About the toolkits

This suite of publications, the toolkits, are a distillation of the learning, methods and resources developed by Aimhigher and the Lifelong Learning Network programmes to support the effective strategy, management and delivery of outreach work to encourage progression to higher education for under-represented groups. The toolkits recontextualise the learning from these programmes to fit the current higher education environment. This is the third edition of the toolkits. They were first published in December 2012, then revised in December 2013 and again in June 2014 following revisions in June 2013, to take account of relevant changes in the field.

The toolkits are not meant to be prescriptive but are designed to promote discussion and development. They comprise the following:

- Overview
- Toolkit 1 Partnership
- Toolkit 2 Targeting
- Toolkit 3 Programmes
- Toolkit 4 Evaluation
- Resources and glossary

Who they are for

The toolkits are aimed at widening participation managers and those they work with. They provide:

- guidance, materials and ideas for the development of programmes
- materials that are useful for strategic leaders
- practical tools for those involved in delivery.

The guidance and resources in the toolkits are most effective when delivered as part of a comprehensive approach that fits within a whole-institution strategy that addresses the topics covered by each of the four toolkits: partnership, targeting, programmes and evaluation.

Last accessed

All of the links in this document were last accessed in December 2013.

Authors

The toolkits were prepared for the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) by the International Centre for Guidance Studies and The Progression Trust. They were written by Phil Dent, Liz Garton, Tristram Hooley, Chris Leonard, John Marriott and Nicki Moore.
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Resources and glossary

These resources and glossary form part of the series ‘Higher Education Outreach to Widen Participation: Toolkits for practitioners’. They provide references for all material used in the toolkits, plus additional resources that may be useful. The most value will be gained from this document by using it in conjunction with the others in the series, which can be viewed on the Higher Education Academy website.

About the resources

This list provides details and summaries of all the documents used in producing the toolkits. They are grouped according to the toolkit they contributed to. At the end of each section is additional material on the topic that is considered potentially useful for anyone interested in carrying out further investigation. All of the links were last accessed in December 2013.

About the glossary

The glossary defines the main terms used within the toolkits. For definitions of more general terms used in higher education see the HEFCE glossary.
Overview

Resources used


**Summary:** This study provides analysis of uses and impact of access agreements and associated spending on widening participation outcomes in higher education institutions. The report’s findings include:

- The majority of institutions integrate other sources of funding for WP with the additional fee income committed in their access agreement, and they do not necessarily differentiate activities that are funded by different income streams.
- Access agreements and associated spending have had a positive impact on institutional policies, planning, behaviour and institutional strategies.
- Institutions believe access agreements have also improved monitoring and evaluation of WP activity.
- Access agreements have also perceived to have encouraged a higher proportion of under-represented groups to access the most selective institutions.
- Disparities in the rates of retention and success between WP and non-WP students in inclusive institutions are being reduced.
- Access agreements have helped to mitigate against the impact of higher tuition fees.


**Summary:** This report uses six case studies of international research into widening participation to (HE, and was developed to inform the national strategy for access and student success. The research found that the international evidence supports and reinforces much of the understanding developed in England about ‘what works’ in relation to WP, and that England is leading the way in WP policy and practice.


**Summary:** The settlement letter from HEFCE confirms reductions in funding for higher education institutions in 2014-15, and again in 2015-16, beyond those accounted for by the switch to publicly funded tuition fees.

**Summary:** The national strategy highlights a number of priorities for widening participation which include:

- a strategic, whole-institution approach
- a whole student lifecycle approach
- smarter, evidence-based spending
- strategically rebalancing access agreement spend to support access, student success and progression
- provision of support for mature and part-time students across the student lifecycle
- effective collaboration, where appropriate, across the student lifecycle.


**Summary:** This report summarises findings from a literature review of research into widening participation to HE, and was developed to inform the national strategy for access and student success. The review was undertaken to assess the key issues and challenges to widening participation, and highlight the policies, approaches and practice that have been shown to be most effective in widening access and supporting student success.


**Summary:** This document gives guidance to universities and colleges that charge tuition fees above the basic level for higher education on how to write and submit their access agreements for 2014-15.


**Summary:** This report gives the results of OFFA and HEFCE monitoring for 2011-12 access agreements and WPSAs, as well as in-year monitoring on the National Scholarship Programme for 2012-13.


**Summary:** This guidance note on access agreements should be used in conjunction with the 2014-15 access agreements guidance (see above).
Additional resources for this overview


Available from: www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2013/wpusesimpact/

**Summary:** This report on the uses and impact of HEFCE’s funding for widening participation (WP) shows that there is widespread agreement that the funding provided by HEFCE has had a significant impact upon WP activity and enhanced outcomes. The research found evidence that the introduction of this funding has helped to formalise and integrate widening participation work within institutions, leading to a shift in organisational culture and attitudes. It has had a significant impact upon activity in this area and has enhanced outcomes for students.


Available from: www.hefce.ac.uk/about/intro/abouthighereducationinengland/impact/

**Summary:** This report identified little evidence of a general negative impact on disadvantaged groups from the changes, but highlighted persisting inequalities between them and their more advantaged peers. The evidence also showed significant gaps between particular sub-groups and access to different types of university, with a considerable drop in acceptances for mature and part-time learners, and a continuing gender bias.


**Summary:** This report, produced by Alan Milburn, Independent Reviewer on Social Mobility and Child Poverty, looks at what universities need to do to address the social inequalities in terms of who gets into university and what the government needs to do to reduce the risks that its higher education policies pose to its social mobility strategy. The report identifies the overall progress made in widening participation in recent years, but highlights the stark gap between the most disadvantaged and their more advantaged peers. His report calls on all education stakeholders to act, but challenges HE providers, in particular, to take a lead in devising robust action that addresses key barriers to access at each of four stages in the student life-course: getting ready, getting in, staying in, and getting on.


**Summary:** This is an annual update from the Milburn report of 2012. It found that overall the response by the higher education sector been good with all universities recognising the access challenge as an issue. The report made a number of recommendations for further improvement which included:

- Setting clear statistical targets for improving fair access
- Making more use of contextual data in the admissions process
- Taking urgent action to improve the effectiveness of the National Scholarship Programme
- Setting up an independent review of the postgraduate funding system.
Toolkit 1: Partnership

Resources used

Children’s University (2012). Children’s University. Available from: www.childrensuniversity.co.uk/

Summary: The Children’s University (CU) Trust is managed through a network of over 80 local children’s universities in England, including the Service Children’s Education Schools CU. Each one is distinctive in character, responding to the needs of the local community within the quality assurance framework of the CU Trust.


Summary: This strategy document sets out the Government’s vision for reform of adult learning and skills over the remainder of this Parliament, and points the way towards growth in the longer term.


Summary: This press release details how government funding will support thousands of apprenticeships up to degree-equivalent level, enabling employers, colleges and universities to deliver the advanced skills most critical for growth.


Summary: This statistical first release provides information on the number of young people in education, employment and training.


Summary: This guidance document sets out the expectations of what access agreements for 2014-15 should cover.


Summary: STEMNET creates opportunities to inspire young people in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics. This enables young people to develop their creativity, problem-solving and employability skills, widens their choices and supports the UK’s future competitiveness.

**Summary:** This study focuses on the strategies used by schools and colleges to support high-achieving disadvantaged students to pursue Higher Education. The study provides evidence of the importance that schools and colleges place on encouraging their students to apply to higher education, with most institutions surveyed indicating that this was one of their highest priorities. However, it also found that schools and particularly colleges used different measures of disadvantage.


**Summary:** This report is a synthesis of the evidence in the Widening Access, Student Retention and Success (WASRS) archive about partnership working and collaboration to widen participation. It draws on reports from the Lifelong Learning Networks and the Aimhigher programme.

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**Additional resources for partnership**


**Summary:** The Higher Education Progression Framework Guide was initially developed as guidance for Aimhigher Partnerships. However, the Framework can be adapted for use by HEIs involved in developing links between schools, colleges, learners and HEIs as part of their own outreach work.


**Summary:** This review focuses on three aspects of Aimhigher partnerships: the management models in use, strengths and key challenges, and the effectiveness of the brokerage provided.


**Summary:** The Aimhigher Communications Resource Pack has been developed by the National Communications Resource Team to provide practitioners with general guidance on their communications activities.


**Summary:** The aim of this document is to facilitate sharing of information between Aimhigher partners (schools, academies, colleges, training providers, universities and local authorities), so that the Aimhigher target group receive the services they need.

**Summary:** This paper examines an attempt to continue with collaborative outreach work in London through the development of a new organisation called AccessHE. It explores the challenges that this organisation will face in being sustainable in a context where HEIs, not the state, control the funding. It argues that opportunities for collaboration in this area remain, but the nature of this work has to be re-positioned and a new, wider set of stakeholders engaged.


**Summary:** This paper discusses the findings of an investigation of how social partnerships can best be formed, developed and sustained over time.


**Summary:** This guide was created by five East Midlands area coordinators sharing their experiences, to identify some common themes and begin to frame some rough guidance on creating a partnership.


**Summary:** This synthesis focuses first on the efforts of further education and sixth-form colleges to widen participation by enabling progression and successful transition to higher education from Levels 2 and 3 of the National Qualifications Framework, particularly from vocational routes. Second it discusses the role of further education colleges in offering higher education as a means of widening access to higher education.


**Summary:** Among other themes, this toolkit explores how to create partnerships for WP for adults.

**Summary:** This article focuses on the characteristics of partnerships that contribute to their effectiveness, sustainability and success, filling a gap in the literature on educational partnerships. The research data emanate from a qualitative study of partnership working in England. The study used a grounded approach and inductively linked characteristics of partnerships found in the partnership literature with empirical data from a case study of a sub-regional partnership of education and training organisations. This combined evidence is used to conceptualise partnership as a continuum of weak to strong forms of partnership and to develop a table of characteristics which underpin such partnerships. The findings reveal the extent to which trust, networks, norms and values support effective, sustained and successful partnerships.


**Summary:** This paper reviews the literature analysing Aimhigher’s contribution to WP in higher education in the UK. The successes of Aimhigher are considered alongside its challenges, particularly the need to situate policy within the diverse demands of the 42 areas comprising England. These issues are considered in the context of wider contemporary debates concerning the quality of research into WP and the instruments used to evaluate policy. Four strands of literature are identified and analysed: Aimhigher’s impact and evaluation; its effectiveness in targeting beneficiaries; the progression and tracking of students; and policy.

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHSW-Aimhigher_and_Colleges

**Summary:** This study was undertaken regionally on behalf of all three Aimhigher Area Partnerships in the South West. The research is contextualised by a literature review, and focuses on the ways in which further education colleges (FECs) engage with Aimhigher targeting criteria and the HE Progression Framework. Interviews with key stakeholders in FEC and Aimhigher management explore the extent to which Aimhigher is aligned with FECs’ key strategic priorities.

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Guidance_aimhigher_partnership

**Summary:** This guidance sets out the objectives, scope and structure of the Aimhigher programme from August 2008; provides advice for Aimhigher partnerships on what they needed to do between February and July 2008 to prepare for the new phase of the programme; and requests partnerships to submit strategic plans for the three academic years 2008-2011.

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/LLN/SSC_Developing_progression_agreements

**Summary:** This guide provides an in-depth look at setting up progression agreements between education providers to enable learner progression to HE.

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHHIOW-Evaluation_Sustainability_2010](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHHIOW-Evaluation_Sustainability_2010)

**Summary:** This evaluation focuses on partnership working and Aimhigher activities from the perspective of practitioners, including ambassadors, associates and mentors, managers and senior managers.


Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHW-Embedding_Aimhigher_in_LAs](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHW-Embedding_Aimhigher_in_LAs)

**Summary:** This research investigates the extent to which the values, attitudes and philosophy of the Aimhigher programme are embedded within the work of local authorities, using desk-based research and fieldwork interviews with 14-19 advisers and line managers in all eight local authorities in the Aimhigher West area.


**Summary:** This briefing gives some examples of best practice from Russell Group universities in partnering with local schools, colleges and academies, in an effort to raise aspirations, improve attainment and widen participation further.


Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHLancs_partnership_community_voluntary](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHLancs_partnership_community_voluntary)

**Summary:** This is a guide for higher education and further education institutions working in partnership with the voluntary sector.
Toolkit 2: Targeting

Resources used


**Summary:** This information guide is for parents and carers of young people who have been chosen to take part in the Aimhigher Mentoring Scheme.

Aimhigher (n.d.). *Targeting Aimhigher Learners.*

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHHIOW-Info_card-Targeting_of_students

**Summary:** These three steps are designed to help organisations prioritise learners for all Aimhigher targeting activities.

Aimhigher (2010). *Brief Guide to Data Sources: A Resource for Widening Participation Practitioners.*

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Aimhigher_guide_to_data_sources

**Summary:** This brief guide has been developed primarily by Aimhigher practitioners in order to provide details of some important data sources relevant to the WP agenda. The guide will be useful for WP practitioners, including those in HEIs, who are looking to use data to support the targeting and monitoring of their WP activities.


Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHWM_information_sharing_protocol

**Summary:** The aim of this document is to facilitate sharing of information between Aimhigher partners (schools, academies, colleges, training providers, universities and local authorities), so that the Aimhigher target group receive the services they need.


Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHBS-WP_and_HE_Related_Activities

**Summary:** This toolkit has been produced to assist practitioners in schools and colleges with the design, delivery and evaluation of Aimhigher and HE outreach activities for their learners.


Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Targetting_WP_learners

**Summary:** The guide provides a model which maps the types of learner-level data that can be used to target learners.

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHKM_GUIDE_HE_FE_YOUNG_PEOPLE_LEAVING_CARE](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHKM_GUIDE_HE_FE_YOUNG_PEOPLE_LEAVING_CARE)

**Summary:** The purpose of this training pack is to ensure that every institution offering further or higher education can ensure that there are always trained and expert members of staff available to act as advocates and supporters for young people who are from a care background and who wish to continue their studies.


Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHNortheast_CURDS](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHNortheast_CURDS)

**Summary:** This is the final report by Newcastle University’s Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies to the Aimhigher programme in the North East region. The report documents the distribution of priority groups across the sub-regions through which the Aimhigher programme is delivered. It also compares different ways of identifying priority groups. The report ends by outlining some approaches to targeting for which maps and the supporting intelligence could be used.


Available from: [www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmbis/885/88502.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201012/cmselect/cmbis/885/88502.htm)

**Summary:** This inquiry into government reform of higher education was launched in February 2011 in the expectation of the imminent publication of the Government’s HE White Paper. The inquiry highlighted a number of areas of concern. Decisions were taken early on regarding the raising of tuition fees and the report recommended the need for a clear communications strategy.


**Summary:** This paper reviews the literature analysing Aimhigher’s contribution to WP in HE in the UK. The successes of Aimhigher are considered alongside its challenges, particularly the need to situate policy within the diverse demands of 42 areas comprising England. These issues are considered in the context of wider contemporary debates concerning the quality of research into WP and the instruments used to evaluate policy. Four strands of literature are identified and analysed: Aimhigher’s impact and evaluation; its effectiveness in targeting beneficiaries; the progression and tracking of students; and policy.


Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/support_disabled_learners_summer](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/support_disabled_learners_summer)

**Summary:** This guide is primarily designed to assist staff responsible for recruiting learners to summer schools, such as Aimhigher co-ordinators in HE Local Authority Districts, boroughs and schools. It will also be of use to all practitioners engaged in recruitment to a range of aspiration-raising and transition activities, to ensure that disabled learners are not unintentionally excluded from any Aimhigher or WP initiatives.

Summary: This guide introduces the theory and practice of The Progression Matrix.


Summary: This study seeks to gain a deeper understanding of the ‘potential to benefit’ principle, and uses the findings from this research as the basis for making recommendations about future practice.


Summary: Updates and amendments to the Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) classification, assessing the POLAR3 construction, and looking at how it relates to other measures of deprivation in relation to participation in higher education. The research finds that participation varies within wards, and that POLAR is only suitable to identify educational disadvantage relating to participation in higher education, and is therefore not an appropriate substitute for other measures of disadvantage.


Summary: This document provides guidance on effective ways to target outreach activities at people from communities under-represented in HE. It refines the definition of the target group for Aimhigher and outreach activity, provides a methodology to make targeting more effective, and sets out a process for measuring the effectiveness of targeting.


Summary: This document requests HEIs and FECs directly funded by HEFCE to submit WP strategic assessments. It outlines the reporting framework and provides guidance that sets out the expectations of HEFCE and OFFA.


Summary: This report compares, by ethnicity, the characteristics of the UK-domiciled entrants to full-time first degree courses in 2002-03, as well as their progression routes through their first degree studies.


**Summary:** This document provides guidance to HEIs and FECs on the operation, management, funding, monitoring and review of the National Scholarship Programme for the academic year 2012-13.

HESA (2012). *Performance Indicators in Higher Education in the UK*. Cheltenham: HESA.

Available from: [www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/2072/141/](http://www.hesa.ac.uk/content/view/2072/141/)

**Summary:** This is an annual publication providing performance indicators relating to HE. It is based on data submitted to HESA by publicly funded HEIs in the UK and one privately funded institution, the University of Buckingham.


**Summary:** This report has enabled the first investigation into how Aimhigher support for care leavers aligns with national care leaver policy and research.


Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHEM-Boys_into_HE_Literature_Review](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHEM-Boys_into_HE_Literature_Review)

**Summary:** This is a literature review looking at male underachievement and how it relates to participation in HE.


Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHWest-Care_Leavers_in_FE](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHWest-Care_Leavers_in_FE)

**Summary:** This report is based upon research undertaken during the period January to March 2011 to evaluate the effectiveness of progression arrangements for care leavers in further education, especially in respect of learner transition to HE.


**Summary:** This research is based on surveys which focused on which activities are delivered through the Aimhigher partnerships, how the activities are perceived to impact on the provider and the apparent effect they have on the progression of target groups to higher education.

**Summary:** This report draws together the findings from the National Foundation for Educational Research’s secondary analysis of matched data from the National Pupil Database, the Individual Learner Record and HESA, exploring the relative probability of progression to HE for the first cohort of young people who were in Aimhigher Excellence Challenge schools.


**Summary:** This guidance document sets out the expectations of what access agreements for 2014-15 should cover.


**Summary:** Following guidance from HEFCE, Aimhigher Kent and Medway targeted learners during 2008-09 using a three stage process of area-level targeting (at school, college and community levels), learner-level targeting, and monitoring the effectiveness of the targeting process. This paper is concerned with stages two and three of this process. It sets out a review of learner-level targeting in practice in Kent and Medway institutions, together with student profiles allowing the partnership to evaluate the effectiveness of its targeting strategy.

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**Additional resources for targeting**


**Summary:** The Higher Education Progression Framework Guide was initially developed as guidance for Aimhigher Partnerships. However, the Framework can be adapted for use by HEIs involved in developing links between schools, colleges, learners and HEIs as part of their own outreach work.


**Summary:** This guide aims to bridge the gap between school and further education and HE by providing information about the support available for disabled students in further education and HE.


This briefing provides an overview of how institutions are targeting their widening participation activities and guidance available to assist them.
**Aimhigher Hertfordshire (2011). Analysis of the Delivery and Impact of the BME Mentoring Work Undertaken through the Aimhigher Programme in Hertfordshire.**

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Herts-Analysis_of_BME_Mentoring](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Herts-Analysis_of_BME_Mentoring)

**Summary:** This report looks at the work done by Aimhigher with black and minority ethnic (BME) groups, with a particular focus on the barriers for young people from these communities regarding education and progression.

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**Aimhigher Milton Keynes, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire (2009). Mentoring for Higher Education at HMP Springhill: The Case for National Expansion.**

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHMKOB_mentoring_HE_HMP_Springhill](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHMKOB_mentoring_HE_HMP_Springhill)

**Summary:** The Aimhigher-led ‘mentoring for progression’ pilot project at Her Majesty’s Prison (HMP) Springhill encourages and supports prisoners to go on to college or university, either during their sentence or once released. It is credited with contributing to a dramatic lowering of the re-offending rate among those involved, at a fraction of the cost of one person re-offending. In its first three years, the project has engaged with more than 500 prisoners, of whom more than 60 have gone on to some form of further or higher education.

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**Aimhigher West Partnership (n.d.). Ensuring Inclusion: A Good Practice Checklist Intended for People Planning and Putting on Events or Producing or Publishing Information.**

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHWestArea_ensuring_inclusion](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHWestArea_ensuring_inclusion)

**Summary:** This is a detailed guide to making documents inclusive and contains practical checklists to assist in making WP work (e.g. meetings, events, printed information and electronic information) as accessible as possible.

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Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/WP_syntheses/Bowl](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/WP_syntheses/Bowl)

**Summary:** This synthesis focuses first on the efforts of further education and sixth-form colleges to widen participation by enabling progression and successful transition to higher education from Levels 2 and 3 of the National Qualifications Framework, particularly from vocational routes. Second it discusses the role of further education colleges in offering higher education as a means of widening access to higher education.

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Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AH_beyond_boundaries](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AH_beyond_boundaries)

**Summary:** This report details targeting strategies adopted for all groups (travellers, asylum seekers, prisoners etc.) in Aimhigher.

Available from: [www.plymouth.ac.uk/files/extranet/docs/WID/PedRIO_WP_Horizon_Scanning_Report_FINAL.pdf](http://www.plymouth.ac.uk/files/extranet/docs/WID/PedRIO_WP_Horizon_Scanning_Report_FINAL.pdf)

**Summary:** This report provides a review of literature and examples of good practice throughout the full range of widening participation activities, from outreach, induction and retention to employability. The WP agenda has developed over the past decade from mainly involving outreach activities for young non-traditional learners (and monitoring of attendance at outreach events) to a wider range of activities, a more strategic approach, and more sophisticated evaluation of impact.


Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/WP_syntheses/Gazeley_Aynsley](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/WP_syntheses/Gazeley_Aynsley)

**Summary:** This synthesis of the literature in the WASRS archive explores the factors known to be associated with improved student retention and success. It examines the evidence to show whether and how these factors are successfully addressed by pre-entry interventions.


Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/action-on-access/Role_of_Targeting_briefing](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/action-on-access/Role_of_Targeting_briefing)

**Summary:** This topic briefing provides an overview of how institutions are targeting their WP activities and the targeting guidance available to assist them. It offers a set of reflective questions for HEIs to explore how the success of their targeting may be explored and improved.


**Summary:** This document provides guidance on effective ways to target outreach activities at people from communities under-represented in HE. It refines the definition of the target group for Aimhigher and outreach activity, provides a methodology to make targeting more effective, and sets out a process for measuring the effectiveness of the targeting process.


**Summary:** This is the final report of a five-year action research project commissioned by the Frank Buttle Trust to explore the experiences of the small minority of care leavers who continue into HE.

**Summary:** This report brings together material related to Lifelong Learning Network progression agreements and, to a lesser extent, the Aimhigher progression framework and considers their role and potential impact on social mobility.


**Summary:** This guide explores the wide range of activity undertaken by the Network to develop the information, advice and guidance (IAG) services available to vocational learners in the East Midlands.


**Summary:** This presentation summarises the various different approaches to targeting.


**Summary:** This is an annual report from the University of Manchester. It provides a summary of the full range of the university’s work to promote fair access and widen participation during the 2010-11 academic year, and helps to communicate its achievements and outcomes to OFFA, HEFCE and a range of other key stakeholders.


**Summary:** The topics covered in this guide complement those in a previous Action on Access publication, Widening Participation: A Rough Guide for Higher Education Providers, by providing further information on issues faced by disabled learners. This guide is produced in response to requests from WP practitioners and others who appreciate that although many of the things they do may be relevant for disabled learners, there are ways in which their work could be enhanced by a better understanding of disability.


**Summary:** This report presents the findings of research undertaken by York Consulting Limited to estimate the resource costs of Aimhigher activities and interventions through a case study approach. The study was commissioned by the DfES to improve resource costing transparency and to provide cost estimates to feed into the Comprehensive Spending Review.
**Toolkit 3: Programmes**

**Resources used**


Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/action-on-access/HE_Progression_Framework](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/action-on-access/HE_Progression_Framework)

**Summary:** The Higher Education Progression Framework Guide was initially developed as guidance for Aimhigher Partnerships. However, the Framework can be adapted for use by HEIs involved in developing links between schools, colleges, learners and HEIs as part of their own outreach work.


Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/action-on-access/Role_of_Targeting_briefing](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/action-on-access/Role_of_Targeting_briefing)

**Summary:** An overview of how institutions are targeting their WP activities and the targeting guidance available to assist them. The guidance seeks to refine target groups, provide a methodology to improve the effectiveness of targeting and set out a process for measuring its success.

Aimhigher (n.d.). ‘Activity costing template’.

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Aimhigher_Costs_Completed_Example](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Aimhigher_Costs_Completed_Example)

Planning and set-up, delivery, resources, hospitality and transport costs all need to be accounted for when costing an activity. This spreadsheet is a useful tool to facilitate budget management responsibilities.

Aimhigher (n.d.). *Dare to Dream*. Video.

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Aimhigher_vimeo_dare_to_dream](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Aimhigher_vimeo_dare_to_dream)

**Summary:** This video encourages people with a disability to go to university.

Aimhigher (n.d.). *Don’t Stop*. Video.

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AH_vimeo_dont_stop_jan_2009](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AH_vimeo_dont_stop_jan_2009)

**Summary:** These three short films encourage individuals from all backgrounds and academic levels to enter into further study after school. The films look at the different routes leading up to university. They explain that previous experience of the course is not needed, that students of all academic levels can enjoy and benefit from further study, and how the skills learnt are transferable to many jobs and different areas of everyday life. The non-academic benefits of university life, how it differs from school and what options are available for the future are also discussed.

Aimhigher (n.d.). *GCSEs Still to Come?* Video.

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Aimhigher_vimeo_GCSE_still_to_come](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Aimhigher_vimeo_GCSE_still_to_come)

**Summary:** This short video explains what the options and benefits of HE are. It also includes reasons why some people do not want to go to university and looks at what learners can expect from a student lifestyle.
Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Aimhigher_vimeo_truth_about_going_to_university

**Summary:** This short video dispels some of the myths about going to university. It explains that moving away from home can be fun, allowing students to develop independence and responsibility and to have some freedom.

Aimhigher Greater Manchester (n.d.). *Aimhigher Greater Manchester Progression Resource One: In the Know.*
Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/In_the_know_proof_2sm

**Summary:** Designed primarily for use by schools and colleges, and based on reflection on the experience of Aimhigher, this progression resource pack consists of three booklets, each with associated resources available electronically. The booklets comprise:

- an IAG Progression Resource for teachers, tutors, learning support and advisory staff
- two guides (one for those working with pre-16 pupils and one for those working with post-16 students) to delivering a programme of progression sessions for young people, based on the Aimhigher graduate officer programmes
- a guide to working with HE students.

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Resource_9_associates_session

**Summary:** The Aimhigher Associate Scheme has been designed to encourage more young people from the lowest socioeconomic groups to consider HE as an achievable and realistic goal. The scheme sits alongside Aimhigher initiatives such as summer schools and taster days, which aim to close the gap between the numbers of learners from the WP cohort and those from more advantaged backgrounds.

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/HE_resource_pack

**Summary:** This resource pack is aimed at tutors who assist vocational learners with progression to HE. It is particularly suited to tutors with limited previous experience in supporting learners in applying to HE, but may also be of value to tutors who wish to update their existing knowledge and practice.

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Activities_for_learners

**Summary:** This booklet is primarily for use by schools and colleges and is based on reflection on the experience of Aimhigher. The progression resource pack consists of three booklets, which comprise:

- an IAG progression resource for teachers, tutors, learning support and advisory staff, based on the Aimhigher IAG staff development and disability programmes
- a guide to delivering a programme of progression sessions for young people, based on the Aimhigher graduate officer programmes
- a guide to working with HE students to provide support and role models for younger learners, based on the Aimhigher Associates programme.
Aimhigher Healthcare Academy (n.d.). *Budget Quiz.*
Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHPP_Finance_test](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHPP_Finance_test)
A comprehensive list of possible outgoings that students away from home may encounter is provided in table format. Participants are asked to identify how much they need to spend on a weekly basis in order to highlight the need for careful money management skills when budgeting for university life.

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/MKOB-Disability_Mentoring_Programme](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/MKOB-Disability_Mentoring_Programme)
**Summary:** This pack has been designed specifically for use with students with disabilities, to encourage them to consider going on to HE. Some of the materials were piloted at programmes run at Buckinghamshire Chilterns University College in 2005 and at the University of Oxford in 2006.

Aimhigher Norfolk (n.d.). *Flash Pack: Get Yourself Ready for HE.*
Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHNorfolk_Academic_Complete](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHNorfolk_Academic_Complete)
**Summary:** This academic study module has been designed to help students develop the academic skills and level of understanding needed to move smoothly and successfully from school or college through to HE.

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHNorfolk_Resource_Pack_Post_16](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHNorfolk_Resource_Pack_Post_16)
**Summary:** This resource pack aims to support schools with their progression activities. It includes guidance on how to organise HE visits, and activities and exercises for students to help inform them about various aspects of progression to HE.

Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHTV-School_Guide_2010-11-PBR](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHTV-School_Guide_2010-11-PBR)
**Summary:** The guide aims to provide information about the Aimhigher Associates scheme, including how the scheme will work in school, what is expected of the Associates and the benefits to the school.

Aimhigher West Area Partnership (n.d). *What’s Stopping You and Value of a Degree. Video.*
Available from: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AH_vimeo_whats_stopping_you](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AH_vimeo_whats_stopping_you)
**Summary:** These two videos dispel myths and worries that young people may experience when considering entering HE. Peer pressure, worries about grades, money issues and social class are all issues that may deter young people from entering university. These videos provide advice, information and guidance to potential university students, from other students who have experienced similar worries.

**Summary:** The national strategy highlights a number of priorities for widening participation which include:

- a strategic, whole-institution approach
- a whole student lifecycle approach
- smarter, evidence-based spending
- strategically rebalancing access agreement spending to support access, student success and progression
- provision of support for mature and part-time students across the student lifecycle
- effective collaboration, where appropriate, across the student lifecycle.


**Summary:** This document sets out how organisations and individuals should work together to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people in accordance with the Children Act 1989 and the Children Act 2004.


**Summary:** This government website gives advice to students relating to finance.


**Summary:** This review draws together the issues and views identified by the various stakeholders involved in the project, using case study data and further research activity. It supports school and college leaders and practitioners in wider implementation of the Aimhigher Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) awards and accreditation.


**Summary:** This guide introduces the theory and practice of The Progression Matrix.

**Summary:** This report outlines the findings from consultations with work-based learning providers, and reflects on how the Learner Progression Matrix (LPM) may be used within apprenticeships and other work-based training. During this project, two work-based learning providers, one in the childcare sector, and the other in electro-technical services, were helped to complete an example LPM. The result showed that this tool is relevant and useful in the work-based learning and apprenticeship sectors, though LPMs can be somewhat difficult for providers to understand. Guidance and instructions are included in the appendix.


**Summary:** This report illustrates and evaluates the features of best practice in safeguarding, based on inspection evidence from the 19% of all maintained primary, secondary and special schools, residential special schools and pupil referral units inspected between September 2009 and July 2010 where safeguarding was judged outstanding.


**Summary:** This research evaluates the impact of mentoring within the Aimhigher programme on young people who have participated in the scheme in Hertfordshire schools.


**Summary:** This report presents the findings of research undertaken by York Consulting Limited to estimate the resource costs of Aimhigher activities and interventions through a case study approach.
Additional resources for programmes

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/action-on-access/AoA_acetaster_roughguide

**Summary:** The case studies in this booklet show the different ways in which one category of Aimhigher projects and activities have impacted on people’s lives by creating opportunities in every local education authority in England.

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/action-on-access/AoA_masterclasses_roughguide

**Summary:** The case studies in this booklet show the different ways in which another category of Aimhigher projects and activities have impacted on people’s lives by creating opportunities in every local education authority in England.

Aimhigher (2011). *Campus Visit Outcomes.*
Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/LIFE-Campus_visit_Outcomes

**Summary:** This report explains what campus visits are and their benefits. In January and March 2010 a short survey was carried out among a sample of 54 learners in years nine and ten, who participated in a campus visit. In April and May 2010, two campus visits for looked-after children and their carers took place. Four of these learners had additional learning needs. Surveys and observations were conducted. The findings are presented and considered in this report.

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHSouthCentral_Progress_HE_Toolkit

**Summary:** Progress South Central funded Nextstep Berkshire to update an existing toolkit on routes into HE, originally developed through a partnership between Nextstep and Aimhigher Berkshire. This toolkit was designed for use by guidance workers with groups of learners.

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHGM_universities_outreach_2011_12

**Summary:** This document briefly outlines the plans of Greater Manchester universities for outreach activities in 2011-12, after Aimhigher ends.

Aimhigher Lancashire (n.d.). *College Open Days.*
Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AH_Lancs_college_open_days

**Summary:** This briefing gives advice on how to plan a college open day.
Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AH_Lancs_engaging_families
Summary: This briefing sheet gives examples of ways to engage families including parent workshops, parent courses, one-to-one advice, family-focused tours, interactive presentations, written resources and using university or college facilities.

Aimhigher Lancashire (n.d.). Families on Campus.
Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AH_Lancs_fams_on_campus
Summary: This briefing gives advice on how to plan a campus tour.

Available from: www.research-toolkit.co.uk/images/reports/parents_and_carers_with_video.pdf
Summary: This report identifies strategies undertaken across West Yorkshire to support the development of educational aspirations, self-efficacy, motivation and self-esteem, in the most deprived learning communities, with a specific focus on those from BME, white working-class and other vulnerable learning communities. It includes case studies exemplifying best practice in terms of the effectiveness of parents’ and carers’ involvement, and pathways to further learning.

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/what-works-student-retention/Aston-What_Works_Final_Reports-Dec_11
Summary: Based on empirical research findings, this manual provides those working in HE with the knowledge and tools necessary to set up a peer mentoring programme. Written in a question-and-answer format, the manual comprises a list of guidelines. Tools to recruit and train peer mentors are included as appendices.

Available from: www.plymouth.ac.uk/files/extranet/docs/WID/PedRIO_WP_Horizon_Scanning_Report_FINAL.pdf
Summary: This report provides a review of literature and examples of good practice throughout the full range of widening participation activities, from outreach, induction and retention to employability. The WP agenda has developed over the past decade from mainly involving outreach activities for young non-traditional learners (and monitoring of attendance at outreach events) to a wider range of activities, a more strategic approach, and more sophisticated evaluation of impact.

Summary: This government website gives advice to parents on student finance.

**Summary:** The open day was arranged so the young people could see a university first hand and learn more about education at post-16 level. Parents were also invited to attend this event, in an effort to engage them and pass knowledge on to them.


**Summary:** An evaluation of an event to show young people what Health Sciences are and which courses were available to them at university, and for them to learn more about HE. The event involved a series of academic taster sessions delivered by University of Liverpool Health Sciences staff and student advocates.

HEFCE. (2014). *Differences in Degree Outcomes: Key Findings.* Bristol: HEFCE. Available from: www.hefce.ac.uk/media/hefce/content/pubs/2014/201403/HEFCE2014_03.pdf

**Summary:** This report looks at the outcomes of the cohort of English-domiciled A-level students who entered full-time degree courses in 2007-08. The report examines the extent to which a student’s background affects their chance of an upper second or first degree. It finds that students from disadvantaged areas tend to do less well in HE than those with the same prior educational attainment from more advantaged areas. In addition, students from independent schools with the same grades as students from state schools tend to do less well at university.


**Summary:** This report provides findings from an analysis of Aimhigher summer school provision jointly funded by the European Social Fund and HEFCE from 2004 to 2008. It describes the nature of summer school provision and the characteristics of summer school participants, with a focus on whether the programme reached the intended target groups.


**Summary:** This document provides guidance on effective ways to target outreach activities at people from communities under-represented in HE. It refines the definition of the target group for Aimhigher and outreach activity, provides a methodology to make targeting more effective, and sets out a process for measuring the effectiveness of targeting.


**Summary:** This pack has been designed specifically for use with students with disabilities, to encourage them to consider going on to HE.

**Summary:** This document demonstrates the impact of Aimhigher partnerships on the educational progression, attainment and the aspirations of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The young people represented here were chosen to participate in the Aimhigher programme because of their evident potential to progress to HE study and, importantly, because according to their teachers that potential was unlikely to be realised without the extra support that Aimhigher partnerships have put in place.


**Summary:** The report identifies a number of ways that universities can support widening participation. It recommends amongst other things, outreach programmes, more community engagement and institutional commitment as the main drivers for WP activity.


Available at: [www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/WP_syntheses/Sanders_Higham](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/WP_syntheses/Sanders_Higham)

**Summary:** This synthesis focuses on the material in the WASRS archive that describes this work and the wider literature. Key findings of the synthesis are as follows:

- The use of HE students has grown both in scale and breadth over recent years and is now a significant element of widening access programmes, with the student workforce adding to the delivery capacity of widening participation teams across the HE sector.

- HE students take on a variety of roles within widening access. They are also given various titles, with 'student ambassador' being the most commonly used term. The number, variety and interchangeability of the titles used means that a student’s precise role and function is not always clear from their title alone.

- HE students can feel uncertain about their role in widening access, particularly in relation to marketing their own institution, managing the behaviour of learners and advising learners on topics that they themselves are unfamiliar with.
**Toolkit 4: Evaluation**

**Resources used**

Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHGTM-Evaluation_Toolkit-PBR
Summary: This guide describes a simple and realistic approach to evaluating Aimhigher programmes and activities.

Aimhigher Greater Merseyside (n.d.). *How to Conduct an Ethical Evaluation.*
Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/AHGM_ethical_evaluation
Summary: This toolkit is based on the British Educational Research Association’s Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research, and covers researchers’ responsibilities to participants, sponsors and other researchers.

Aimhigher Kent and Medway (2010). *Brief Guide to Data Sources: A Resource for Widening Participation Practitioners.*
Available from: www.heacademy.ac.uk/resources/detail/aim_higher/Aimhigher_guide_to_data_sources
Summary: The guide is firstly intended to be an introduction to the key data sources and provide signposting to how different sets of data can be accessed. Secondly, it aims to provide some tips and pitfalls which need to be borne in mind when using data for targeting and monitoring WP activities.

Available from: www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2013/wpusesimpact/

Available from: http://www.bera.ac.uk/researchers-resources/publications/ethical-guidelines-for-educational-research-2011
Summary: These guidelines are designed to support educational researchers in conducting research to the highest ethical standards, in whatever context it is needed.

Summary: This report explores the role of formative evaluation and argues that its main aims are to help policy-makers, HEFCE and participating institutions develop a fuller understanding of ‘what works best and why’ in relation to the design and delivery of the National Scholarship Programme. The evaluation also offers cumulative insights into the impact and influence that the Programme has on student decision-making, participation and retention amongst under-represented groups.

**Summary:** This report summarises the findings from the second year of the formative evaluation of the National Scholarship Programme (NSP), which will be completed in July 2015. The report identified four primary issues with implementation:

- The NSP is not a national entitlement; student eligibility is determined by individual institutions using locally derived criteria.
- Few institutions are able to guarantee an award for specified groups of potential applicants.
- The amount of cash that can be awarded and the timing of the delivery of the cash element are restricted.
- The total value and composition of the award varies between institutions.


**Summary:** This guidance has been written by practitioners for practitioners. Its intention is to encourage area and regional partnerships to use the evidence they have collected to demonstrate the impact of Aimhigher upon learners.


**Summary:** This letter clarifies HEFCE’s expectations of WP strategic assessments and highlights good practice, tools and resources to help institutions enhance and improve their plans for evaluation.


**Summary:** This book summarises the four-level ‘Kirkpatrick Model’ for evaluating training.


**Summary:** This guidance document sets out the expectations of what access agreements for 2014-15 should cover.


**Summary:** This document sets out the supplementary guidance needed for institutions to carry out annual monitoring of access agreements and WP strategic assessments. It should be read in conjunction with OFFA, 2013.

**Summary:** This document sets out the information needed from institutions to carry out annual monitoring of access agreements and WP strategic assessments.

Available from: [www.nfer.ac.uk/nfer/publications/AIM01/AIM01.pdf](www.nfer.ac.uk/nfer/publications/AIM01/AIM01.pdf)

**Summary:** This research assesses the quality and extent of existing data in order to refine and develop future data capture exercises in Aimhigher partnerships; explores in detail the evidence of impact that can be inferred from data provided by Aimhigher partnerships where data quality and completeness is perceived to be good; and provides a robust evaluation of the Aimhigher programme as a whole.


**Summary:** This article suggests that it is possible to conceptualise evaluation as a series of knowledge-based practices.

Available from: [www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/events/capacitybuilding/about.htm](www.lancs.ac.uk/fass/events/capacitybuilding/about.htm)

**Summary:** This toolkit complements guidance provided by HEFCE regarding evaluation, and in particular details about the collection of ‘core participant data’. It outlines the steps taken during the development of an evaluation plan, offers ideas for how to incorporate the core features into an evaluation plan and subsequent evaluations, provides materials including evaluation methods to support evaluation planning, lists existing evaluation resources, and suggests how these might be used when developing an evaluation plan and undertaking subsequent evaluations.

Available from: [www.wphe.org/](www.wphe.org/)

**Summary:** The Widening Participation in Higher Education website has an interactive tool showing widening participation data from 2009-10 by institution, mission group, and by mission group with location-adjusted benchmarks. The website also includes a series of research reports on widening participation.
Additional resources for evaluation


Summary: Drawing on experience of evaluating an Aimhigher partnership, this discussion paper engages with current methodological debates on the evaluation of Aimhigher, summarising how HEFCE has responded to the criticisms of WP research. It argues that the debate is distorted by red herrings, but that there are also real problems.


Summary: This guide describes a simple and realistic approach to evaluating Aimhigher programmes and activities, in conjunction with the Aimhigher Greater Merseyside toolkit resources (see above).


Summary: The toolkit series has been written for educational practitioners involved in planning and undertaking research. It should also be helpful to those who are involved in supporting practitioners to set up and carry out research.


Summary: This paper explores the current landscape of interventions to promote fairer or improved access to HE, focusing on the effectiveness of multi-university interventions and of research methods in this area.


Summary: This ‘metrics guide’ has been designed to help organisations understand the business case for investing in WP in Health. It also seeks to help organisations collect information on those metrics which will demonstrate whether or not the organisation is making progress towards achieving agreed outcomes.

**Summary:** This guide is designed to help STEM faculties, schools, departments, programmes and modules to use data and evaluation to inform and implement an effective strategic approach and associated interventions to improve student transition, induction and retention into higher education.


**Summary:** This training resources pack contains information and suggested activities for those wishing to undertake action research into gender inequalities in Science, Technology, Engineering and the Built Environment.
**Glossary**

For definitions of more general terms used in higher education see the [HEFCE glossary](#).

**Access agreements:**
Agreements submitted by Higher Education Institutions to OFFA, which indicate how institutions intend to:
- support improvements in participation rates in HE from under-represented groups
- increase where appropriate the amount of funding available for bursaries or for outreach work with schools, FE colleges and so on.

**Action on Access:**
Is a national provider of coordination and support for furthering widening participation and access to higher education in the UK. It began in 1999 and works with a wide range of partners and strategic alliances to both challenge and support the sector to deliver and to embed access, widening participation and student success.

**Aimhigher:**
Was a national programme (in England) which aimed to widen participation and access in higher education (HE) by raising awareness, aspirations and attainment among learners from under-represented groups. Aimhigher encompassed a wide range of activities to engage and motivate learners who had the potential to enter HE, but were under-achieving, undecided or lacking in confidence. The programme particularly focused on children in school from lower socio-economic groups and those from disadvantaged backgrounds who lived in areas of relative deprivation where participation in HE was low.

**Compacts:**
Relationships between HEIs and schools to encourage pupils to study at the HEI.

**Counterfactual:**
Outputs and outcomes in the absence of the intervention. The counterfactual is necessary for comparing actual outputs and outcomes to what they would have been in the absence of the intervention i.e. with versus without. The with versus without: ‘with’ refers to the outputs and outcomes with the intervention (the factual), which are compared with the outputs and outcomes ‘without’ the intervention (the Counterfactual) to determine the impact of the intervention, through single or double difference estimates.

**Data:**
Data consist of a series of facts or statements that may have been collected, stored, processed or manipulated, but have not been organized or placed into context. When data are organized, they become information. Information can be processed and used to draw generalised conclusions or knowledge.

**Evaluation:**
The systematic and objective assessment of an ongoing or completed project, programme or policy, its design, implementation and results. The aim is to determine the relevance and fulfilment of objectives, development efficiency, effectiveness, impact and sustainability. An evaluation should provide information that is credible and useful, enabling the incorporation of lessons learned into the decision-making process of both recipients and donors.
The Fischer Family Trust Data Analysis Project (FFT):
A service to provide performance data to schools to inform expectations for all learners across a range of subjects. The service supports schools in target-setting and self-evaluation.

Focus groups:
A specialised form of group interview in which participants are asked to respond to a particular theme or set of issues. Participants are often selected to be representative of a particular population. Typically focus groups seek to reveal opinions, attitudes, beliefs and reactions rather than to establish facts.

Formative evaluation:
Evaluation conducted for the benefit of internal partners during the implementation phase of the measure under review. Its intention is to improve performance through providing regular feedback to key stakeholders on the effectiveness and relevance of the strategy, processes, measures, and actions.

Free school meal (FSM):
An entitlement available for all pupils who meet certain criteria laid down by Government, often used as a proxy indicator for disadvantage.

Gantt chart:
A particular type of bar chart showing planned activity against time.

Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE):
The non-departmental government body responsible for the distribution of government funding for HE in England.

Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT)
The HEAT service is a collaborative project which helps higher education institutions in England track students who have taken part in outreach activities in schools and colleges, through their achievement in higher education and beyond.

Higher Education Progression Framework (HEPF):
The HEPF provides a set of principles and characteristics to guide partnerships and institutions in moving beyond one-off WP interventions to a sequence of experiences for learners within a sustained and planned programme integrated with the activities of the wider learning community of schools and colleges. The HEPF was developed by Action on Access and was central to the 2008-11 phase of Aimhigher. It provides a model for the delivery of sequential and progressive activity by Aimhigher partnerships in schools and colleges. The Framework aims to facilitate effective cross-sector collaboration by placing an emphasis on individual learner progression, in line with both the aims of WP and school and college priorities.

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA):
HESA collects, analyses and reports on HE statistics for universities and colleges in the UK.

Impact evaluation:
A study of the attribution of changes in the outcome of a particular intervention. Impact evaluations have either an experimental or quasi-experimental design.
Indices of multiple deprivation (IMD):
A measure of the deprivation of an area comprising seven indices: Income; Employment; Health Deprivation and Disability; Education, Skills and Training; Barriers to Housing and Services; Crime; and Living Environment. The IMD provide a relative ranking of areas across England according to level of deprivation.

Initial teacher training (ITT):
Courses which lead to a qualification as a teacher.

Interviews:
Interviews involve an interaction between a researcher and a research participant for the purpose of gathering qualitative data. Interviews typically gather both factual and interpretative data, and can use a variety of different approaches (structured or unstructured, life history, thematic etc.).

Low participation neighbourhood (LPN):
In a measure of HE participation rates of people aged 18, students whose postcode falls within wards with the lowest participation (quintile 1) are defined by HESA in its performance indicators as being from an LPN (see POLAR data).

Mixed methods:
A research design using more than one data collection technique. This may or may not involve the mixing of qualitative and quantitative approaches. (Also called 'multi-method).

Monitoring:
The ongoing process of examining the delivery of programme outputs, carried out during the execution of a programme with the intention of correcting any deviation from operational objectives. This is likely to include monitoring of inputs, outputs, processes, outcomes and impacts.

National Statistics Socio-Economic Classifications (NS-SEC):
Occupationally based classifications designed to categorise economically active adults, and by association their dependents. NS-SEC groups 4-8 are often used as a proxy for disadvantage.

Office for Fair Access (OFFA):
A non-departmental public body set up in 2004 to promote and safeguard fair access to HE for under-represented groups, in light of the introduction of variable tuition fees in 2006-07.

POLAR data:
Participation of Local Areas (POLAR) is a classification of small areas across the UK, available as a series of maps and data sets, showing the participation of young people in HE for geographical areas ranging from regions to census wards.

Primary data:
Data collected by a researcher specifically for a research project.

The Progression Matrix:
The Progression Matrix is a model and visual planning tool that provides a framework for the diagnosis of progression needs, as well as for the planning, delivery and review of progression support activities at individual, organisation and partnership levels. It is based on a conceptualisation of the factors that, together, cause cumulative progression. These determinants are presented as a general theory in the form of an equation: aspiration + awareness + attainment = progression.
Qualitative data:
Data consisting of the experiences of individuals from their perspective, usually with less emphasis on numbers or statistical analysis. Consultations are more likely to yield qualitative rather than quantitative data.

Quantitative data:
Data consisting of numbers, typically derived from either a population in general or samples of that population. This information is often analysed using either descriptive statistics, which consider general profiles, distributions and trends in the data, or inferential statistics, which are used to determine ‘significance’, either in relationships or differences in the data.

Secondary analysis:
Reanalysis of data by researchers who typically were not involved in the original data collection or analysis. Such data are often acquired from data archives.

Summative evaluation:
Retrospective evaluation of a public measure, conducted upon or after the stabilisation of the programme (‘mid-term’) or its completion (‘ex-post’), for the benefit of some external audience or decision-maker.

Surveys:
Research methods used by researchers to collect data. They may be either quantitative or qualitative in focus, or a mixture of the two.

UCAS:
The central organisation that processes applications for full-time undergraduate courses at UK universities and colleges.

UCAS Apply:
The name of the application process service for those intending to become undergraduates in HE.

Unistats:
Unistats is the official site that allows you to search for and compare data and information on university and college courses from across the UK. The site draws together comparable information on those areas that students have identified as important in making decisions about what and where to study. The information is presented as a Key Information Set, which can be found on the Overview tab for each course.

University technical college (UTC):
A college for students aged 14 to 19 which specialises in technical studies and is sponsored by a university. UTCs offer full-time courses which combine practical and academic studies. Employers are involved in shaping the curriculum.

Widening participation (WP):
Increasing the number of students in universities and colleges who come from under-represented social groups. Examples of such groups are: looked-after children, children from families with no experience of HE, children from working-class backgrounds or from LPNs. WP inevitably relates to fair access and therefore social mobility, particularly where universities and subject choices are over-subscribed.
Widening Participation Strategic Assessment and Strategic Statement (WPSA and WPSS): Documents that HEFCE asks all universities and some further education colleges offering HE to produce. The WPSA shows the financial commitment of the organisation to WP and details of activities undertaken, and have been produced up to 2010-11. In future HEFCE will request WPSSs.
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Kingston University
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham
OFFA
Sheffield College
St Angela’s Ursuline School
St Mary’s University College
The Open University
UCAS
University of Birmingham
University of Bristol
University of Cumbria
University of Derby
University of Greenwich
University of Leicester
University of Sussex
Acronyms

ASDAN  Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network
BERA  British Educational Research Association
CEIAG  Careers education, information, advice and guidance
CURDS  Centre for Urban and Regional Development Studies
DBIS  Department for Business, Innovation and Skills
DCLG  Department for Communities and Local Government
DfE  Department for Education
DfES  Department for Education and Skills
EBLO  Education Business Link Organisation
EFA  Education Funding Agency
FE  Further education
FFT  The Fischer Family Trust
FSM  Free school meal
GLA  Greater London Authority
HE  Higher education
HEFCE  Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI  Higher education institution
HEPF  Higher Education Progression Framework
HESA  Higher Education Statistics Agency
IAG  Information, advice and guidance
IMD  Index of multiple deprivation
IMRaD  Introduction, methods, results discussion
ITT  Initial teacher training
LLN  Lifelong Learning Network
LPN  Low participation neighbourhood
LSC  Learning and Skills Council
MAT  Multi-agency team
NEETS  Not in education, employment or training
NS-SEC  National Statistics Socio-Economic Classification
OFFA  Office for Fair Access
POLAR  Participation of Local Areas
SEN  Special educational needs
SFA  Skills Funding Agency
SMART  Specific, measureable, attainable, relevant and timely
SSCLLN  Skills for Sustainable Communities Lifelong Learning Network
STEM  Science, Technology, Engineering And Maths
STEMNET  Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Network
UPN  Unique pupil number
UTC  University Technical Colleges
WASRS  Widening Access and Student Retention and Success
WP  Widening participation
WPSA  Widening Participation Strategic Assessment
WPSS  Widening Participation Strategic Statement

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