wards are defined by HESA as “low participation neighbourhoods” i.e. wards that are in the lowest 20% nationally for HE participation (Quintile 1). This has implications for targeting widening participation initiatives to close the gaps.

- (ii) In most wards HE participation was about five percentage points below what may have been expected given students' GCSE results. This shows that there were more students with the academic potential to go to university than actually went. If this gap was closed the participation rate would rise to around 21%. However, this still remains significantly below the national average of 35.5%. Because HE participation is dependent upon good academic performance at GCSE and post-16, initiatives to increase participation in South Bristol will have most impact if they help to raise academic performance as well as pupils' aspirations.
- (iii) Although there have been some improvements in the percentage of South Bristol young people participating in HE (from 13% in 1999/2000 to 18% in 2011/12) the improvement rate is below the national average so the gap is not closing. The most up-to-date figures show a rise in numbers between 2009/10 and 2011/12 but since then numbers have remained fairly static at just under a 1000 per year (of which 55% are female and 45% are male).
- (iv) Over the last six years (2009/10-2014/15), young people from South Bristol attended over 100 different universities. The University of the West of England (UWE) in Bristol was clearly the most popular, attended by nearly one in four (24%) of the South Bristol entrants. In three wards, over a third of HE entries over this period were to UWE (Hartcliffe 36%, Whitchurch Park 35% and Hengrove 34%).
- (v) Of the top ten most popular universities, nine were in the South West and Wales, indicating that the majority of young people are choosing universities that are relatively close to, or easily accessible from home. Compared with the national average, university students from South Bristol are more likely to live at home (30% compared with 26% nationally) and this is particularly the case for students from those wards with the lowest HE participation rates such as Hengrove, Harcliffe, Whitchurch Park and Filwood. While experience of and familiarity with local universities may help increase participation and reduce costs this needs to be balanced against more course options and the broader life experiences of living away from home. There are implications for advising and supporting students in choosing a university, including information about courses available nationally and assistance with living away from home.
- (vi) The percentage of HE entrants from South Bristol wards going to a Russell Group (RG) university between 2009/10-2014/15 was 21% compared with a national average of 28%. There is a wide variation across the South Bristol wards with 34% of students from Windmill Hill attending a RG university compared with just 8.3% from Hartcliffe. This is partly a reflection of differences in the proportion of students from each ward achieving the higher A-level grades asked for by RG universities.
- (vii) Based on an A-level point score of 360 and above (equivalent to 3 A-level 'A' grades) there are more South Bristol students with good enough grades to meet RG entry requirements than actually went to a RG university. Overall, 37.6% of HE entrants from South Bristol between 2009/10 -2014/15 had RG potential based on their A-level point score. However, the data do not differentiate between subjects taken so it is quite likely that a proportion of those with the highest A-level point scores did not have the facilitating subjects required for some courses by RG universities. There are implications for advising high potential learners on their A-level subject choices and for providing information to these students on the RG courses available and support in making applications.
- (viii) As a percentage of course entries between 2009/10-2014/15, creative arts and design was the most popular subject area chosen by students from South Bristol (14.4%) followed by biological sciences (11.1%), business and administration (8.6%) and social studies (8.0%). Compared with the national picture, the percentage of students studying medicine and dentistry was half the national average (1.7% compared with 3.4%) and in three wards no students studied medicine or dentistry over this period. The percentage of South Bristol students studying business and administration was also

below the national average (8.6% compared with 11.9%) whereas subjects studied at above the national average rate include creative arts and design (14.4% compared with 10.9% nationally), education, including teacher training (6.1% compared with 4.1%) and mass communication which includes media studies (4.6% compared with 3.1%).

- (ix) There are implications for helping potential HE students in choosing courses. For example, a recent study by the Institute for Fiscal Studies⁷ showed that a creative arts degree gives no advantage in terms of future earnings compared with the earnings achieved by non-graduates. While future earnings are not the only or even the main criterion for subject choice, it is a factor that young people need to be made aware of.
- (x) There were significant gender differences in the subject areas studied by HE entrants from South Bristol. A much higher percentage of females compared to males studied subjects allied to medicine e.g. nursing (10.5% of females compared with 2.6% of males), languages (10.5% compared with 3.5%) and education including teacher training (9.5% compared with 1.7%). Males were more likely than females to be studying physical sciences (6.8% compared with 3.5%), mathematical sciences (4.7% compared with 0.9%), computer science (9.9% compared with 0.8%) and engineering & technology (10.5% compared with 1.4%). Again there are implications for helping young people to make informed subject choices at both A-level and university application, including challenging gender stereotypes and providing gender specific role models.
- (xi) A third (33%) of HE entrants from South Bristol between 2009/10-2014/15 had a parent or guardian with HE qualifications (compared with the national average of 43%), although this varied across wards ranging from 17% for Whitchurch Park to 58% for Southville. As most parents/guardians from South Bristol will not have direct experience of HE there are implications for providing parents/guardians with advice on the HE opportunities available to their child, the cost/benefits of HE, information on the application process and how to support their child's learning.

⁷ Britton, J. et al (2016) How English domiciled graduate earnings vary with gender, institution attended, subject and socioeconomic background, *Institute for Fiscal Studies Working Paper W16/06*

Chapter 5: Pupil Attainment, Attendance and Behaviour

To date we have not yet received this data from all schools so have not yet been able to carry out this analysis. All schools agreed that they would collate the data for us in Term 6 of 2015/16. We provided a spreadsheet to each school for this purpose in Autumn 2015 and again in Summer 2016. As yet, however, we have received no data from Merchants' Academy, despite numerous emails and discussions. We are also awaiting response to queries about the data from Bedminster Down.

Chapter 6: The Perspectives of South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme Delivery Team

Interviews were conducted in Winter 2015/16 with: Camilla Chandler-Mant, in her role as Chief Executive of South Bristol Youth; Amy Hayhurst, the South Bristol Youth Widening Participation Officer; Di Stone, the UWE Lead for the Ambitions Programme Phase 1; Tom Prince, the UoB Lead for the Ambitions Programme Phase 3; and Dennis Burn, in his role as Chair of the South Bristol Youth Board. Focus groups were conducted in Summer 2016 with Student Ambassadors from UWE (2 groups) and from UoB (1 group). The interviews with the South Bristol Youth team and University Leads focused on their approaches to designing and running the sessions, their experiences of partnership working in the Ambitions Programme, what they hoped to achieve, the rationale behind their decisions about delivery, and the ways in which they worked with Student Ambassadors. Interview topic guides can be found in Appendix 3. The focus groups with student ambassadors focused on their decision to work on the Ambitions Programme, their experiences of the Ambitions Programme and what they hoped to achieve when working with the participating pupils, their role in the Ambitions Programme, and their views on participating pupils. Focus group topic guides can be found in Appendix 4. The analysis below focuses on the delivery team roles, the agenda of the Ambitions Programme, and the approach used in the sessions.

South Bristol Youth Delivery Team Roles

The main point of contact for schools and universities is Amy Hayhurst, the Widening Participation Office for South Bristol Youth. Amy was thought to be excellent at building and maintaining relationships with all those involved in the programme, including university staff, student ambassadors, school staff, young people, and parents. Camilla Chandler-Mant, as the Chief Executive of South Bristol Youth, was recognised as having credibility with schools due to her past experience - and this credibility was seen by university staff as important in terms of initiating and maintaining schools' engagement.

The role of Student Ambassadors is also crucial in delivering the programme. In relation to participating pupils, they are seen to occupy a position in between a peer and an adult - and therefore be more approachable for participating pupils. South Bristol Youth staff and university staff believe that participating pupils can see that Student Ambassadors have real and current experience of being a student, so are a relevant source of information about university. This is borne out by data from pupils (see Chapter 8). The recruitment and training of Student Ambassadors was generic to the university, and appeared to vary from year to year, though most interviewed seemed confident in working with school pupils of this age and to be prepared for awkward or problematic questions that may arise. Student Ambassadors did not always feel well-prepared for the particular sessions they were expected to deliver- although some received emails in advance, they often were briefed immediately before the session and felt as if they were "only one step ahead" of participating pupils when working through activities.

Some Student Ambassadors valued the continuous nature of the programme and believed that the opportunity to build relationships with participating pupils helped pupils feel more comfortable chatting about their ambitions and asking questions about university. However, the idea that Student Ambassadors would act as mentors for participating pupils was not realistic in practice - in part due to logistical issues that meant that not all student ambassadors could attend all events, and in part due to the conflicting agenda of allowing participating pupils to meet a wide range of Student Ambassadors.

South Bristol Youth staff and university staff highlighted that involvement and commitment of schools is needed for the programme to run effectively and for pupils to gain maximum benefit from the programme. This includes: allowing time off timetable for pupils; prompt communication with the South Bristol Youth team especially around dates and times for scheduling sessions as this is important in ensuring continuity with Student Ambassadors; ensuring that pupils arrive promptly at sessions so there is enough time for scheduled activities, and those pupil who are there on time don't "go off the boil"; resource in terms of teachers attending sessions; and provision of data as agreed to the evaluation team. There were some comments that schools tended to focus solely on attainment in the short term, and believed that the best

way to achieve this was for pupils to spend time in lessons rather than thinking more creatively about the impact that other activities might have on attainment.

The Agenda of South Bristol Youth Provision

While working under a broad agenda of raising aspirations and increasing awareness about university, the two universities appeared to have different remits about their involvement in South Bristol Youth. UWE, who provide Ambitions Phase 1 to Year 8 pupils, emphasise inclusivity and giving participating pupils the opportunity to consider the range of options available to them post-16 and post-18, of which university is only one. UoB recognised that positive interaction with universities was important for participating pupils, but felt that attainment was a key issue for them as participating pupils are “*not achieving anywhere near the grades they need to come somewhere like Bristol*”: this was in tension with one of UoB’s drivers for involvement being student recruitment. UoB Student Ambassadors also recognised that attainment of participating pupils was an issue, however they felt their role was not to “*sell the university like at UCAS fairs*”, but was about raising awareness of what university was like.

The Approach Used in the Ambitions Programme

All those who work face-to-face with participating pupils said that they aim to make the programme “different to school”, and this related to how they interacted with the pupils. They aimed to be “not too much like teachers” but still maintain enough authority to ensure the pupils stayed engaged. Student ambassadors noted that activities that were clearly different from school, such as campus visits and Y10 team building at Goblin Combe, were more exciting for pupils and therefore easier to engage them in. While the location and activities may be different from those in school, the pedagogical characteristics of a good Ambitions Programme session which engages pupils and develops their thinking may be similar to the characteristics of a good lesson in school.

The provision for participating pupils is not differentiated: all receive the same programme of activities. There are a range of different activities, and there is a rationale that different pupils will take different things from the programme, according to need.

Chapter 7: Attendance at Ambitions Programme Events

Attendance data were collected for 161 Year 8 pupils and 103 Year 10 pupils at the majority of programme events. However, the data for Ambitions Programme Events are not complete for all schools. Attendance data are missing for:

- 1 school for Y8 UWE Campus Visit
- 3 schools for Y8 “Where am I now?” session
- 1 school for the Y10 Goblin Combe Icebreaker day
- 2 schools for the Y10 UoB Campus Visit
- 3 schools for the Y10 Sports and Societies Taster Day
- All schools for the Y10 Oxford University Visit

This means that the number of pupils attending these sessions is likely to be an underestimate. However, the percentages presented are attendances as a proportion of those schools for whom there are data – the percentages, therefore, are likely to be a more appropriate indicator of attendance levels. Attendance at evening and optional sessions was very low. However, for the sessions during the school day the percentage attending from each school was broadly similar.

The number of programme events attended by Year 8 pupils ranged from 0 to 7, with a mean, median and mode of 4 events. The parents of 26 Year 8 pupils came to one event, and the parents of 13 Year 8 pupils came to two events. Parents of the remaining 119 pupils did not attend any events. Table 7.1 shows the numbers of pupils attending each event.

Table 7.1: Numbers and percentages of pupils attending South Bristol Youth Ambitions Phase 1 activities

Phase 1 Activities (Year 8 pupils)			
Activity	Location	Number Attending	% of Cohort Attending
Team Building Day	UWE	139	86%
What is University?	School	144	84%
Information Evening for Parents and Carers	Bristol City Football Club (Evening)	24	15%
Future Choices	School	135	84%
Campus Visit	UWE	114	88%*
Where am I now?	School	66	84%*
Celebration Event	UWE (Evening)	29	18%

* based on incomplete data

The number of core programme events attended by Year 10 pupils ranged from 0 to 7, with a mean, median, and mode of 4. Of the optional activities, 72 Year 10 pupils attended none, 27 attended one, and 4 attended two. The parents of 28 Year 10 pupils came to one event, and the parents of 5 Year 10 pupils came to two events. Parents of the remaining 70 Year 10 pupils did not attend any events. Tables 7.2 and 7.3 show the numbers and percentages of Year 10 pupils attending each event.

Table 7.2: Numbers and percentages of pupils attending South Bristol Youth Ambitions Phase 3 activities

Phase 3 Core Activities (Year 10 pupils)			
Activity	Location	Number Attending	% of Cohort Attending
Team Building Day	Goblin Combe Outdoor Education	78	89%*
Campus Visit	UoB	49	71%*
Learning Styles (Evening)	Bristol City Football Club	36	35%
Future Options (Evening)	Bristol City Football Club	42	41%
Information Evening for Parents and Carers	Bristol City Football Club	17	16%
Sports/Societies Taster Day	UoB	30	53%*
Academic Taster Lectures	UoB	89	85%
Graduation	UoB	71	69% ^{we}

* based on incomplete data

^{we} in one school Year 10 pupils were on work experience when the Graduation Ceremony took place.

Table 7.3: Numbers and percentages of pupils in Year 10 attending optional Ambitions Programme activities.

Phase 3 Optional Activities (Year 10 pupils)		
Activity	Number Attending	% of Cohort Attending
Oxford University Visit	Unknown	Unknown
University of Reading Visit	4	4%
Cardiff Metropolitan University Visit	6	6%
Summer School at UWE	25	24%

The low levels of attendance at evening activities and parent-focussed events in particular highlights the need to develop mechanisms to support parental engagement in the programme.

Chapter 8: Young People's Perspectives

Pupils from Year 8 and Year 10 completed surveys in June and July 2016, about their experiences of the Ambitions Programme and their thoughts on HE and their future careers. The survey can be found in Appendix 5. A sample of Year 8 and Year 10 pupils also participated in focus groups in June and July 2016, which explored their experiences of the Ambitions Programme. The topic guide for pupil focus groups can be found in Appendix 6. In addition, the content of posters from the Year 8 "Where am I now?" session was analysed. The findings from these three sets of data analysis are presented below.

Selection for the programme

There is a large variation in pupils' understanding between and sometimes within schools about the basis of selection for the Ambitions Programme. This is most marked in Y8 but evident with a few pupils in Year 10 including those who have been in the programme from the start and those who have joined it in Year 10.

It may be that pupils' perceptions reflect differences in criteria used by schools for inclusion, and different ideas about the usefulness of the programme. The analysis of the data also suggests that perhaps, especially in Year 8, the reasons for inclusion are not clearly articulated to the pupils by the schools and possibly by the programme.

The basis for selection used by the schools may be contributing to the lack of consistency and coherence in pupils' responses to the programme.

Impact of the programme on attitudes to university

Responses to the questionnaire showed that 65% of Year 8 and 57% of Year 10 thought that a university degree is important for getting a good job in the future. This was supported by the content of the Year 8 posters.

In relation to their aspirations, over one third of pupils (36% of Y8 and 38% of Y10) said that at the start of their involvement with the Ambitions programme they had not given any thought to going to university. By the end of the programme 2015-16 the responses provided a different picture, as can be seen in Table 8.1.

Table 8.1: Attitudes to university at the end of the 2015-16 Ambitions Programme

Attitude	Year 8 %	Year 10 %
I'd definitely like to go to university	60	63
I am more curious about university	53	74
I'm unsure about going to university	25	40
I definitely don't want to go to university	8	11
I could go to university if I wanted to	67	77

For a majority of pupils the Ambitions programme has clearly succeeded in raising aspirations in relation to university; in particular it has influenced a group of Year 8 pupils who might otherwise not have considered this as an option. It has increased both pupils' understanding about universities, and their confidence in the possibility of going there.

Impact of the programme on other related areas

Questionnaire responses show that half of all Year 8 and year 10 pupils thought the Ambitions programme had had a positive impact on their school studies. Some focus group participants said it had made them work harder, though this was less evident in Year 8 where few pupils made this connection. However those that had were clear: '(you have to) *work more harder to achieve what you want in life and do what you want when you are older*'. Many Year 10 participants in the focus groups said that thinking about university had made them '*get their heads down*' for GCSE and work harder. For some simply being chosen had affected their self-image. Being in the programme had changed some pupils' attitude to themselves and their futures. It had also enhanced their social skills and given them more confidence.

(You see) like where it gets you to the future so like it will help you get a better job; you have a better understanding of the subject; you have more education. There's obviously barriers that stop you; but the only thing that can stop you is yourself. Because people help you with what you struggle with...like say money, confidence...but I think the programme has helped us with the confidence...we know it gave us a good overview.

Young People's Future Plans and aspirations

For most pupils, their plans for post-16 crystallise as they progress through the school and, not surprisingly, there appears to be greater clarity over the future they see for themselves in Year 10 compared with in Year 8. Of the six schools in the Ambitions Programme, only 2 offer post-16 provision at A-level. While young people must now be in some form of education or training until age 18, after the age of 16 this may be on-the-job training, or an apprenticeship. While some Y8 pupils were planning to remain in full-time education the large majority were unsure, did not know or had other plans.

Three-quarters of Year 10 pupils already had some idea of their plans post-16. Of those who knew what they were planning to do just over half intended to go to a 6th form college. Only two of the schools in South Bristol Youth have Level 3 post-16 provision, and very few of the pupils wanted to attend those schools. Less than a quarter of pupils wanted to go to a college of FE. The majority foresaw taking A-levels and going on to university. The number of pupils with more fully thought-through plans was small.

A third of the Y8 and a fifth of the Y10 respondents were not intending to stay in full-time education post-16. Some of these intended to leave and get a job, the majority of these were planning on an apprenticeship.

Reasons given for young people's current ideas about choices post-16

The majority of pupils relate their choices to having a job as an adult. A few see a direct line through education to this. For those who are still uncertain about their future direction or have no clear idea about jobs in their areas of interest, continuing with education enables them to take A-levels, BTECs or continue with Level 2 education, and gain more experience before the next step.

The choices of some are based on a perception that a degree or even post-16 education is not necessary. Relevant here is the questionnaire finding that only 57% of Year 10 pupils thought that having a degree was important for getting a good job. For some Y10 pupils, the opportunity for employment is already in place and they refer to working in their family business or companies where family members are already employed.

The 'dream jobs' identified in the Year 8 Posters included few for which a degree is essential and many for which a degree might be helpful but not necessary. In the focus groups also there were pupils who believed a degree would not be useful to them. Included among these were several who intended to join the Army, RAF or Police and referred only to the most basic entry levels which did not require any qualifications above Level 2.

Young people's knowledge about career paths

Two thirds of pupils in Year 8 (68%) and in Year 10 (64%) now said they knew about the different courses at university. However, evidence from all data sources indicates that this knowledge about courses at university varied in its accuracy. Even if they believed that they were knowledgeable about courses they had large gaps in their knowledge of the specifics of university entry. Only half of the Y10 and Y8 pupils said they knew about the subjects they needed to study and the grades required to go to university. Perceptions were very general: 58% of Y10 believed that they must get *excellent* grades and only 16% of Y10 pupils disagreed with this idea.

Though some Year 10 participants were becoming clearer about future directions and thought post-16 full-time study would be a part of this, almost all had no clear idea about what careers were associated with their areas of interest, or had any idea about ways to navigate the route to where they wanted to be. They had little or no knowledge of different university courses that might be relevant, access requirements for

university courses, alternatives routes to a degree or necessary qualifications. Some who thought they had such information were misinformed.

Who do young people in the Ambitions Programme talk to about their futures?

In general, pupils in Years 8 and 10 said they do not talk to teachers about their possible futures and they think teachers do not want to know. The exceptions are with individual teachers of related subjects who are seen as having an interest in the aspirations of specific pupils. They say that schools do not talk to them about university and teachers are mainly concerned with improving their grades for immediate goals.

Pupils who already had clear career aspirations and those who had some idea about their futures said they talked about this to their families and friends. Pupils who have no idea about their future don't talk about it to anyone. In some cases a student's interests and aspirations arise from, and may be nurtured by, family and friends or activity outside school. Where a student wants to branch out into a new area their families and friends are generally supportive. In general, though, pupils said that their families and friends had no detailed information about routes into a career or area of work to offer and did not know how to access it. Few pupils had anyone in their extended family or friends with HE experience; if they did the pupils could rarely provide any detail about it.

Two thirds of pupils agreed that their families were pleased about their participation in the programme. However, only 30% of Y8 and 41% of Y10 felt that they talked more about university to their friends and family as a result of the Ambitions Programme. Focus group data suggest that this group includes the pupils most engaged with the idea of university and with the central ideas of the programme.

Formal PSHE/Careers lessons were rarely mentioned by pupils and never as an opportunity to talk about their ideas or aspirations. Perceptions of their value varied. The Ambitions Programme had been helpful to some in achieving a focus and providing information. Contact with the Student Ambassadors was valued and mentioned specifically as a way of finding information about courses, though opportunities for informal contact that facilitated this kind of talk were limited.

Perceived barriers and how to overcome them.

From the questionnaire 29% of Year 8 pupils and 34% of Year 10 pupils felt that there are things that will get in the way of achieving the ambition to go to university. The Focus Groups addressed the question of the form these perceived barriers take. In Year 8 'Getting the grades' was a pervasive theme in discussion of barriers. However the pupils' horizon rarely went beyond GCSE. At some schools issues around friends with different priorities and other pupils' distracting behaviour and attitudes were identified as significant. In general both of these barriers could be overcome by: working hard, 'getting your head down'; choosing/managing your friends; having self-belief and determination. Financial issues or students fees were not mentioned as a barrier.

Pupils in Year 10 thought finance could be a big factor. However the general feeling was that this could be managed. The Ambitions sessions had helped and provided information about loans, bursaries and so on that was reassuring to pupils and their families. Some pupils thought that making the wrong choices at A-Level might be a barrier. They felt they needed advice and information to make the right choices. Some pupils thought getting the grades might be a barrier. The way to overcome this is to work hard.

Young people's experience of the Ambitions Programme

The survey asked participating pupils what their two most-liked and two least-liked activities were in the Ambitions Programme. Responses from Year 8 pupils can be seen in Tables 8.2 and 8.3.

Table 8.2: Most liked activities in Year 8

Team building (at UWE campus)	71%
UWE Campus visit	71%
Where Am I now?	23%
Future Choices	19%

Table 8.3: Least liked activities in Year 8

Parents and Carers	48%
Ambitions launch (at BCFC)	42%
What is university?	30%

Activities were liked because they were ‘fun’, ‘super fun’ or ‘very fun’ in that they enabled the pupils to be active, to interact with others and to meet new people from other schools. The event at the Sports Centre was approved for the emphasis on teamwork, and the opportunities for meeting new people because the schools were mixed. The Campus Visit was enjoyed as a way of learning about the university and seeing what living as a student was like. Meeting the Student Ambassadors as part of the visit to the campus was also enjoyed.

However in the focus group discussions some pupils commented on the unequal access to activities on the team-building day, specifically not having a turn at the climbing wall. Although being mixed up with pupils from other schools was generally approved, for some it was challenging, and problematic when it involved talking to people they did not know in situations such as having lunch or making a video. Pupils spoke of being scared and feeling embarrassed in these situations. However some realized that although it was challenging they were learning useful social skills, and developing skills in self-presentation and communication.

In general in-school activities were poorly-recalled by focus group participants; there was frequently confusion about what had happened, and why it had been done. Some of the pupils’ description seemed to refer to activities experienced outside the Ambitions programme.

In relation to *Where Am I Now?* it is interesting to note an almost equal percentage (24%) who placed it as one of their least favourite two activities and those who placed it as one of their most favourite. Pupils who enjoyed reviewing what they knew and thinking about their futures were matched by pupils who weren’t interested, found it boring, didn’t know what to include and lost interest in the activity. The analysis of the poster outcomes of this session reflects this dichotomy. The most detailed and elaborated content came from fewer than 20 pupils. The posters themselves suggest varied levels of interest, engagement and commitment to the activity. This may be related to how the task was mediated in different schools, and there is some evidence of this. But it may also reflect the responses of pupils with different levels of interest in thinking about their futures and learning about university and thus differently engaged by the activity. Contrast for example: *‘I liked the poster making because I got to talk about ideas for the future and had kind people listening to my explanations.’* with: *‘I think we’re a bit young to be looking at universities and that, it’s more like Year 10’.*

The most frequent epithet attached to least-liked activities by Year 8 pupils was ‘boring’ (37%). They were disliked because of lack of activity and of opportunities to be involved, and because they happened in the evening when everyone was tired. The main reasons for disliking in-school activity was that it was too much like school *‘everyone sat around writing things on paper’* and that wasn’t fun. Pupils also thought that there was too much information to deal with in the time.

Tables 8.4 and 8.5 show the most-liked and least-liked activities by Year 10 pupils.

Table 8.4: Most liked activities in Year 10

Team building (at Goblin Combe)	73%
Campus visit (to UoB)	51%
Academic taster lectures (at UoB)	50%
Sports and Societies (UoB Halls of residence)	41%
Graduation Ceremony	38%

Table 8.5: Least liked activities in Year 10

My Future	42%
Y10 Launch (at BCFC)	38%
Learning styles (at BCFC)	36%
Sports and Societies	20%

Team building at Goblin Combe was the favourite activity for most and liked by all. It was considered ‘fun’, ‘a bit of an ice breaker’, ‘valuable’. Reasons for this positive response were: meeting/getting to know pupils from other schools; making new friends; gaining confidence in talking to people you didn’t know; talking to people from other places/not in ‘our little school bubble’; learning about team work/leadership, developing skills, good communication; *taking me out of my comfort zone*. Overall, favourite activities were associated with being with other schools; meeting new people and having new experiences.

The responses for the other activities suggest, as in year 8, pupils with a differential commitment to finding out about university because of a definite interest in getting a degree and/or belief that this is a real possibility. In the Focus Groups for instance pupils' reaction to the Academic Taster Lectures was deeply divided. Many pupils enjoyed the experience even when the topic of a lecture did not particularly interest them. *'The lectures were just so interesting and fun'; 'I liked how you got to understand more about being in a university, sitting in a lecture.'* However others disliked it because *'it was mostly boring and not useful'; 'boring'; 'too formal'; 'nothing that was practical to do'; 'just sat listening' and 'all sat with our own schools.'*

Many pupils enjoyed the Campus Visit, the experience of visiting a university and the social experience of meeting new people. *'...Because they were all new to me, also you saw what it was like to be at a university and trying to find your way around'*. Other pupils simply recalled a lot of walking, a lot of hills and the free lunch.

The same divide in response is found in reactions to the Launch Event. Some found it informative, they liked meeting people from the programme and from other schools. Parents had found it useful. Others found it *'boring'* with people *'just talking to us'*.

Equally, My Future was liked by some because they had gained useful information which had been provided in an accessible way. For others it was all about sitting and listening and was boring.

The Sports and Societies Taster was generally liked and seen as good fun. Many had not realized the breadth and extent of the extra-curricular provision. *'When you think about university you think it is all work but they also have clubs where you can mix in with other people...your interests.'* *'It's not all about learning.'*

Pupils found some of the Graduation Ceremony daunting, but they appreciated and enjoyed it, as had any of their family members who came. *'The graduation brought it all together. It was scary but I liked it.'*; *'It was an opportunity to show our parents what we've been doing.'*; *'It was daunting at first but then it was nice...to have the graduation where the actual pupils would have their graduation.'*

The three least-liked activities all took place in the evening. As with Year 8, pupils felt that this was a mistake as people were tired and nothing was done to get them active and involved. From those pupils who attended the Learning Styles session, some remembered the activity but they weren't sure why they had done it and had not taken it any further. Some were interested in the idea and thought that what they learned might be *'quite handy'*. Others were not sure how useful it was and had attended only because they thought they were getting *'revision techniques'*. Others thought it *'seemed a bit pointless'*, it wasn't helpful and they hadn't learned much. These pupils thought they already adapted their learning style to the task in hand and learned in different ways.

University visits to Oxford, Reading, Exeter and Cardiff Metropolitan were generally poorly attended by Y10 but most of the pupils who did take part in these visits, consistently placed them in the most liked category.

Young people's perspective on the Student Ambassadors

Overall both Year 8 and Year 10 pupils were very positive about the Ambassadors and saw them as an important part of the programme.

They were frequently described by Year 8 pupils as: *nice, easy to talk to, down-to-earth, friendly, helpful, kind, funny, inspirational*. Especially if pupils were already thinking (however tentatively) about university they were a very good source of information about what it was like to study a particular subject and to live as a student. However, pupils varied in the amount of interaction with Student Ambassadors they reported. Some had talked with Student Ambassadors a lot and found it enjoyable and helpful. Others had only talked *a little bit* or not at all. This was reacted to confidence. Some pupils would prefer to have the same Student Ambassadors every time, to ensure consistency in information, and for developing a relationship which would make it easier to talk to them, Others would prefer the Student Ambassadors they meet to change

because having people who are doing different courses creates more opportunities for asking more questions and ones that are relevant to individual interests.

Pupils were aware of the difference between Student Ambassadors and teachers but also that in the school-based sessions they were doing very 'schooly things' which affected the relationship and required different skills from the Student Ambassadors. Many perceived the in-school activities as tests and were concerned that they didn't have the 'right answers'. They liked Student Ambassadors who helped them if they got stuck.

For a few pupils meeting the Student Ambassadors had made them realize they needed to take school work and learning more seriously

Year 10 pupils also perceived the Student Ambassadors very positively: they described them as *nice, helpful, interesting*. They were seen as not judgmental, and not trying to force you/persuade you to go to university. They weren't patronizing and treated the pupils as equals. Pupils liked the opportunities created for informal chats with people who were experiencing university now and offered a realistic, unbiased view: *'Loads of times when we could just sit down and just ask them questions...that was useful'*. This aligns with the way that the University Leads described how the Student Ambassadors functioned, and how the Student Ambassadors themselves said that they aimed to position themselves. Some pupils, however, did not find it easy to get to talk to Student Ambassadors, especially one who was doing a course they were interested in: *'I wanted to (ask) but they were talking to other people'*. Year 10 pupils thought it was important to have Ambassadors who were taking different courses so they could get different opinions.

Impact of the Programme Overall.

When asked to describe the programme overall, words chosen by pupils included:

Beneficial, educational, eye-opening, great experience, informative, positive, life-changing, inspiring, independent, educational, interesting, encouraging, good.

Summary

It is clear that the Ambitions Programme is perceived positively by most participants. 70% of this cohort say they want to continue into the next year. In relation to aspiration to and knowledge about university it is having some impact on most participants. It is also contributing to developing social skills, confidence and a positive attitude to attainment in some students.

The evidence on young people's perspectives from all data sources points to the presence of groups of students who relate very differently to the Programme, whose response is different and who needs also differ. It may be that varied approaches by schools to selection criteria for the Programme is creating or contributing to these differences. Within the current Year 8 and year 10 participants it is possible to suggest four groups:

1. Students who are future-focused and already have HE and some career in mind (even if this may change). These are generally engaged and committed, have currently benefitted most from the Programme and have the support of their parents, who are also most likely to attend events or welcome information. They are inspired by the Programme and aware of the need for 'high grades' and hard work..
2. Students who have some idea of a future and are likely to continue with full-time education post-16 and possibly into HE. Most of these also engage with the programme and generally enjoy the activities. Some may doubt their ability to achieve what is needed for university but believe (at least theoretically) in the efficacy of working hard.
3. Students who at present do not see a future that they think requires HE but who may have a job in mind. These are less engaged in the Programme because its focus is on university rather than eg apprenticeships, access to the army, RAF, Police or the Fire Service. They enjoy trips out of school and activities that are fun and active but are not motivated by other activities which they are likely to see as 'boring' or 'pointless'. They are disinclined to attend after school events.

4. A large group of students (between a quarter of Year 8 and a third of Y10 students) who do not know what they are planning to do and have as yet no direction. They engage with the programme generally but it has had little impact. They may be attracted to the idea of university but probably more for the independence and social life.

Students in Group 1 are likely to be ready for more detailed information. They have very little information relevant to them about how education might help their progress, about the importance of choice points at GCSE, post-16 or post-18, or about how to find out information that might be helpful. If students are to be adequately prepared for university they must have accurate knowledge about the subjects they need to study and the grades required and there is clearly more work that could be done to address the knowledge gap in this area.

Students in Group 2 have usually identified an area of interest which they would like to pursue into the future. They have little or no idea of what jobs/careers are possible in these areas or whether in fact a degree would be useful to them. When they are clearer about their direction needs are those of Group 1.

Students in Group 3 may be more likely to drop out of the Programme, except for their enjoyment of being out of school. It may be useful to explore the relevance of HE to their stated choices and challenge their current level of aspiration by (for example) graduate entry to the army, police and so on; or a degree by apprenticeship.

Students in Group 4, as yet uncommitted to any plans post-16, would appear to be likely to benefit from more exposure to university and more information about possible job opportunities in order to make more informed decisions about their future.

Students responded negatively to some approaches used in delivering events and activities. After-school events were seen as too focused on sitting and listening, sometimes not well organized, and lacking interaction. In-school events were very poorly recalled. Activities in the existing programme which addressed important student needs were unfortunately disliked by some as 'boring' or not sufficiently active. Attention to the pedagogical aspects of the Programme could be beneficial.

The social aspects of the Programme are important to students. Meeting students from other schools is consistently seen as a benefit. However the organization of this is not always effective or consistent. Many students lack the social skills to deal with some situations effectively and, though some do develop skill and confidence on their own, this is not the case for all. Students do not always know the other students in their Ambitions Group.

The students views on how the programme could be improved are worth attention. Year 8 suggestions for improvement included:

1. More activity out of school.
2. More detail about courses that pupils might be interested in.
3. Get people who know what they are interested in or what they might want to do in groups so they can ask questions (maybe of Ambassadors): this is about getting more information, and sharing ideas.
4. School sessions (one hour) are too short for so much information. So longer sessions, or more sessions, would be better.
5. More visits to UWE to look at different rooms/places so they become more familiar with the university environment, as this is what the programme is about.

6. Make it more active and interactive, using fun things that get pupils involved; things that make pupils remember – not writing things down; sharing ideas with people from other schools/meeting new people.

7. Improve the 'sitting around and listening' things.

8. When parents are brought in to tell them stuff at the beginning, get pupils involved in something. Maybe quizzes on what they want to do/might want to do when they are older, then get them into groups with similar people.

Year 10 suggestions to improve the programme included:

1. More things related to what pupils are interested in and need to know, including ideas such as '*More, shorter taster lectures*'; '*Ask everyone at the start of the year what they are interested in and maybe fit the tasters to what the kids want to do*'; '*Sessions where you have an opportunity to talk to students who are doing something you are interested in – where you can just talk*'; '*I wish we could experience more courses*'; '*More about courses at different universities, how they are different*'; '*Sit in on real lectures*' (Year 10 pupils have been doing this with post-16 colleges).

2. More information about A-Level choices and university entry requirements, for example: '*They didn't really tell us about what grades you needed. I found that out for myself. There was nothing about AL*'; '*For your AL choices you need to know about what you want to do at university so you can get it right*'.

3. They would like school to be more involved and know more about what they are doing, such as: '*They give out so many learning opportunities but it's not sometimes in the right area. The Ambitions project helped you in the right area, if school knew it would encourage more*'.

4. Parents found it difficult to attend events and get the information that was being provided. Pupils wondered if there was another way: '*My parents read everything about education. Maybe they could send out little booklets*'.

5. From those pupils who disliked sitting and being talked at there was a general request for activities that were '*more interactive*', '*getting us more involved*', '*more activities outside*', '*actually doing stuff*'.

6. Some pupils felt that '*it wasn't organized well*'. They complained about communication to them from the school, for example they would come in and be told there was an event/activity and no-one knew this was happening. They wanted more advance notice, '*So like we know about the trips and stuff; obviously we didn't know a lot about them*'.

Chapter 9: Perspective of Parents and Carers

This part is based on analysis of parent questionnaire administered in Autumn 2015, to which 177 parents responded, and interviews with 8 parents carried out in Summer 2016. The survey and interview topic guide can be found in Appendices 7 and 8.

Aims of the programme

The following discussion provides an insight into what a group of parents interviewed view to be the aims of the programme. We have chosen to present this conversation in detail because it illustrates the aspirations that these parents have for their children and the historical challenges that they and their families have faced in gaining access to Higher Education.

Int: What do you think are the aims of the programme?

P 1: Ambition for our children. The clue is in the title..... I wouldn't know anything else about it. It just gives them ambition to go to university.

P 3: Exposure to it [university] so that they can have – they can see that everybody can go.

*P 1: That is a big thing they're trying to promote, isn't it? **It's not just for –***

*P 3: **the elite in this country any more.***

P 1: I mean, I've been a cleaner and I'm now a trainee Teaching Assistant, whereas obviously you're [addressing P3] a solicitor and you're in law. It's more recognised your children will go to university than –

P 3: Yeah, but I came from a home care assistant, single parent who worked three jobs to put us through so –

P 1: trying to get them away from that.....

P3: 20 years ago when I went, it was extraordinary that, you know, somebody whose parent was a home care assistant was going to university. That wasn't the norm. Now it's more common that - you know, I mean, all of our family have got children who are going to university at some point, and so it's more the norm. And I think that, especially – and because of the issues that we have with the term Hartcliffe, you've got to start showing children that come from areas where they're looked down upon because of where they go to school, that actually there's no barrier there. There is no barrier. The only barrier is you, and you can do it if you want to. There's a big wide world out there. It doesn't revolve around the –

P 1:that little BS13.

P3: Yeah, exactly. You can have goals and you can get there, and I think this programme is a prime example to the kids of exposure to that.

P1: My daughter, obviously, the Year 8 one, she went, "But you're 40, Mum. You're just training now." And I'm like, "Yeah, but I've done college. I didn't do uni. I didn't know what I wanted to do. Now I'm a little bit older (laughter), I now know what I want to do and I want to do this for two years and then I want to go on and maybe train to be a teacher. Who says I can't?"

P 3:....you're absolutely right.

P 1: So I could have gone, but when they looked at where I came from, go and work in an office. And I did, I worked my way up, but – yeah.

P 3: For our kids, we want something more for them than what was labelled for us 20 years ago, and programmes like this –

P1: Yeah, exactly.

Int: So if I was just to ask you to say one sentence, how do you think your child is benefiting from being part of the Ambitions programme? I know you've touched on this briefly at the very beginning. What would you say?

R 2: It gives them a taster of what it's like. Whether they use it is another thing. But then that's up to every child wherever they're born, they've got to do it themselves. Nobody offers it to them on a plate.

R1: Nothing's easy.

*R3: Yep. It's **giving them exposure to options, with choices that they can make.***

This discussion echoes themes from the parent surveys: the majority of respondents (81%) agreed that all young people should be able to go to University. The majority (79%) disagreed that university is “not for people like us.” Furthermore, 143 parents (81%) agreed that all young people should be able to go to university, and 121 (68%) disagreed that university is for rich people.

Why were their children chosen to be on the programme

Some of the parents interviewed thought that their children had been chosen for the programme because they had the potential to go to University. Others were not sure. Two parents thought that their children had been picked to improve their behaviour.

.....he's very intelligent and he's got the intelligence level. It's just he can't seem to close his mouth for long enough to learn something. And they wanted to show him, this is what you can achieve if you zip it and listen. And I would say, touch wood, thus far it's worked. So yeah, he's definitely changed his view significantly. But yeah, that's why he was chosen, because he's got the intelligence level, just doesn't tend to use it

The benefits of the programme

Some of the parents interviewed could see that their children on the programme were becoming more confident.

*And I think this programme absolutely gave him the confidence to be able to say what he would like to do. That's a huge thing, getting that out of him, do you actually want to go to university or do you want to do an apprenticeship, or do you want to go to college and then go into an office job..... That was an immediate no. Work? Don't want to do that. But I think the actual giving him the confidence to be able to say, **"I would like to go to university. I would like to do politics. Actually, I'd like to do philosophy, politics and economics,"** which I nearly fell over on –*

Others appreciated how the programme was enabling their children to consider university as an option.

Well, I think it's been good for him to go and see what the future could be for him, I suppose, and see what university might be like, and given the opportunity that if he wants to go down that road then he can. So I think that's been a good thing. Because I think a lot of young ones don't feel that they've got that opportunity to go later on. They don't even think about university, a lot of them. They just sort of think about getting to the end of sixth form and then that's it, get a job, type of

thing. So I don't think a lot of them know that there is that option to go to university if you want to. So at least that's given him an idea of what he could do in the future if that's what he wants to do.

Overall the parents interviewed had not participated in many of the events for parents. Events that were spoken about positively included the UWE celebration event and the UoB graduation event. Parents appreciated the formality of these events. The parents interviewed from one of the South Bristol schools had appreciated the fact that many parents and teachers from this school had attended the graduation in the Great Hall in the Wills Memorial Building (which was not the case for all of the schools).

I'd have to say the University of Bristol because it's, you know, the pinnacle of where they would love to achieve to go, you know. So for me, to see them walking up onto the stage and getting their certificate and their book, that for me was.....

It was nice for me really to get dressed up, rather than trainers and... yeah. And the pride I think, the pride in our children.

I went to the graduation ceremony, with [name's] grandmother. So like she said, she doesn't know if she'll be here when he graduates. I was like, oh, for goodness sake. So that was quite nice, actually, to go up to that.

The taster lectures were also mentioned as being valuable:

They had them at the University of Bristol, and he went to those ones and loved them, absolutely loved them, especially the science ones, because they teach in a different way at university.

I think to give them a taster, especially....for Year 10, the year before he takes his GCSEs he's got a certain number of weeks left before he has to start reigning it in, and to get him to understand where the end goal is now really has helped, really has definitely helped him. He knows he wants to go to university. He knows what kind of job he wants to do. The taster sessions that you did actually at the university, the lectures, he was involved in one there, so he's looking into what he can do with that kind of degree. And so it's really switched the light on. And I've said to him, you know, "The steps are, to get there you have to get GCSEs. Then you have to get A levels, and then you go and choose your university." Now he sees the end, this step now is a lot easier, to get him to knuckle down and realise, if you want that, you have to do this first. So for me it's definitely the light on for him.

The summer camp at UWE was considered to be a positive experience for those pupils who attended it.

He came back, yap, yap, yap, yap, yap, yap, yap. He's made the decisions all in his head, what he wants to do and where he's going to go, and the independence – he's 15 and really desperate for that independence, but I'm not quite ready to let him have it. But to have that taster – and cooking, when they had to cook a meal. They had to go to Sainsbury's, buy the ingredients and cook the meal.

Yeah, that really made him understand what it was like to be a student. Because they did sort of – not lectures but they did programmes during the day. They were there for two nights, and so during the day they did programmes and then on the evening they – the first night they had to eat in the canteen. The second night they had to make a meal themselves. And I think he really sort of understood then that, number one, it's not all about mucking about and having a good time, but actually what you get to experience – it's not like school.

A visit to the University of Oxford was organised in the Spring and one parent could see why this had been valuable for her son (who wants to study Politics, Philosophy and Economics).

And so when he came back, "Oh, did you know that David Cameron did PPE?" And I said, "No, I didn't." And he said, "Yes," he said, "and Boris Johnson did classics." And I said, "Well, there you go." And just talking about the differences between what they were doing, and why some people think this degree is better than that degree and all that lot. And I said, "Well, you come back with a first in anything, I don't care" (laughter).

Parents' participation in the programme

Overall the participation of the parents in the programme has been low, as can be seen in Chapter 7. The focus group interviews revealed a wide range of reasons why it was difficult for parents to attend events, including: not being able to drive and having to take the bus; being ill; the event clashing with prior commitments; and not knowing enough in advance about the events.

P3 Had I known, I would have been on it. Heavily pregnant, but I would have been on it.

P1 And there was one of them that was at Ashton Gate that was learning about the financial side of it. I didn't know it was a parents' one. He told me it wasn't a parents' one, so I dropped him off and went home and had no idea it was a parents' one.

Location of University

In the questionnaire administered in Autumn 2015 only a minority of parents (26%) said that if their child went to university, they would like their child to stay living at home and almost half (46%) said they would be happy for their child to go to a university anywhere. Similar responses were found from the parents in the focus group interviews, with several parents arguing that their child should go away to University.

See, personally I think he needs to go away. If he chose to go to Bristol, I would absolutely support him. It's his decision. If I had to choose for him, it wouldn't - you know, no, I don't want St Andrew's, I mean, but I would want him to - I think a part of going to university also is learning to stand on your own two feet. If he is local, I know I would still be doing his washing. I know I would be cooking him his meals every now and again, he'll come home and do that. I know he probably wouldn't have the whole experience of university life.

However some of the parents interviewed thought that it might be more expensive to study at a University not in the Bristol area.

That would come down to financially, I think, that one. I know a lot of them like to go away, and I would - you know, if that's what he'd want to do I would try and help that, because I think the experience is good for them. If that's what he wants to do, to go away, to experience university, that would be fine. But I know, speaking to friends at school that have had children that have gone off to university, they've found that that has been slightly more expensive living away from home rather than living at home and commuting. But I mean, that would be something that we would have to look into. But I wouldn't stop him if he wanted to go away and study because I feel that that is the university experience and life. So, you know, it's just what you do.

Overall the parents emphasised that they would respect their child's choice about whether to study locally or further afield.

.....it'll be her choice, I wouldn't have a say in it, it would be her choice. I'd probably be a bit heartbroken if she went further afield, but I'll always be able to get to her, no matter where or when it is, but it would be ultimately her choice, that's part of growing up, making decisions and responsibilities I think.

This relates to the HESA data from South Bristol (see Chapter 4), showing that around 30% of university students from South Bristol live in the parental home during term time, compared to a national average of 26%. This figure was higher for students from Hengrove, Hartcliffe, Whitchurch Park and Filwood.

Barriers to participation in HE

When asked what could be barriers to progressing to HE several of the parents mentioned qualifications.

So I think, as far as getting him there, it's just the qualifications that he needs to be able to get to a university. Yes, he would love to go to Bristol University, and I would love him to go to Bristol University. [] And I know you can go to college still and retake your GCSEs and all that lot, so, you know, it'll just be the confidence building. And that's his big problem is he's got no confidence in himself. He can't do it, he's useless, but he wants to do it. And the thing is, he does do it, but just –

The parents interviewed appeared to be aware of the financial implications of studying at University, but were still supportive.

..... I think he's more than capable. If anything it'll be his enthusiasm for it, if anything, and that's down to him, really. But there wouldn't be anything in the way, you know. Obviously - one of my stepdaughters has gone to university and she's taken out a student loan, so we would do what we could to help him, but if he's got to do that then he would have to do that, you know, at the end of the day. But if that's what he wants to do then that shouldn't stop him.

One major barrier for young people in South Bristol who attend schools that do not offer post-16 academic courses is that they may find it difficult to access appropriate post-16 courses in other areas of the city.

In fact I've got a meeting with the principal at College X, because I was actually at College X when one of the teachers commented to some children who are from School Y – I was there with my niece, and she promptly turned round and said, "Well, at least you're from School Y and not from School Z [a school in South Bristol], because we don't have people from School Z here. They've got behavioural issues and academic issues." And I'm sat there and I can feel like my palms – and I'm thinking, don't say anything, don't say anything. And my niece just looked at me and went, "Please don't say anything. Please don't say anything." So she carried on the conversation that, yes, they choose children from schools where they know that they are going to have a certain level of education.

There is also anecdotal evidence that, when pupils from South Bristol progress to Post-16 education in other areas of the City, they can drop-out before completing their A-level courses.

Knowledge about Higher Education and where to go for advice

Only 19 (11%) of survey respondents had been to university themselves, although this figure was slightly higher for those who had someone in their household who had been to university (30 respondents, 17%), and much higher for those who had family members who don't live with them who have been to university (105 respondents, 59%). In addition, 110 (62%) had family friends who have been to university.

A substantial number of parents did not feel informed about university applications: 81 (46%) disagreed that they understood the application process for university, and only 89 (50%) agreed that they could find the information they need to advise their child about getting into university. 39 (22%) disagreed that they knew how to help their child find out information about university. While 106 (60%) agreed that the school can give their child good advice on how to get into university, 107 (60%) disagreed that they have had discussions with the school about their child's future and/or university. This points to the variable role of schools in supporting pupils: it is worth questioning the extent to which teachers know about pupils' aspirations (especially given the finding in Chapter 8 that pupils felt that schools did not discuss aspirations with them and were more concerned about attainment in the short-term) and how best to advise pupils on pursuing their aspirations. Given that parents have little experience of university themselves, it is important that school is able to guide, advise and support pupils through the process of finding out about and applying to university.

Only one of the 8 parents interviewed had been to university, although several of them had older children who were applying for University. The parent who had attended university had considerable awareness about universities and university courses.

P3 Yeah. Bristol is – well, it's a Russell Group, so...

P2: There's a lot of overseas students at Bristol University.

P3: Yeah, it's got some phenomenal programmes that are world renowned. The veterinary school is just, you know, I mean, world class. As a lawyer, the law degree, if you put down that you got it from Bristol University, you are up there when you're putting your CV together. For me UWE tends to be more vocational, so the nursing –

P 1: See, that's the side I know.

P 3: Yeah, and I think that – I'm not knocking it at all, you know. A friend of mine's doing a midwifery degree there. So there are degrees that they're doing there that are vocational and then there are degrees that are more academic, and Bristol to me is more academic than vocational. But at the end of the day, for any child to get a degree in anything – I think in 10, 15 years' time, if you haven't got a degree you're going to struggle to get a job. We're going to be like the States, where if you haven't got a degree you're not going to get a job. And that's where I think we're heading

P3 I've been to Nottingham and Exeter, because I've got nephews at both. Exeter's a lovely campus. I mean, it's a lovely place to go. Nottingham, I think it wouldn't be where I chose..... but my nephew thought it was phenomenal.....and he's doing physics so.....

The parent (P3), represented in the discussion above studied law at university and is now part of a family where many of the young people from the next generation are progressing to university. She has the knowledge and expertise to support them in this process. She is an important counter-example to the view that parents in South Bristol do not have any expertise about Higher Education. This case suggests that it would only take one generation of young people in South Bristol to participate in Higher Education in order to change what is possible for future generations.

However the interviews also revealed that young people are often not receiving appropriate advice about HE courses, and the A-level and GCSE entrance requirements for such courses. For example one of the parents interviewed said that her daughter wants to study journalism, but is not aware of relevant courses at university for this choice.

I mean I've got five children, she's the youngest, and my oldest works in a solicitors, my next son down works in a printers and [name] has just literally left from her A-Levels and she's the only one that is...and she said it from way back, a few years back, even before she went to college that she wanted to do Uni. But she wants to do journalism and I don't think there was a journalism course so that's the only thing that's sort of like holding her back now, that she won't be able to do what she wanted to do. She's the only one that's ever mentioned it out of all of them.

The parents were aware that they needed more advice.

Like if he decides that sport is what he wants to do, you know, which university would cater perhaps a bit more than others for that particular thing, probably something like that, really

Some parents interviewed suggested that they would be able to find out relevant information from the internet. One thought that she could telephone the university for advice.

I suppose I'd have to ring up the university and ask to speak to, I don't know, HM or whoever's in charge of that, just to enquire, say, "I'm enquiring about this particular university, could you tell me what you provide?" So just contacting them directly, I suppose, and finding out that way.

The response above, although demonstrating initiative, does suggest that the parents are not aware of the complexity of making decisions about HE courses and the fine-level of detail involved.

While the majority of parents feel that there are people they could ask if they had questions about going to university (for example: 153 (86%) agreed that if they have questions about their child going to university, they are happy to ask Amy and other people from South Bristol Youth; 150 (85%) agreed that if they have questions about their child going to university, they are happy to ask a teacher at their child's school; 139 (79%) agreed that if they have questions about their child going to university, they are happy to ask other school staff (eg career advisor, family link worker); 147 (83%) agreed that if they have questions about their child going to university, they are happy to ask family and friends), very few have actually discussed university with school: 116 (94%) disagreed that the school has offered to give them information about university. It seems though that more parents discuss university with family and friends, as only 57 (32%) disagreed that they have had discussions with family and/or friends about university.

Suggestions from parents for enhancing the programme

The parents interviewed offered some sound advice about how the programme could improve.

1. Arrange for students from South Bristol who have progressed to Higher Education to meet and talk to the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme participants.

What I would love for them to do is invite kids back who have been to university to sit with Year 10s and say, "This is where I went.....So not only this kind of promotion, but promotion with children who have gone to university, have got their degree, or are part way through their degree, to say, "I'm from here, born here, bred here, raised here, and I did it. No reason why you can't." Get that confidence in the children.

2. Information about events sent home in advance. In general this had not been clear enough in 2015/2016.
3. Briefing notes for parents about sessions that they cannot attend, for example the session on the financial aspects of attending university.

I think if an information pack had been given out on the financial night, that would have been really beneficial, because they could have taken that home and said, "I was told this. I was told that." But he came back with nothing.

4. Arranging transport to key events.

Chapter 10: The Perspective of School Staff

Staff from each of the six schools were interviewed in Spring 2016. A range of staff were interviewed, including those who were the main point of contact for South Bristol Youth, and those who had a strategic responsibility for progression and/or careers. An interview topic guide can be found in Appendix 9.

Aims of the programme

In general the staff interviewed consider that the overall aim of the programme is to increase University participation for young people in the South Bristol area. Other more specific aims that were mentioned included: developing awareness of the courses on offer at University and understanding what a lecture is; developing understanding of how you live at University; enabling young people to make an informed choice about whether or not to apply to University. Some staff interviewed thought that there would be increased academic outcomes for pupils on the programme because their aspirations would be raised.

Selection of pupils

Each of the partner schools has their own procedure for choosing pupils for the Year 8 and Year 10 programmes. All of the schools aim to choose pupils who a) would be the first in their family to attend University and b) have the potential to attend university. Some of the schools do not choose what they call their “gifted and talented” pupils because these pupils are either involved in other programmes or they believe that such pupils do not need the additional support of the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme. Other schools choose their C/D borderline pupils because they believe that the programme will encourage these pupils to work harder for their GCSE examinations.

Views about the programme

All the staff interviewed were very positive about the programme. Aspects of the programme that were explicitly mentioned in response to the question “what do you think works well in the programme” were: having Amy as the key point of contact; having contact with Camilla because she’s got the overview of everything and she recognises where things are going; Amy being very good at talking to the pupils; involvement of local universities and the difference between the two universities; student ambassadors in general and UWE ambassadors visiting the school and understanding where the pupils are coming from; graduation in the Wills Memorial Building for Year 10 because the ‘*kudos there is huge for them and the sense of achievement*’; the team building at Goblin Coombe; and meeting pupils from other schools. The reason for the importance of student ambassadors is illustrated by the following quote:

The ambassadors start a conversation with the kids in a really informal way. We ask them what do you think about the ambassadors they say ‘they were alright weren’t they, just like normal’kids from here think that [] university pupils maybe wear spats and stuff like that, I don’t know. They have a view of someone that goes to university, and it is a real ‘keener or boffin or whatever, that is what they think. People that just sit there with their heads down the whole time, just work work work, that is how they see university pupils. And then they go and see these people. Last time we went with a group, they were doing ... they were playing volley ball, there was a volley ball tournament going on..... so it was really good to break down all the perceptions that our pupils have, because ours have really bad perceptions of university.

Again, much of this aligns with what was discussed in interviews and focus groups with the Ambitions Programme Delivery Team, the participating pupils, and parents.

Many of the staff interviewed explicitly mentioned positive outcomes for the pupils. For example:

“just seeing how their confidence at the thought of going on to university has blossomed [] it’s just subtle, you see a change over time. So their knowledge base is much better than the standard student and their motivation seems to be a little bit higher as well with it, they just seem overall more comfortable with the notion of progressing on to university.

I can think of one of our pupils who is autistic; on occasions she's very withdrawn and lacking in confidence [], but she's part of the programme and you can see that when she's off site, she's fully engaged in the activities and doesn't seem to be remotely phased by having to mix with new people and get involved in new things. When you talk to her mother she really struggles with meeting new people and undertaking new activities, but I think because she's part of the group [] that gives her confidence to overcome certain aspects of her autism when she's out and about.

When asked the question “what could improve/change about the programme” the responses included: more parents to attend the graduations; more involvement of parents generally; buses that could take pupils (possibly from several schools) to the events; less variability in the school coordinator who accompanies pupils to events; more involvement/awareness of school leadership team in the programme; and for some schools an increased number of pupils participating in the programme. The issues around resource and staff time echo issues raised by the Ambitions Programme Delivery Team.

Barriers to participation for young people in South Bristol

When asked what they considered to be the main barriers to participation for young people in South Bristol many of the teachers said 1) finance and 2) not having anyone in the family who knows about university and post-16 education. In order to address this it was considered that a key component of the programme should be engaging parents. However it was recognised by some interviewees that some parents of South Bristol Youth participants were becoming more engaged because their children had been chosen to be part of the programme:

.....we saw a difference in some parents who had previously been less engaged. When we'd phone up to say, “Katy, Joe's playing up again, being really naughty,” before she just would be like, “I'm sick of that school, it's your job to sort him out when he's with you, it's my job to sort him out at home.” But since [her child was chosen for the Ambitions Programme] I think she feels a real sense of pride, and she'll say, that's the hook now, so when I phone to say, “Look, remember that I'm calling you because we don't want him to throw his potential away.” And something's happened, “Can you help me, can you work with us?” And it's a million times better, it's like you're talking to a different woman because there's the pride in him..... [] his mum has high aspirations for him.

One concrete suggestion made was that the paperwork that goes to parents could be improved with higher production values. For example a flyer with ‘This is South Bristol Youth,’ and a summary of each of the events that their child has been invited to join.

Other factors mentioned as being barriers to participation were: the reluctance of many young people in South Bristol to move away from Bristol (this is highlighted in the analysis of the HESA data in Chapter 4, which showed that by far the most popular universities for students from South Bristol are local universities); pupils not receiving the grades at GCSE level; and a lack of awareness of the possibilities opened up in terms of employment if you have an undergraduate degree. Some interviewees suggested that the pupils themselves are not ambitious enough when they are thinking about their careers.

They don't have a dream, they don't have, ‘I've always wanted to do this.’ They've settled. ‘I just wanna do this.’ That's the language that they use. ‘I just wanna do this. I just wanna work for my dad. I just wanna do an apprenticeship.’ It's not, ‘I've always wanted to,’ or ‘I'd love to,’ or ‘I really want to be,’ all those positive things. It's, ‘I'm just gonna do this,’ and I don't think they notice the difference in that. Some of our students here, they'll be very definite. ‘Yes, I'm gonna be a doctor.’ ‘Yes, I'm gonna be an engineer.’ ‘I'm going to be a teacher.’ ‘I'd love to be a vet.’ ‘I really want to be an accountant.’ ‘I really want to do this.’ But there's a higher percentage of students, that say, ‘I'm just gonna do this.’

Another issue is the lack of post-16 academic provision in South Bristol. Because young people in South Bristol like to stay in their own area there appears to be evidence that they are likely to choose the Skills Academy that is “on their doorstep”.

Because of where we are, we have got the South Bristol Skills Academy across the way, and we have a history of students going there, and just saying what courses have you got? So choosing the venue and then seeing what they can do in the venue, rather than ... rather than I want to be a vet, or I want to be a doctor and then seeing how they go about becoming that, so real issue of achievement in the area.

.....the trouble with Bristol is we have really good provision for post-16, too much provision in some respects, but what there isn't really is provision that's specifically geared around what South Bristol students need. Because they don't like to travel, they have little confidence, they don't like unfamiliar situations, and so they'll go to College X, which is an amazing college, but for them it's too big –. So they'll drop out. And I had a girl come see me the other day that was here last year, and she's dropped out. She just couldn't deal with it; it was too much. And she wanted to come back here, but it's too late, it's like...we can't start now, you've missed six months of the course, you'll have to start again in September. [] So there isn't any real specific provision in South Bristol for them, they have to travel. I know you've got the Skills Academy, but obviously the Skills Academy is a very vocational based college, so...they should never have built that there actually, because it's encouraged more and more students to stay in the area and not actually move away.

Who are the most significant people in terms of supporting students in South Bristol to access Higher Education

The majority of staff said that parents are the most significant people to support their children, but that many parents of young people in the South Bristol area are not aware of what is possible.

Peer groups were also recognised as being an important influence:

So peer influence is huge. And I know personally of some families whereby students who've gone on to university, who've got younger siblings here, the younger sibling's friends feel inspired by that because they hear a lot about, "Oh, this is what my sister's doing, and she's got this job and she's renting a flat in London."

In this respect many interviewees suggested that contact with students from South Bristol who have progressed to University would be valuable.

In alignment with the lack of confidence described by parents in understanding how to support their child's decision making about university, there was an awareness among school staff that because of parents' lack of experience of HE schools and teachers play an important role:

Because of parents lack of knowledge and maybe their education I think schools definitely are really important. But then schools need to be working with organisations like South Bristol because I feel they've got the capacity to organise and bring together schools with higher education institutions.

Some interviewees suggested that having staff in their school who are studying for Masters degrees at University and sharing their experiences with pupils was a motivating factor for pupils: *'We've tried to encourage those staff that are doing Master's units to talk to their classes about them.'*

Some interviewees recognised that their school could do more in terms of supporting their pupils to progress to HE:

I would like us to be more tied up in terms of identifying students earlier in the school that have the academic ability for university. I think as a school because of where we were in the journey we were focusing lots on our C/D borderline and about getting people on to sixth form, and actually we could probably identify much earlier those that have the potential for university to make it a little bit more joined up.

The majority of South Bristol schools involved in the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme do not offer academic/level 3 courses at Post-16. Many pupils from South Bristol progress to other colleges/schools across the City. Schools do not historically have the data for what courses these pupils take, their success in such courses and whether they progress to HE.

How do young people obtain information about what is needed to study particular courses at University?

Throughout our evaluation of the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme in 2015/2016 we have met and talked to a number of pupils and parents. From these discussions we have picked up that pupils and parents were sometimes struggling to obtain relevant information about the requirements for studying particular university courses (for example psychiatry, forensic science, veterinary studies). For this reason we explicitly asked the question “where would a student go for information about what is needed in order to study a particular course (for example forensic science)?”. Schools have different approaches to responding to such a question. However it was not clear to us that it would be straightforward for pupils and parents to be able to find out about the specific requirements of particular courses. Also the information provided by schools might be too late in terms of GCSE choices already made.

There was awareness from some interviewees that schools can sometimes offer the wrong advice:

Previously we were saying to young people who wanted to study law, they were saying, “I want to be a lawyer, or be solicitor.” We would say, “Okay, study law at A-level.” And actually we later found out that wasn’t helpful and that universities almost preferred them not have studied A-level law before starting with them.

One issue that arose from interviews with school staff was whether or not a young person might be over-aspiring in terms of degree and career choices, given their likely GCSE and A-level grades. This is an interesting issue, given that the rhetoric is often about such young people not being aspirational.

I think they get encouraged too much, because even a contextualised offer for say the University of Bristol, it’s still a very big ask for the academic level of our pupils.

It has to be recognised that when young people start to imagine what could be considered to be aspirational careers they are likely to think in broad terms such as “I would like to be a doctor” or “I would like to be a forensic scientist”. They need advice and support to treat these ideas as a starting point for a consideration of both the qualifications needed for such careers and other related career options. It has to be recognised that there is a tension between wanting young people to “develop a dream” and the concept of “over-aspiring”, because that is what dreaming should be about. At the same time it is important to be honest with pupils about the qualifications needed for particular career paths.

So I will always be realistic and honest with students – ‘I want to be a doctor’. ‘What grades are you getting?’ That’s my first question. ‘Oh, I am getting Es’. ‘I’m afraid you aren’t going to be a doctor, you have to get As to be a doctor’. They need to know, and I think it’s only fair on them to be honest. I don’t know if people would agree with that, but it’s just the way I feel.

Importance of working together and the South Bristol Youth Board

Some schools feel inundated with support from a range of providers.

South Bristol Youth do a lot with us, we have Ablaze that do a lot with us, we have got Into University as well that want to come and do stuff with us. You look at all the different things that we have, Butterflies come in and do stuff with us, Learning Partnership West come in. None of it is co-ordinated. How do you co-ordinate that lot?and then you find people that start their own little programmes, and don’t want anyone else messing with it. ... if you are going to raise achievement really, you need a much more co-ordinated approach. You sit down in June/July and you say right next year, this is what we are going to run, this is who we are going to run it for. And then this is the aim of it, really.

But I prefer to maybe just use South Bristol Youth, but then expand what they do really, keep the contact with them and expand what we do with them, or expand the number of students we get on their programmes.

Many of the interviewees saw the value of all of the South Bristol schools working together.

I think we're waking up to the fact that [as schools] we need to address it together. I think a better collaboration here would make a huge, huge difference.

In this respect the importance of the relationship between the South Bristol Youth Board and the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme should not be underestimated. Many of the interviewees were also Directors on the South Bristol Youth Board and this seems to be important both in terms of developing awareness of the challenges of widening participation in South Bristol and in supporting collaboration between the schools.

Chapter 11: Recommendations

Recommendations arising from the interim report are grouped thematically. The first set of recommendations relate to the overall agenda of the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme and will be relevant for all those involved in the organisation. The second and third set of recommendations relate to preparation for and delivery of the activities, and will be particularly relevant for the delivery team, with some relevance to schools as well. The fourth set of recommendations relates to ways in which parents can be supported to become involved in the programme, and will be of relevance for the delivery team and schools. The fifth set of recommendations relates to ways in which schools can support the effective running of the Ambitions Programme. The sixth set of recommendations refers to broader issues around partnership work and is relevant for all those involved in or with South Bristol Youth.

Overall strategy

- Amy Hayhurst's role is crucial to the success of the Ambitions Programme, in terms of developing and maintaining relationships with all stakeholders, liaising with schools and universities, logistical work for the sessions, and encouraging and supporting pupils and parents to engage with the programme. Continued support for Amy's role should be an absolute priority.
- Universities should work with South Bristol Youth to articulate a clear agenda for their involvement in the programme, and consider how the agendas of all providers can be met.
- The extent to which the programme meets the needs of a variety of pupils (see the summary of Chapter 8) needs to be considered carefully. Schools and South Bristol Youth could usefully consider the basis for selection and whether this could be more closely aligned. Characteristics of students who leave or join the programme could be discussed by schools and South Bristol Youth.
- South Bristol Youth should consider whether the school staff who are involved in the Ambitions Programme could be part of a South Bristol Youth support group.

Organisation and Preparation of the Sessions

- South Bristol Youth should consult pupils to discover where they are in the notional groupings outlined in the summary of Chapter 8.
- Student Ambassadors should be given specific training on Ambitions Programme aims and sessions when they sign up to work on the Programme
- More support and training should be provided for Student Ambassadors in running in-school sessions, in developing interaction with shy and unconfident pupils, in managing and taking care of pupils in situations that are challenging (ie balancing fear and excitement), and in reducing a fear of embarrassment.
- Student Ambassadors should only be required to provide advice for participating pupils on issues about which they are informed.
- Universities and South Bristol Youth should consider the implications of the pupils' comments that some activities contained too much information or were not given enough time.
- More opportunities should be provided for pupils to meet people who are studying, teaching, or working in areas in which the students have an interest.

- Sessions could group together or facilitate networking for pupils from different schools who have similar interests/ambitions.

Delivery of Sessions

When planning delivery of sessions, universities and South Bristol Youth should:

- Consider aiming for more clarity and emphasis in communicating to pupils the purpose of all events and activities.
- Consider how the Programme might support pupils in developing social skills.
- Consider the current methods for mixing pupils. Could they be improved?
- Consider ways of discovering when pupils have misunderstood or are misinformed about what is being communicated.
- Include time for a planned review/reflection after each event/activity.

Support for parents

There needs to be a stronger mechanism for involving parents in the programme. This could be achieved through a number of means.

- Understanding the parent perspective is key to the development of the programme. In Year 2 of the evaluation more focus group interviews with parents should be carried out.
- Parents need to know who they can turn to for advice in order to support their children to gain access to Higher Education.
- The information/paperwork that goes to parents from the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme could be improved. Information packs for parents could be prepared by the Universities on key issues that relate to accessing Higher Education, for example the financial aspect.
- Transport for parents to key events should be considered.
- Find strategies to encourage more parental interaction at meetings; find ways to involve students more in events with parents.
- More parent representation on the South Bristol Youth Board should be considered.

School functioning

- Senior management in schools need to commit resource to ensure the smooth running of the programme, and to reflect on the range of ways in which attainment can be increased beyond time spent in the classroom.
- Schools should examine their role in the programme and whether or not members of their Senior Leadership team are adequately involved in/aware of the programme.
- Schools could make the basis for selection to the Ambitions Programme more open and clearer to participating pupils.

- The usefulness of creating a coherent identity for an Ambitions Group within a school could be discussed, and methods for achieving this considered by schools and South Bristol Youth.
- Young people from the South Bristol Area who have attended university could be a valuable resource for South Bristol schools.
- School staff need to become more aware of their role in supporting their pupils to access Higher Education, because the vast majority of pupils in their schools will be the first in family to attend University. Pupils need to be made aware of the career implications of different degree choices.
- There should be more of a partnership between South Bristol Youth and schools in terms of finding out a young person's potential career choices at an early stage and providing the support and information to both the young people themselves and their parents about GCSE and A-level entrance requirements for relevant University degree courses.
- There needs to be a mechanism to collect data about Post 16 progression for South Bristol pupils, including courses taken at Post-16 and progression after Post-16 courses.
- There needs to be increased provision of Academic/Level 3 courses in the South Bristol area.
- It is important that the evaluation team are able to track the educational outcomes for the 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 Year 8 and Year 10 pupils. In order to do this it is essential that the schools provide the team with the requested student performance data.

Partnership work

- The role of the South Bristol Youth Board and the representation of schools and universities on the board should be recognised and developed in order to strengthen the South Bristol Youth Ambitions Programme.
- South Bristol Youth should consider working more closely with schools (teachers, careers staff, and pupils) so students receive useful advice on possible HE routes that suit their interests and ambitions and on choices and subjects needed for university in their preferred subjects.
- Providers who are offering support to South Bristol schools should be aware of the effect that a lack of coordination of such support has on the schools.

Appendix 1: Calculation of English Indices of Deprivation

The English Indices of Deprivation 2015 are based on 37 separate indicators, organised across seven distinct domains of deprivation (Income; Employment; Education, Skills and Training; Health and Disability; Crime; and Barriers to Housing and Services). These indicators are combined, using appropriate weights, to calculate the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2015 (IMD 2015). This is an overall measure of multiple deprivations experienced by people living in an area and is calculated for every Lower layer Super Output Area (LSOA), or neighbourhood, in England.

The Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index (IDACI) measures the proportion of all children aged 0 to 15 living in income deprived families.

The Education, Skills and Training deprivation domain measures the lack of attainment and skills in the local population. The indicators fall into two sub-domains: one relating to children and young people and one relating to adult skills. The Children and Young People sub-domain measures attainment and qualifications (KS2, KS4), school absences, staying –on rates and entry to HE, while the Adult Skills sub-domain measures the proportion of working age adults with no or low qualifications and the proportion who cannot speak English well.

Some domains of IMD – in particular IDACI and the education and income domains – correlate with educational disadvantage which in turn is linked to a reduced likelihood of applying to university (Crawford and Greaves 2013⁸). For this reason the Indices of Deprivation are often used to identify areas of educational need and to target resources. For example IDACI is used as part of the pupil premium element of the government's current school funding formula.⁹ The voluntary and community sector also uses the Index, for example, to identify areas where people may benefit from the services they provide.

⁸ Crawford,C. and Greaves,E. (2013) A comparison of commonly used socio-economic indicators: their relationship to educational disadvantage and relevance to Teach First. Institute For Fiscal Studies IFS Report R79

⁹ Department for Education (2014) Fairer Schools Funding. Arrangements for 2015 to 2016

Appendix 2: Joint Academic Coding System (JACS) Subject Codes (v3.0): 2012/13 onwards

JACS SUBJECT AREA	JACS PRINCIPAL SUBJECT
(1) Medicine & dentistry	(A0) Broadly-based programmes within medicine & dentistry (A1) Pre-clinical medicine (A2) Pre-clinical dentistry (A3) Clinical medicine (A4) Clinical dentistry (A9) Others in medicine & dentistry
(2) Subjects allied to medicine	(B0) Broadly-based programmes within subjects allied to medicine (B1) Anatomy, physiology & pathology (B2) Pharmacology, toxicology & pharmacy (B3) Complementary medicines, therapies & well-being (B4) Nutrition (B5) Ophthalmics (B6) Aural & oral sciences (B7) Nursing (B8) Medical technology (B9) Others in subjects allied to medicine
(3) Biological sciences	(C0) Broadly-based programmes within biological sciences (C1) Biology (C2) Botany (C3) Zoology (C4) Genetics (C5) Microbiology (C6) Sport & exercise science (C7) Molecular biology, biophysics & biochemistry (C8) Psychology (C9) Others in Biological Sciences
(4) Veterinary science	(D1) Pre-clinical veterinary medicine (D2) Clinical veterinary medicine & dentistry
(5) Agriculture & related subjects	(D0) Broadly-based programmes within agriculture & related subjects (D3) Animal science (D4) Agriculture (D5) Forestry & arboriculture (D6) Food & beverage studies (D7) Agricultural sciences (D9) Others in veterinary sciences, agriculture & related subjects
(6) Physical sciences	(F0) Broadly-based programmes within physical sciences (F1) Chemistry (F2) Materials science (F3) Physics (F4) Forensic & archaeological sciences (F5) Astronomy (F6) Geology (F7) Science of aquatic & terrestrial environments (F8) Physical geographical sciences (F9) Others in physical sciences
(7) Mathematical sciences	(G1) Mathematics (G2) Operational research

	(G3) Statistics (G9) Others in mathematical sciences
(8) Computer science	(I1) Computer science (I2) Information systems (I3) Software engineering (I4) Artificial intelligence (I5) Health informatics (I6) Games (I7) Computer generated visual & audio effects (I9) Others in Computer sciences
(9) Engineering & technology	(H0) Broadly-based programmes within engineering & technology (H1) General engineering (H2) Civil engineering (H3) Mechanical engineering (H4) Aerospace engineering (H5) Naval architecture (H6) Electronic & electrical engineering (H7) Production & manufacturing engineering (H8) Chemical, process & energy engineering (H9) Others in engineering (J1) Minerals technology (J2) Metallurgy (J3) Ceramics & glass (J4) Polymers & textiles (J5) Materials technology not otherwise specified (J6) Maritime technology (J7) Biotechnology (J9) Others in technology
(A) Architecture, building & planning	(K0) Broadly-based programmes within architecture, building & planning (K1) Architecture (K2) Building (K3) Landscape & garden design (K4) Planning (urban, rural & regional) (K9) Others in architecture, building & planning
(B) Social studies	(L0) Broadly-based programmes within social studies (L1) Economics (L2) Politics (L3) Sociology (L4) Social policy (L5) Social work (L6) Anthropology (L7) Human & social geography (L8) Development studies (L9) Others in social studies
(C) Law	(M0) Broadly-based programmes within law (M1) Law by area (M2) Law by topic (M9) Others in law
(D) Business & administrative studies	(N0) Broadly-based programmes within business & administrative studies (N1) Business studies (N2) Management studies

	<p>(N3) Finance (N4) Accounting (N5) Marketing (N6) Human resource management (N7) Office skills (N8) Hospitality, leisure, sport, tourism & transport (N9) Others in business & administrative studies</p>
(E) Mass communications & documentation	<p>(P0) Broadly-based programmes within mass communications & documentation (P1) Information services (P2) Publicity studies (P3) Media studies (P4) Publishing (P5) Journalism (P9) Others in mass communications & documentation</p>
(F) Languages	<p>(Q0) Broadly-based programmes within languages (Q1) Linguistics (Q2) Comparative literary studies (Q3) English studies (Q4) Ancient language studies (Q5) Celtic studies (Q6) Latin studies (Q7) Classical Greek studies (Q8) Classical studies (Q9) Others in linguistics, classics & related subjects (R1) French studies (R2) German studies (R3) Italian studies (R4) Spanish studies (R5) Portuguese studies (R6) Scandinavian studies (R7) Russian & East European studies (R8) European studies (R9) Others in European languages, literature & related subjects (T1) Chinese studies (T2) Japanese studies (T3) South Asian studies (T4) Other Asian studies (T5) African studies (T6) Modern Middle Eastern studies (T7) American studies (T8) Australasian studies (T9) Others in Eastern, Asiatic, African, American & Australasian languages, literature & related subjects</p>
(G) Historical & philosophical studies	<p>(V0) Broadly-based programmes within historical & philosophical studies (V1) History by period (V2) History by area (V3) History by topic (V4) Archaeology (V5) Philosophy (V6) Theology & religious studies</p>

	(V7) Heritage studies (V9) Others in historical & philosophical studies
(H) Creative arts & design	(W0) Broadly-based programmes within creative arts & design (W1) Fine art (W2) Design studies (W3) Music (W4) Drama (W5) Dance (W6) Cinematics & photography (W7) Crafts (W8) Imaginative writing (W9) Others in creative arts & design
(I) Education	(X0) Broadly-based programmes within education (X1) Training teachers (X2) Research & study skills in education (X3) Academic studies in education (X9) Others in education
(J) Combined	(Y0) Combined

Appendix 3: Interview Topic Guide for South Bristol Youth Delivery Team

How do they decide what to do? And how to do it?

- What do you aim to do through your work on the SBY Ambitions programme?
- What do you see as your roles and responsibilities in delivering the programme (and across the different events)? How do you work with student ambassadors? What are their roles and responsibilities?
- Can you tell me about your background of working with young people in this kind of context? In the SBY Ambitions Programme, what kinds of activities have you participated in planning/designing? Why do you think they are useful activities? How do they relate to increased HE participation?
- Which activities in the SBY Ambitions Programme do you think relate most to increased HE participation? Why those activities, what is it about them?
- What do you think influences the development of young people's horizons (ideas of what is possible) and aspirations?
- At a more general level, how do you try to engage young people (and parents)? Why do you think that type of approach is appropriate? (NB this is trying to get at their philosophy behind what they do!) What makes the SBY approach distinctive from other approaches?

What do they think success (and non-success) looks like? What has worked well in the past? What has not worked well? Why was this? How did they tell?

- Can you tell me about a young person or family that you are particularly proud of with respect to what SBY has achieved ? (eg Background, interaction with programme, how you knew it was successful etc) What difference do you think SBY made? Why?
- Can you tell me about a young person or family that you think that SBY hasn't make a difference? (eg Background, interaction with programme, why you thought it was not successful etc) Why do you think SBY made little difference in this case? What would you do differently again?
- How do students from different backgrounds and with different career aspirations etc interact with the programme? Does the programme work differently for different students? Why might this be?
- Do young people from different schools interact with each other on the programme. Do you think this is important (why). If yes who does the programme facilitate this?

How to persuade people to participate and engage? Relationships with young people, parents and schools.

- What do you see as the key challenges, and the key drivers, in persuading schools to participate in the Ambitions programme? What about the young people and parents?
- How do you try to persuade schools, pupils and parents to participate? Can you give me examples of people who were hard to engage at first and then got really into it? What do you think made a difference?
- What aspects of the role in terms of supporting young people and families to consider HE, informing them about HE processes and potential outcomes, giving them experiences of HE etc do you find particularly challenging? What do you think works well? Why is this?
- How do you challenge schools to develop their culture of aspiration for pupils? And to develop a coherent WP strategy?

How to fit in with existing provision?

- To what extent does your role overlap with that of other professionals? What do you do that is unique?
- How do you develop an understanding of existing provision and opportunities around HE-focused activities and opportunities (for experiences and contextualised offers etc)? (Ask about schools, universities nationally and locally, and other providers).

Appendix 4: Focus Group Topic Guide for Student Ambassadors

Introductions: name, course, year, length of time as a Student Ambassador, length of time with SBY

Why SBY?

- Why did you want to get involved with the SBY project? (eg WP student, socially committed, career experience, just a job...) How does SBY fit in with other Ambassador sessions eg majority, differences
- How were you chosen (ie what was the application process for being an Ambassador and/or SBY Ambassador?)

SBY Programme

- What do you think are the aims and outcomes of the SBY programme?
- How do you decide whether a session has been successful?
- What do you think works well? Why? (Both generally and individual sessions)
- What do you think works less well? Why? (Both generally and individual sessions)
- Has there been anything that's surprised you? (Both generally and individual examples)
- Anything you think needs to change?

Your Role

- What do you see as being your role in the programme?
- How do you aim to interact with the school students? Why do you work with the students in the way that you do? (eg control, leading on writing activities)
- Can you tell me about the organisation of the sessions and the logistics.
- How would you describe your relationship with Di and Angela? Or Tom?
- What about the students' relationship with Di/Angela or Tom?
- How are you briefed? What training do you have? (anything on engaging YP etc generally?) How do you debrief after each session? Do you discuss the sessions with each other? What is your learning about your own practice?
- In which of the sessions did you feel you made the most impact? Why? Are there any of the students that you got to know?
- What do you feel was your contribution to the programme? How would you describe your contribution to the programme?
- Is there any further information or training you think would be of value in developing the role of Ambassadors for this type of programme?
- Your future plans - will you continue with Ambassador role? How does it fit in with your future plans eg contribution it has made to your career planning eg Amy started off as an Ambassador; Emmy applied for WP post.

The Young People on SBY Ambitions Programme

- It has been said that the elements of the programme which are really important are: meeting Student Ambassadors; visits to university and meeting people from other schools. What do you think about that?
- Relationship forming (given the aim to have the same Ambassadors at each school). Did this happen?
- What do you think of the young people? Do they have the potential to go to university? What are the challenges they face? How could they overcome them?

Appendix 5: Pupil Surveys



Ambitions Programme Phases 1 & 3

Dear Student,

This short questionnaire aims to explore your views on the Ambitions programme. We also ask some questions about you and your studies but please note that *your answers are only used to evaluate the programme and its impact on you*. When you have finished the questionnaire you should return it to the evaluator. The questionnaire will only be read by the University of Bristol evaluation team.

The questionnaire is divided into 3 parts:

- Part 1 is about you
- Part 2 explores your experience of the Ambitions programme
- Part 3 looks towards your future plans.

We expect this questionnaire to take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. We hope you will answer all the questions but if you feel uncomfortable with a particular question feel free to skip it.

Thank you



Y8 Ambitions Programme Evaluation Questionnaire

PART 1: About you

- a. What is your name? (please write clearly in capital letters).....
- b. Are you Male Female
- c. What is the name of your school?.....
- d. What year are you in? Year

PART 2: Ambitions Programme Phase 1

a. This section asks about your experiences of the programme. From the following list of activities, please choose your *top 2* activities and place a tick for each activity in the first column. In the second column, please tick your *bottom 2* activities.

	Top 2 activities	Bottom 2 activities
Year 8		
Launch event at Bristol City Football Club		
Team-building event at UWE Centre for Sport		
What is university? (in school)		
Future choices (in school)		
Campus visit and make a video (at UWE)		
Parents/carers information session at Bristol City Football Club Hospitality Suite		
Where am I now? Making a poster (in school)		
End of Year Celebration (at UWE)		

- b. For your top 2 activities, please explain what you liked about them

- c. For your bottom 2 activities, please explain what you didn't like about them

- d. What's the best thing about the Ambitions programme?

- e. What did you feel you got out of being part of the Ambitions programme?

f. For each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, please circle **one** choice that best represents your response to each statement where 1= Strongly agree and 5= Strongly disagree

	Strongly Agree	<----->			Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
I have become more curious about university since taking part in the Ambitions programme	1	2	3	4	5
My family are pleased I took part in the Ambitions programme	1	2	3	4	5
I now know about different courses at universities	1	2	3	4	5
The Ambitions programme has made me think more about my future career	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to go to university	1	2	3	4	5
I have become more interested in doing well at school since being part of the Ambitions programme	1	2	3	4	5
I must get excellent grades if I want to go to university	1	2	3	4	5
A university degree is important to get a good job in the future	1	2	3	4	5
I know about the subjects I need to study go to university	1	2	3	4	5
I know about the grades I need to go to university	1	2	3	4	5
Being on the Ambitions programme has influenced my choice of GCSE subjects	1	2	3	4	5
Meeting university Student Ambassadors was an important part of the Ambitions programme for me	1	2	3	4	5
I believe I could go to university when I leave school if I wanted to	1	2	3	4	5
I have met interesting people on the Ambitions programme visits	1	2	3	4	5

I now talk more about university to my friends and family	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to stay part of the Ambitions programme	1	2	3	4	5
On the Ambitions programme I mixed with students from other schools	1	2	3	4	5
Because of the Ambitions programme I now know who to go to for advice about university and careers	1	2	3	4	5
At the start of the Ambitions programme I hadn't given any thought about going to university	1	2	3	4	5
I'd like to go to university but think it will be hard because there are things that will get in the way of achieving this	1	2	3	4	5
All universities offer the same courses	1	2	3	4	5
Someone at my school knows about my future career plans	1	2	3	4	5

PART 3: Your thoughts about post 16

a. Have you any thoughts about what you will be doing after Y11?

Yes No Not sure

b. If yes, what do you think you will do after Y11?

Go to a 6th Form college Go to FE college e.g. City of Bristol Stay at my school
 Apprenticeship Leave and get a job

Please explain why you have made this choice.

.....

c. What kind of jobs do you think you'd like to be doing at the age of 25? (e.g. teacher, working with animals, something to do with computers)

.....

d. Finally, have you any ideas that might help us plan the Ambitions programme for next year's Y8?

Thank you very much for your help!

Ambitions Programme Phases 1 & 3

Dear Student,

This short questionnaire aims to explore your views on the Ambitions programme. We also ask some questions about you and your studies but please note that *your answers are only used to evaluate the programme and its impact on you*. When you have finished the questionnaire you should return it to the evaluator. The questionnaire will only be read by the University of Bristol evaluation team.

The questionnaire is divided into 3 parts:

- Part 1 is about you and your past decisions over examination subjects
- Part 2 explores your experience of the Ambitions programme
- Part 3 looks towards your future plans.

We expect this questionnaire to take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. We hope you will answer all the questions but if you feel uncomfortable with a particular question feel free to skip it.

Thank you

f. Were there other subjects that you would have liked to study but were not available to you (e.g. music, Spanish) ? Yes No

g. If you answered *Yes*, then please state what these subjects were and give the reason you would have liked to study them

.....

PART 2: Ambitions Programme Phase 3

a. This section asks about your experiences of the programme. From the following list of activities, please choose your *top 3* activities and place a tick for each activity in the first column. In the second column, please tick your *bottom 3* activities.

Year 10 Ambitions Programme	Top 3 activities	Bottom 3 activities
Launch event at Bristol City FC, Ashton Gate Stadium		
Team-building (Goblin Combe)		
Campus visit (University of Bristol)		
Learning styles (Ashton Gate Stadium)		
Interim review (school)		
My future (Ashton Gate Stadium)		
<i>University visit - Lincoln College, University of Oxford</i>		
Sports and societies tasters (University of Bristol)		
<i>University visit - University of Reading</i>		
<i>University visit - Cardiff Metropolitan University</i>		
Academic taster lectures (University of Bristol)		
<i>University visit - University of Exeter</i>		
Graduation ceremony (University of Bristol)		
Summer school (UWE)		

b. For your top 3 activities, please explain what you liked about them

.....

c. For your bottom 3 activities, please explain what you didn't like about them

.....

d. What's the best thing about the Ambitions programme?

.....

e. What did you feel you got out of being part of the Ambitions programme?

.....

f. For each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, please circle **one** choice that best represents your response to each statement where 1= Strongly agree and 5= Strongly disagree

	Strongly Agree	<----->			Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
I have become more curious about university since taking part in the Ambitions programme	1	2	3	4	5
My family are pleased I took part in the Ambitions programme	1	2	3	4	5
I now know about different courses at universities	1	2	3	4	5
The Ambitions programme has made me think more about my future career	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to go to university	1	2	3	4	5
I have become more interested in doing well at school since being part of the Ambitions programme	1	2	3	4	5
I must get excellent grades if I want to go to university	1	2	3	4	5
A university degree is important to get a good job in the future	1	2	3	4	5
I know about the subjects I need to study go to university	1	2	3	4	5
I know about the grades I need to go to university	1	2	3	4	5
Being on the Ambitions programme has influenced my choice of GCSE subjects	1	2	3	4	5

Meeting university Student Ambassadors was an important part of the Ambitions programme for me	1	2	3	4	5
I believe I could go to university when I leave school if I wanted to	1	2	3	4	5
I have met interesting people on the Ambitions programme visits	1	2	3	4	5
I now talk more about university to my friends and family	1	2	3	4	5
I would like to stay part of the Ambitions programme	1	2	3	4	5
On the Ambitions programme I mixed with students from other schools	1	2	3	4	5
Because of the Ambitions programme I now know who to go to for advice about university and careers	1	2	3	4	5
At the start of the Ambitions programme I hadn't given any thought about going to university	1	2	3	4	5
I'd like to go to university but think it will be hard because there are things that will get in the way of achieving this	1	2	3	4	5
All universities offer the same courses	1	2	3	4	5
Someone at my school knows about my future career plans	1	2	3	4	5

PART 3: Your thoughts about post 16

c. Have you any thoughts about what you will be doing after Y11?

Yes No Not sure

d. If yes, what do you think you will do after Y11?

Go to a 6th Form college Go to FE college e.g. City of Bristol Stay at my school
 Apprenticeship Leave and get a job

Please explain why you have made this choice.

.....

c. What kind of jobs do you think you'd like to be doing at the age of 25? (e.g. teacher, working with animals, something to do with computers)

.....
.....
.....

d. Finally, have you any ideas that might help us plan the Ambitions programme for next year's Y10?

Thank you very much for your help!

Appendix 6: Focus Group Topic Guide for Pupils

Selection for Ambitions Programme.

- How did you get to be part of the Ambitions Programme? [Y10 only: Were you in it in Y8/Y9?]
- Why do you think you were chosen?

Journey travelled

- At the start of the Ambitions Programme in Y8/Y10, were you thinking about university?
- Have your ideas changed? – about university?
- about yourself?
- What are you thinking about your future? Does that include university? What will it take for you to achieve this?
- Has being on the Ambitions Programme helped you with this? How? [probe: Impact of Ambitions Programme on Family, School?]
- Who are you talking to about your future? [Family? School? Friends?]
- Who knows about your plans? How are you finding out about these things [probe for examples]
- Is there anything that's going to get in the way of achieving what you want? [e.g finance]
- Have you got any ideas about how you might overcome these barriers?

Activities on the Ambitions Programme.

Materials: A list of the activities from the Programme for each student in FG and 3 post-it notes.

- Going through each activity on the Programme list, what do you feel you got out of each session?
- What **2** (Y8 only) /**3** (Y10) sessions did you like best? Why those activities, what is it about them? What **2/3** sessions did you like the least? Why those activities, what is it about them?
-

After discussing each individual session, and distributing the post-it notes, ask each student to write on each note, one word to describe the overall impact of the Programme on them. Share and group together the post-it notes and discuss.

**Additional question for Y10 only.*

- Did you apply for the Ambitions Summer School at UWE? If yes, what were your reasons for applying? If *no*, why did you not consider it?

Student Ambassadors and other students

- Lots of the sessions had Student Ambassadors. What did you think about them? [probe: role model? Perceptions?]
- How did they run the sessions? Did you talk to them? Did you see the same Ambassadors often?
- What about students from schools? Did you talk and mix with students from other schools?

Changes?

- Could the Y8/Y10 Ambitions Programme be improved? In what ways? [ask for examples]
- If you are on the Ambitions Programme next year, what do you want to know about? What sorts of things would be helpful to know?
- Finally, is there something else you would like to say about the Ambitions Programme?

Appendix 7: Interview Topic Guide for Parents

Introductory warm up questions

- Can you tell me your name and the school year of your child in the Ambitions programme?
- How do you think NAME SCHOOL (e.g. Ashton Park) chooses students for the Ambitions programme?

The Ambitions programme and venues

- What do you think about the Ambitions programme? (*follow-up with probing for examples to illustrate a point*)
- Do you get to talk to people when you attend sessions? (*Probe for Ambassadors, Amy, Camilla, other parents, students....probe what they talk about....*)
- What sessions have you attended? (*probe name of session...what was it about ...what learned in session that didn't know before*)
- Have there been sessions that you have been invited to that you couldn't attend? (*If yes why?*)
- Do you think that sessions for parents could be organised at different times/venues so that you could attend?
- Have you been to UWE as part of the programme? What did you find interesting about this visit?
- Have you been to the University of Bristol as part of the programme? What did you find interesting about this visit?
- What other venues have you been to as part of the SBY programme? (*e.g. school, Bristol City football ground*)
- Which is your favourite venue and why?

Your child

- What is your child thinking of doing when he/she leaves school? (*probe career/university/apprenticeship etc*)
- Is he/she thinking about going to University and if so do you know what he/she is thinking of studying/which university?
- Is there anything that's going to get in the way of your child achieving what they want? (*e.g finance*)
- Do you think that the Ambitions programme is encouraging your child to think about university? If yes why?

Information about university for parents

- Are there things about going to university that you as a parent would like to know more about?
- Who do you talk to if you want to find out more information about going to university for your child (*e.g. particular courses, A-level choices for particular courses, which universities?*)
- Are there people in your family who have been to university?
- Is there someone at NAME SCHOOL who you can talk to if you want to find more about your child going to university?
- Does the school organise meeting for parents to discuss how to get into university?
- Do you sometimes ask Amy/student Ambassadors/other parents questions about what your child needs to do in order to get into university? (*e.g. the qualifications that your child will need in order to get into the university course they are interested in?*)

Universities

- Do you think there is a difference between the University of the West of England and the University of Bristol? *Probe*
- Have you visited any other universities? (*if yes probe similarities and differences*)
- If your child goes to university would you prefer them to stay near Bristol?

The Ambitions Programme

- What do you think the ambitions programme is trying to achieve?

- How do you think your child is benefiting from being part of the Ambitions programme (*were they part of a programme last year?*)
- Which sessions have you most enjoyed?
- Which sessions have you least enjoyed?
- How do you think the programme could be improved for next year?

Appendix 8: Parent Survey



Evaluation of the *Ambitions* Programme Phases 1 & 3

Dear Parent,

This questionnaire aims to explore your views on university. We also ask some questions about you and your educational experiences but we won't ask for your name. Your answers will only be used to evaluate the programme and its impact. When you have finished the questionnaire please return it to a member of the University of Bristol evaluation team - the questionnaire will only be read by the evaluation team.

The questionnaire is divided into 4 parts:

- Part 1 is about the value of university
- Part 2 explores information and beliefs about university
- Part 3 discusses the experience and financial aspects of going to university
- Part 4 is about you and your family experience of university education.

We expect this questionnaire to take no longer than 15 minutes to complete. We hope you will answer all the questions but if you feel uncomfortable with a particular question feel free to skip it. *If you change your mind about a question, please cross out your answer and indicate your new choice.*

Thank you

Jo Rose, Ros Sutherland, Pat Triggs, Wan Yee
Graduate School of Education
University of Bristol
35 Berkeley Square
Bristol
BS8 1JA

Please give the questionnaire back to us this evening!

Evaluation Questionnaire for parents

PART 1: The value of university

a. This section asks for **your views about university**.

*For each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, please circle **one** choice that best represents your response to each statement where 1= Strongly agree and 5= Strongly disagree*

	Strongly Agree	<----->			Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
All young people should be able to go to university	1	2	3	4	5
University is only for rich people	1	2	3	4	5
University is not for people like us	1	2	3	4	5
You need to go to university to get a good job in the future	1	2	3	4	5
You can succeed in life without going to university	1	2	3	4	5
University gives you important experiences in life	1	2	3	4	5
It is better to start an apprenticeship than go to university	1	2	3	4	5

b. This section asks for your views about **your child** going to university.

*For each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, please circle **one** choice that best represents your response to each statement where 1= Strongly agree and 5= Strongly disagree*

	Strongly Agree	<----->			Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
I would feel proud if my child went to university	1	2	3	4	5
I expect my child will go to university	1	2	3	4	5
I have always thought my child should go to university	1	2	3	4	5
I did not think about university for my child until recently	1	2	3	4	5
I have never expected my child to go to university	1	2	3	4	5
My child would be the first in our family to go to university	1	2	3	4	5
If my child went to university they would meet other people like them	1	2	3	4	5

If my child went to University I would prefer them to go to a local University 1 2 3 4 5

If my child goes to University I would like them to stay living at home 1 2 3 4 5

I will lose touch with my child if they go to university 1 2 3 4 5

My child would change into a different type of person if they go to university 1 2 3 4 5

If my child goes to university they would not move back to this area afterwards 1 2 3 4 5

c. If my child goes to university I would be happy for them to go to: (please tick all that apply)

- a local university (eg Bristol, UWE, Bath etc)
Yes Yes if near family members No
- a university in the South West (eg Cardiff, Exeter, Gloucestershire etc)
Yes Yes if near family members No
- a university in towns a couple of hours journey away (eg Birmingham, Reading, Coventry, Southampton etc)
Yes Yes if near family members No
- a university anywhere (eg Newcastle, Lancaster, Edinburgh, Kent etc.)
Yes Yes if near family members No

d. My child has thought about studying something at university. Yes No

If yes, please briefly explain what you discussed in the box below:

e. This section asks for your views about the **value of your child going to university**.

*For each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, please circle **one** choice that best represents your response to each statement where 1= Strongly agree and 5= Strongly disagree*

	Strongly Agree	<----->			Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
If my child went to university I would like them to study a course that is preparation for a job eg Nursing, Engineering, Teaching, etc	1	2	3	4	5
If my child went to university I would like them to choose an academic subject eg Maths, English, History, Chemistry etc	1	2	3	4	5
If my child went to university I would be happy for them to study any subject they chose	1	2	3	4	5
If my child went to university I would tell them that choosing a degree that is useful is more important than choosing a degree they will enjoy	1	2	3	4	5
I don't think my child would benefit from going to university	1	2	3	4	5
If my child went to university they would get a better job	1	2	3	4	5
If my child went to university it would make no difference to how much money they would earn in the future	1	2	3	4	5
If my child went to university they would meet people from different backgrounds and countries	1	2	3	4	5
My child will learn to be independent at university	1	2	3	4	5

PART 2: Information and admissions

a. This section asks for **your views about differences between universities**.

*For each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, please circle **one** choice that best represents your response to each statement where 1= Strongly agree and 5= Strongly disagree*

	Strongly Agree	<----->			Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
All universities are the same	1	2	3	4	5
Some universities are better than others	1	2	3	4	5

Employers value some universities more than others	1	2	3	4	5
All universities teach in the same way	1	2	3	4	5
It doesn't matter which university my child chooses because courses are similar at different universities	1	2	3	4	5
There are different entrance requirements for the same subject at different universities	1	2	3	4	5
There is no difference between the entrance requirements of the University of Bristol and the University of West of England	1	2	3	4	5
People like us would be more likely to the University of the West of England than to the University of Bristol	1	2	3	4	5
People like us would be more likely to go to the University of Bristol than to the University of the West of England	1	2	3	4	5
A lot of students at the University of Bristol are from private schools	1	2	3	4	5

b. This section asks about **getting into university**. There are no right or wrong answers!

*For each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, please circle **one** choice that best represents your response to each statement where 1= Strongly agree and 5= Strongly disagree*

	Strongly Agree	<----->	Strongly Disagree		
I understand the application process for university	1	2	3	4	5
If you do not get good grades at A Level you can still get into university	1	2	3	4	5
Each university has particular entrance requirements for different degree courses.	1	2	3	4	5
I can find the information that I need to advise my child about getting into university	1	2	3	4	5
I can rely on the school to get my child in to university	1	2	3	4	5
Universities take into account GCSE qualifications of applicants	1	2	3	4	5
It doesn't matter what subjects you study at A level to get into university	1	2	3	4	5

What the school thinks my child will get at A level is important for getting into university	1	2	3	4	5
The school can give my child good advice on how to get into university	1	2	3	4	5
My child's experiences other than their academic grades are important for getting into university	1	2	3	4	5

c. This section asks about **getting information about university**.

For each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, please circle **one** choice that best represents your response to each statement where 1= Strongly agree and 5= Strongly disagree

	Strongly Agree	<----->			Strongly Disagree
	1	2	3	4	5
I know how to help my child find out information about university	1	2	3	4	5
I have had discussions with the school about my child's future and/or university	1	2	3	4	5
The school has offered to give me information about university	1	2	3	4	5
I have had discussions with family and/or friends about university	1	2	3	4	5

d. If I have questions about my child going to university, I am happy to ask: (please tick all that apply)

Amy & other people from South Bristol Youth	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
A teacher at my child's school	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other school staff (eg career advisor, family link worker etc).	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Family and friends	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	
Other (please specify below)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not applicable <input type="checkbox"/>

.....

PART 3: Experiences and costs

- a. This section asks about **the financial aspects of university**. Please note this questionnaire is confidential and we would like your views about costs, loans etc.

*For each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, please circle **one** choice that best represents your response to each statement where 1= Strongly agree and 5= Strongly disagree*

	Strongly Agree	<----->	Strongly Disagree
I cannot afford for my child to go to university	1	2	3 4 5
My child can get financial help to go to university (eg loan, scholarship or grant)	1	2	3 4 5
I don't want my child to have a large debt from going to university	1	2	3 4 5
I believe that my child could pay back a student loan after going to university	1	2	3 4 5
I know how to obtain advice on how my child can afford to go to university	1	2	3 4 5
My child will need a part time job if they go to university	1	2	3 4 5

- b. This section asks about **being at university**.

*For each of the following statements on a scale of 1 to 5, please circle **one** choice that best represents your response to each statement where 1= Strongly agree and 5= Strongly disagree*

	Strongly Agree	<----->	Strongly Disagree
Students work hard at their studies	1	2	3 4 5
Being a student is a waste of time and money	1	2	3 4 5
Being a student involves a lot of partying	1	2	3 4 5
Being a student at university helps you to become an independent learner	1	2	3 4 5

Moving away from home is part of going to university 1 2 3 4 5

This section asks specifically about the **University of Bristol and the University of the West of England**. Please give your responses to the following statements:

i. There are some courses that you can study at the University of the West of England that you can't study at the University of Bristol

Yes No

If *yes*, can you give examples in the box below:

ii. There are some courses that you can study at the University of Bristol that you can't study at the University of the West of England

Yes No

If *yes*, can you give examples in the box below:

PART 4: About you

This section asks for information about **your household and your experiences of education**. Please note this questionnaire is confidential.

a. How old were you when stopped going to school or college?

b. Which secondary school did you go to?.....

c. Have you been to university? Yes No

If *yes*, was this: straight after school Up to 3 years after school Over the age of 21

c. Have you done any more training or education as an adult? Yes No

If *yes*, please tell us what you have done and where in the box below:

e. What is your relationship to the child in the Ambitions Programme? Please state below:

f. How many people live in your household? Please state who else lives in the house:

g. Has anyone in your household ever been to university? ? Yes No

If *yes*, who (please state the relationship to the child) and where they went to university (if you know).

h. Have any other family members *who don't live with you* (e.g. cousin, aunt, grandparent etc) ever been to university? Yes No

If *yes*, who (please state the relationship to the child) and where they went to university (if you know).

i. Have any family friends ever been to university? Yes No

If *yes*, please state how many family friends: : one or two a few lots

j. What year and school is your child in?

Year..... Name of school.....

k. What is your postcode?

Thank you very much for your help!

Appendix 9: Interview Topic Guide for School Staff

Your School's involvement in the SBY Ambitions Programme

- When did your school start to become involved in the SBY project and why did it become involved?
- When did you become involved? What is your role in the school?

Aims and outcomes of SBY?

- What do you see as the main aims of SBY?
- What outcomes do you think the project should achieve? *Probe for school-based reasons*
- How will your school judge the success of the SBY project?
- For your school, what do you think has been working really well in SBY so far? Why? *Probe for school-based reasons*
- For your school, what do you think is not working so well? Why? *Probe for school-based reasons*
- What do you think should change in the programme? Why change this aspect? *Probe for school-based reasons*

HE participation and social capital

- What do you think the barriers/challenges to participation in HE are? (in SBY area)
- What do you think supports HE participation (in SBY area)?
- What three things need to change to make increased participation in HE happen (in SBY area)? *(Then probe what they say - what is it about that in particular that you think is important in raising HE participation? How do the SBY sessions address that – how do they think SBY addresses these underlying challenges/concepts? ...relate back to particular sessions of SBY project they have discussed)*
- What do you think the role of the teachers in this school is in increasing HE participation.
- Do parents have a role in increasing HE participation?
- How do you involve parents in this?
- Who are significant people in supporting young people's aspirations around university, and working towards that? *(eg teachers, parents, friends, youth workers, employers, other relatives, family friends, careers officer, university ambassadors? Probe views on list, eg why not important?)* What is their potential role in this?
- What do you think your school's role is in facilitating these kinds of connections?

School's approach to WP and other provision

- What does your school do to increase access to HE? *Probe for strategy AND practice etc* What is SBY's role in this?
- Could you tell me about any involvement with UoB access to HE activities? And with UWE access to HE activities? Any other local universities?
- Is your school involved in any other HE-focused activities and opportunities? *(Ask about schools, universities nationally and locally, and other providers – do you take students on visits, do you talk about university, do you have people visiting to talk about university, do university staff visit to talk about their work, what year groups are involved, if 6th form, when do you get students to do UCAS form...).*
- Are your students participating in any access to HE schemes?
- What are the WP activities and opportunities that are available? *(probe what they are aware of, and ask specifically for experiences and contextualised offers)* How do you find out about these opportunities?
- How does SBY Ambitions Programme fit into the current local structures *(eg school/HE systems, youth support, other WP provision etc)*