



Access to Excellence

WADHAM COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Impact Report

JANUARY 2017

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This report is produced in collaboration with The Bridge Group to provide an overview of Wadham College’s access activities and a summary of 2015/2016 outcomes.

Foreword from the Warden

Our vision is that Wadham will become a beacon for fair access in higher education. Working in close partnership with the University of Oxford and other partners, the College will be living proof that fairness in education is not about lowering standards.

With a student body among the most diverse in the University, Wadham has at its core the aim of demonstrating that fair access, international reach and academic excellence are objectives that are not in conflict, but are on the contrary, mutually dependent. This happens to accord with the priorities of the current government, but it is not a new focus for Wadham: fair access to education has been at the heart of the College's mission for hundreds of years, and we are determined that it should continue to be so far into the future. We want our College to play a full part in breaking down those barriers that stand between young people of shining talent and the full realisation of their intellectual potential.

Our strategy for realising fair access comprises two complementary strands.

Firstly, we continue to develop and expand our own access initiatives in our designated link regions, ensuring that our work is both effective and informed by the latest research. The College's access work depends on the generous financial backing of our alumni, and the wider support of the Wadham community, which has already enabled

us to expand our access programmes in ambitious ways. We are committed to ensuring that all our access work is evaluated robustly, in order to ensure that our programmes have the greatest possible impact.

Secondly, we hope to contribute to wider public understanding about how universities can help to mitigate deep-rooted inequalities in the education system. We aim to facilitate and contribute to the debate on what kinds of access work can most effectively inspire and help talented but disadvantaged young people to achieve their potential. We are hosting a series of high-profile events to provide a forum through which new research, including that arising from our own access work, can be shared and applied.

We are proud of what we have achieved so far and we have ambitious plans for the future. Wadham has a well-earned reputation as a pluralist, progressive, open institution, and we invite you to join us on the College's journey to become an international beacon for fair access.

Lord Macdonald of River Glaven Kt QC

“Universities have long served as drivers of social mobility, and they will need to continue to do so, and to do so with more energy and creativity if we are to redress societal inequality. Here at Oxford we are redoubling our efforts to ensure that the brightest and best students are able to study with us, regardless of background or personal circumstances.”

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Louise Richardson, University of Oxford

Context: The Policy Landscape

The College's efforts to widen access and support equal graduate outcomes do not operate in isolation; our work responds to the latest research and to the wider policy environment.

Socio-economic disadvantage is the most significant cause of inequality of access to higher education and the professions. The ambition to achieve increased social mobility in the UK is receiving increased attention from all quarters, and the latest research is uncovering both the nature of the challenge, and potential solutions. Most recently, this includes the development of the Higher Education and Research Bill, the Universities UK Social Mobility Advisory Group, and the significant work undertaken by the University of Oxford.

Inequalities associated with socio-economic background begin in early childhood, and continue throughout young people's educational careers. There is a strong correlation between higher levels of deprivation and lower attainment in school: only 33.3% of children eligible for free school meals attain 5 A*-C grades at GCSE, compared with 61.2% of other children. This entrenched inequality is one of the chief causes of the worryingly low rates of progress to higher education among the most disadvantaged pupils.

However, we also know that attainment in school is not the only factor affecting whether young people apply to Wadham, Oxford or university more generally. Many pupils from lower socio-economic backgrounds achieve the right grades, but nonetheless do not apply. The great majority of pupils who achieve three A-grades or better at A-Level are educated in state schools; but many such pupils do not even consider applying to top universities. This is due to a complex range

of cultural and other factors; some pupils have negative or discouraging perceptions of Oxford, and the application process can be perceived as off-puttingly complex. A recent survey by the Sutton Trust found that 43% of state secondary school teachers would rarely or never advise their bright pupils to apply to Oxford or Cambridge.

Undergraduate tuition fees have been shown to make a limited difference to pupils' choice of university. However this is not true at the postgraduate level, where the often astronomical expense of a further degree makes it effectively impossible for many students from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds to progress to Masters and research courses. As the first UK generation of full fee payers moves into research, there is a danger that postgraduate study will become the preserve of the wealthy. We are in the early stages of developing our outreach activity for postgraduate study, but donor support has already allowed us to make significant progress in this area. Wadham's graduate provision has more than doubled over the past three years, with 20% of our graduate students receiving a scholarship.

Finally, we know that getting into university, either for undergraduate or postgraduate degrees, is only part of the student journey. Graduate outcomes are being given increasing weight in debates and formal assessments concerned with quality and efficiency in higher education, and we are developing ways of helping students at the end of their undergraduate and graduate degrees, as they move on from Wadham into professional work.

“One of the most significant developments in the social mobility debate over the last decade has been the increased focus on graduate outcomes and progression into the professions. This has been matched by an increasing interest from employers in achieving greater diversity in recruitment, and a commercial need to seek a broader range of talent.”

The Bridge Group Report on Graduate Outcomes

Access and the University of Oxford

The University of Oxford has a dedicated outreach team, responsible for coordinating and delivering access and widening participation work with under-represented people across the UK. The team works in collaboration with colleges and departments across the University, whilst also maintaining and building key partnerships with external organisations. The UNIQ summer schools and the teachers' regional conferences are the two largest programmes the team delivers with support from the collegiate University.

The collegiate system at Oxford ensures that all regions and local authorities in England, Wales, and Northern Ireland have a designated link College for access purposes. Wadham's designated link regions include a large swathe of East London and the Essex borders (Islington, Hackney, Tower Hamlets, Redbridge, Havering, Barking and Dagenham), as well as Cambridgeshire, Bedfordshire, Luton and Milton Keynes. Wadham is the main "face" of Oxford access throughout these regions, which pose a wide variety of opportunities and challenges.

Wadham's outreach work is all planned, delivered and evaluated in close partnership with the University. The College assists with several programmes led by the central University (perhaps most notably the University's highly successful UNIQ summer schools), and supports colleagues from across the University by running events that regional link colleges are not able to cover.



“Wadham’s approach in supporting students from all backgrounds on their journey to graduate jobs and further study is to be commended. The College’s collaborative work with different partners is key to helping these young people reach their goals”.

Dr Samina Khan
Director, Undergraduate Admissions and Outreach, University of Oxford

Wadham College and Access to Excellence

For years, Wadham has been leading the way in terms of its outreach work, and today the College prides itself on having more than 70% of its students from state schools, which is one of the highest proportions of state school students in any Oxford college. Under the leadership of the illustrious Warden Maurice Bowra (1938-1970), the College pioneered access work before the term "access" was invented, and Bowra encouraged hundreds of talented students from state schools to test their luck by sitting the entrance exam.

This innovative approach paved the way for a consolidated and systematic programme reaching out to talented young applicants, wherever in the country they were, and the College has since developed one of the most advanced access operations in Oxford.

The College's comprehensive access strategy covers every step of the educational journey, from pre-16 schooling through to University graduation

and beyond. We have a particular commitment to the development of sustained interventions with disadvantaged but high-achieving school pupils; to collaboration with trusted external partners such as IntoUniversity; and to the inclusion of high-level academic content in all our outreach activity. Wadham has a long history of providing extensive pastoral and academic support to our students, and we are committed to continuing to support students from less advantaged backgrounds throughout their time at Oxford, and as they move on to their professional careers.

In close partnership with the University, Wadham is building on its pioneering activities in developing distinctive new models to engage talented students regardless of their backgrounds. We have devised a comprehensive five-step Access to Excellence programme to realise our vision to recruit the very best wherever they are to be found, and to nurture their talent during their time with us.

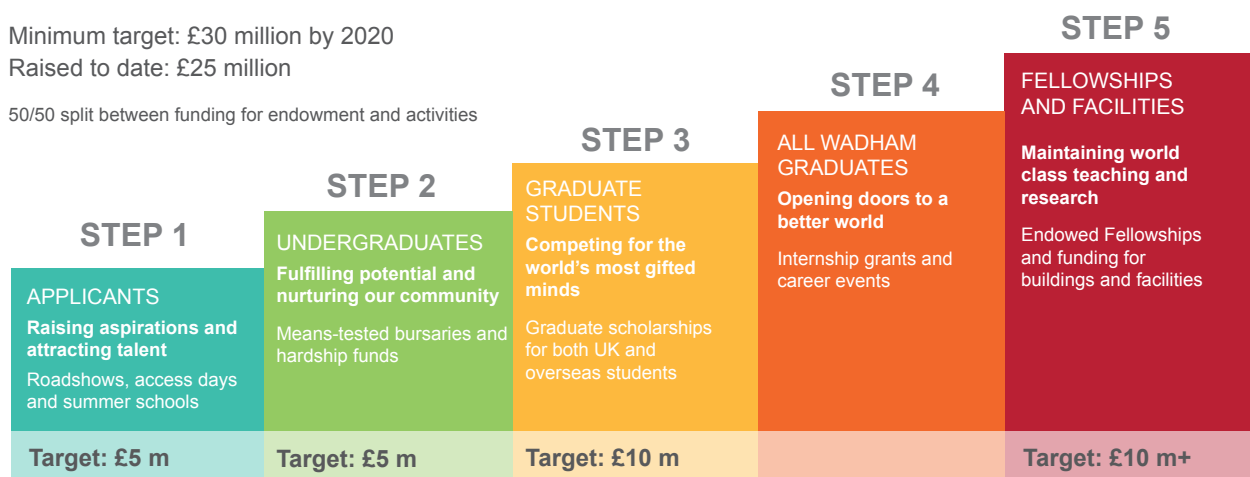
One distinctive strategy. Five bold steps.

Our Access to Excellence programme aims to support young people from the moment they consider university, through their undergraduate and graduate studies, and as they go out into the world to make a positive impact on society.

Minimum target: £30 million by 2020

Raised to date: £25 million

50/50 split between funding for endowment and activities



Access to Excellence
WADHAM COLLEGE

Undergraduate access to the College has naturally been the initial focus of our efforts, and this aspect of our work (Step 1) is the main focus of this report. However, Wadham's commitment to equality of access does not stop at outreach and admissions; it is central to the College's wider ethos, and pervades College

life at all levels. Our aim is to provide meaningful support for disadvantaged students throughout their entire educational journey at Wadham, not least by opening up opportunities for the College's graduates to embark on further studies, regardless of their background.

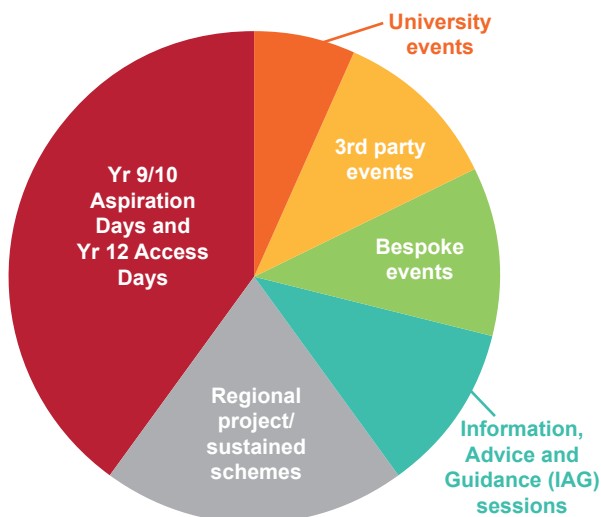
Wadham's Link Regions and Access Events

Access events and activities

In 2015/16, the College ran 130 access events, involving around 6,100 students from 188 different schools. This represents a tenfold increase since 2011 in the number of schools involved in our access events, and places us at the forefront of Oxford colleges in terms of engagement with our designated link regions. These link regions are: Barking & Dagenham, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Hackney, Havering, Islington, Luton, Milton Keynes, Newham, Redbridge, and Tower Hamlets.

Over the last two years in particular, the College has dramatically expanded our access work, thanks to the generous support of the alumni community. This has included increasing the capacity of the dedicated access team, whilst also engaging a greater number of College Fellows and students in the delivery of our activities. As a result of this, we are well on the way towards achieving our ambition to build strong relationships with all 200+ of our designated link schools and, in addition, to focus the most intensive activity on those students who will benefit most. We know from research that sustained contact with targeted groups of disadvantaged pupils is key to achieving maximum impact and the College balances this with breadth of provision across our link regions.

Wadham's access events fall into three groups: day-to-day events; larger, sustained projects; and collaborative activities with the University and other partners. The balance between different types of events is illustrated below, by the proportion of hours spent on each.



Proportion of time spent on different access activities

Schools involved

Of the 188 schools involved with Wadham's access work in 2015/16, the majority reside in the College's link regions.

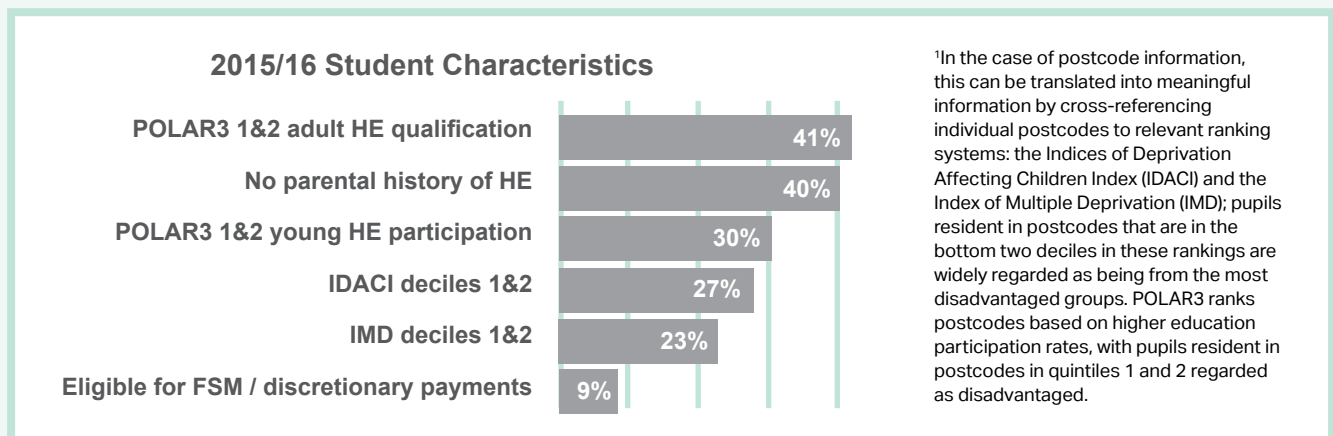


These link regions encompass a wide range of socio-economic contexts and challenges. Balancing access work evenly between inner-city London boroughs and more rural environments is challenging, but it is important to ensure that support and advice is provided to all schools with which the College is engaged. Of the 202 state schools in the 11 link local authority areas, 69 (34%) are in communities ranked in the 20% most deprived areas of the UK (in deciles 1 and 2 of the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)); in 2015/16 Wadham worked with 41 of these schools (59%). The more rural areas of Bedfordshire and Cambridgeshire, along with London boroughs further away from the city centre like Havering, have fewer schools located in areas of high deprivation. They do, however, have their own access issues with Havering, for instance, having extremely low progression rates of students into higher education.

REGION	NUMBER OF SCHOOLS INVOLVED	TOTAL NUMBER OF STATE SCHOOLS WITH ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS	% OF STATE SCHOOLS WITH ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS INVOLVED WITH EVENTS
BARKING & DAGENHAM	9	11	82%
BEDFORDSHIRE	16	23	70%
CAMBRIDGESHIRE	12	33	36%
HACKNEY	14	17	83%
HAVERING	14	20	70%
ISLINGTON	5	12	42%
LUTON	9	13	69%
MILTON KEYNES	10	13	77%
NEWHAM	13	22	59%
REDBRIDGE	16	18	89%
TOWER HAMLETS	14	20	70%
TOTAL LINK REGIONS	132	202	65%
OTHER REGIONS/PRIMARY SCHOOLS	56		
TOTAL SCHOOLS	188		

Pupil characteristics

In 2015/16, the College prioritised collecting student data in order to improve its targeting methods and to evaluate the characteristics of the pupils engaged. In line with good practice across the sector, pupil data focusses on postcode, parental history of higher education (HE), eligibility for free school meals (FSM), and post-16 bursary eligibility. The proportions of pupils from more disadvantaged backgrounds are outlined below¹.



Benchmarking against previous years is not possible, since this detailed data was not collected in 2014/15. The main purpose of capturing this data in 2015/16 was to understand the backgrounds of the students who are often selected by schools to attend events, and to enable benchmarking in future years.

From this year's analysis, almost half of students who took part in the College's access events had no parental history of higher education. The team will monitor the relatively low proportion of students involved who were eligible for FSM or were in receipt of discretionary payments in 2016/17. We are encouraged that we are working with the right group of students; the profile of pupils who are engaged in

the College's more intensive, sustained programmes (including both the Luton and Newham projects, described below) is more disadvantaged than the aggregate data outlined above.

In addition to the data collected above, around 1,000 students have been added to the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) database; this national dataset will allow the College to track student progression to university study in the future, and monitor longer-term impact. This is clearly essential to determine impact on pupil behaviour and results (referring to our evaluation approach, below). For the College's sustained projects, additional bespoke pupil tracking will be undertaken.

Approach to Evaluation

There has been significant research on what kinds of access programmes are most likely to have a positive impact, and we hope to contribute directly to this through robust evaluation of our own activities. We have introduced a rigorous evaluation framework, which includes qualitative and quantitative aspects, to enable the College to:

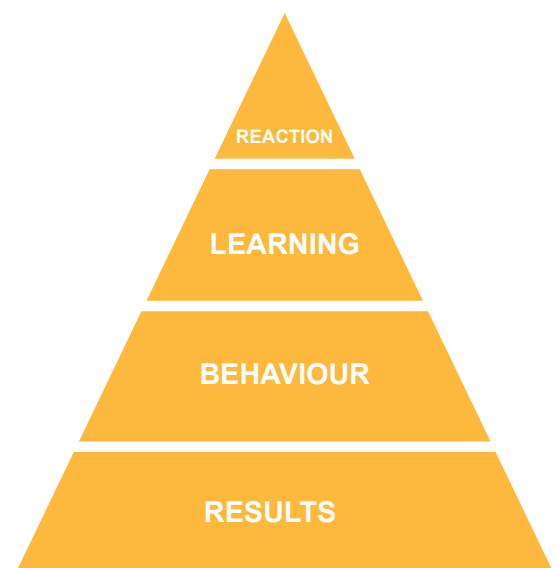
- Understand better the overall impact of the College’s outreach activity, and to identify areas in which we should be targeting our efforts;
- Provide robust evidence of impact to our supporters, and to have confidence in directing benefactors’ support to achieve the greatest impact;
- Develop an evidence base to share with the wider Oxford community, and throughout the higher education sector.

Colleagues from across the College contributed to an interim report from The Bridge Group in May 2016, which outlined several ways to strengthen our work in this area. As a result, we have fine-tuned our targeting of groups of under-represented students, and have expanded our programmes that involve sustained contact with disadvantaged pupils. We will continue to ensure that engagement with academic content is at the heart of our access work, and are exploring ways to complement face-to-face activity with online engagement.

We have also integrated evaluation throughout all our outreach programming. This initially involved defining clearer outcomes for each area of our access work, which then informed an evaluation strategy to identify the extent to which these are achieved. This strategy includes seeking teachers’ feedback and longitudinal tracking of pupils.

Our evaluation is based on the Kirkpatrick model of impact, which measures pupil impact in four areas: initial reaction to engagement; new learning acquired; changes in behaviour; and changes in results. Impact in these areas is being measured using a variety of qualitative and quantitative tools, including tracking pupils, feedback surveys and focus groups, and by accessing national benchmarking data. Naturally, evidence relating to behaviour and results can only be captured over a longer period (primarily through tracking pupils), but we already have some compelling evidence in relation to the College’s impact on pupils’ reactions and learning. We will continue to build on this evidence in the years to come, identifying our impact on pupil behaviour and results.

How participants feel about their experience	Feedback forms, observing participants’ reactions, asking teachers
The increase in participants’ knowledge, skills, aspirations	Formal and informal assessments of knowledge and skills before / after the intervention(s), e.g. measuring levels of understanding about higher education, or the university specifically
How far learning is applied and results in personal change	Observation and interview of participants over time. Tracking pupils into university and beyond
How far the programme impacts on organisational or societal factors	Using local and national data sets to identify whether activities are shifting participation, especially within the institution, and the effects of this



Impact by Activity Type

The following outline of Wadham's access programmes is not exhaustive, but rather highlights a few key areas of the College's work. Our evaluation of these programmes has thus far focussed primarily on pupils' reaction to the College's activities and their learning, since we have not yet evaluated the programmes for long enough to determine impact according to final educational outcomes. In addition to the events below, Wadham also runs an annual access roadshow focussed on our link regions, regular Information, Advice and Guidance sessions with pupils from Year 7 to Year 13 (aged 11-18), and a range of activity with third parties including the Brilliant Club and IntoUniversity.

Day Events for Sixth Form Pupils

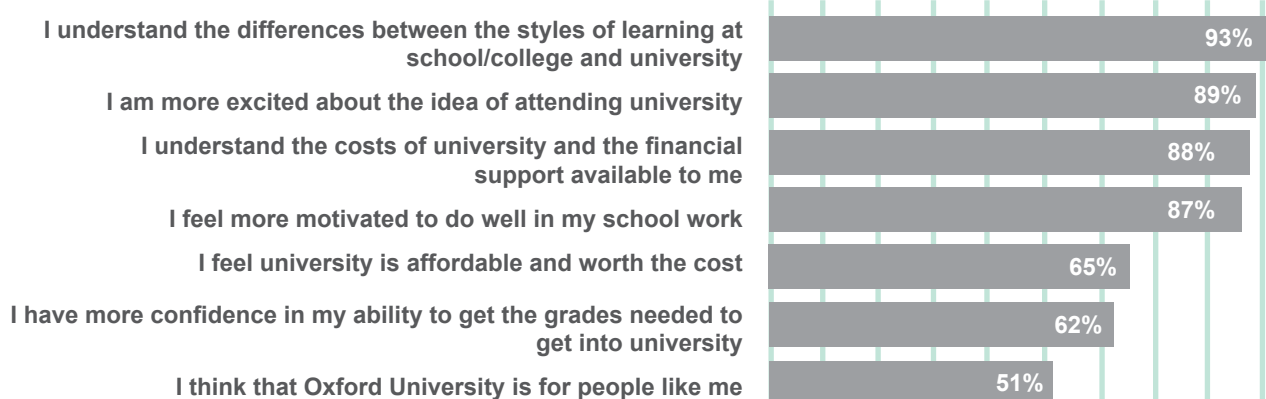
Day-to-day events take place throughout the academic year; they are open to all of Wadham's link state schools, and form the core of our outreach work. They consist of both inbound visits to the College and outbound visits to schools, and are designed to encourage students who may already be thinking about applying to university to consider Russell Group institutions, along with Oxford University and Wadham College. During these visits, Year 12 students (aged 16-17) have an Information, Advice, and Guidance talk, and go to an academic taster session run by Wadham tutors and graduate students – titles of these sessions include: 'History from Coins' or 'Basic brain surgery: It's not rocket science!' The students then have the opportunity to meet current Wadham undergraduates and have a tour of the College.

In pre-event questionnaires, of the 350 Year 12 students who visited the College, many felt they were intending to apply to university in the future (95%), but did not feel confident that they would 'fit in' at university (generally, as opposed to Oxford specifically - 61%) or were not considering applying to Oxford University (50%). Only 23% felt that they would 'fit in' at Oxford itself prior to taking part.

Having participated in the day events, 88% subsequently felt that they understood the costs of university and the financial support available (49% pre-event); 79% felt more confident that they would 'fit in' at university (61% pre-event) and 89% were more excited about the idea of attending university.

“Really insightful culture, very friendly staff... the day was well planned and really informative...I really enjoyed it and I am thinking of applying to Wadham”

Year 12 Access Day Post-Event Feedback (% Strongly Agree / Agree)



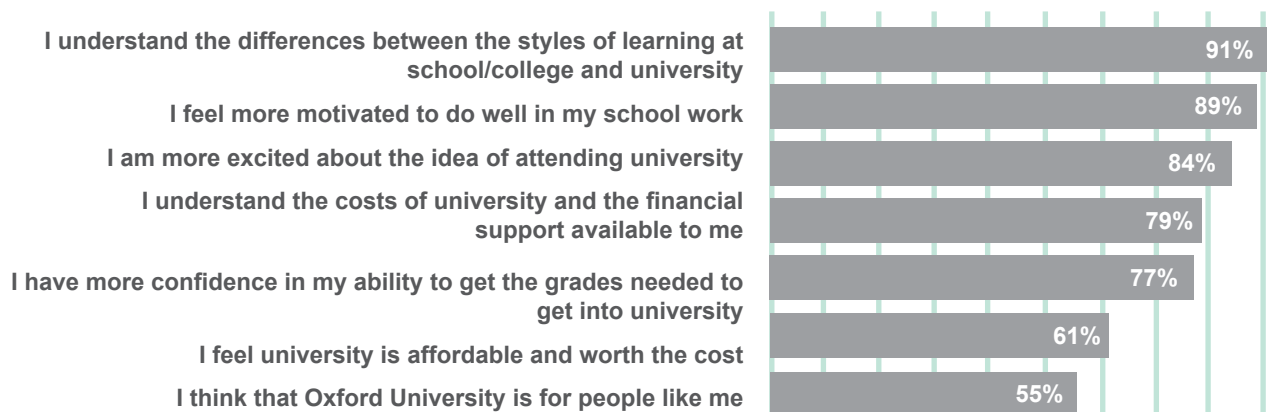
GCSE Aspiration Days

In addition to visits for Year 12 students, the College ran 20 GCSE Aspiration Days in 2015/16, involving 500 students (aged 13-15) from 33 different schools. The events took a similar form to the day events for sixth formers with participants attending a higher education information talk from a member of the access team, an academic taster session, and having the opportunity to meet undergraduate students. They also visited one of the University's stimulating museums at the end of the trip. These events were targeted towards schools in more disadvantaged areas. Prior to attendance, only 37% felt that they knew a lot about university, including the costs and how students apply, though the majority felt that they understood their options beyond GCSEs (70%).

As illustrated below, after taking part, 90% of attendees felt more motivated to do well in their schoolwork; 81% felt that they knew where to go for more information about university (41% pre-event); and 79% agreed that they understood the costs of university and the financial support available to them (39% pre-event).

In addition, before taking part in the event, a general concern from the students was that the University may not be for people 'like them' with only 41% agreeing or strongly agreeing that they would 'fit in' at Oxford. Following the event, 55% felt this way; understanding the perceptions underlying this data will be important for the College, to help develop activities that aim to further break down perceptions that pupils would not fit in at the University.

GCSE Access Day Post-Event Feedback (% Strongly Agree / Agree)



Luton Project

In consultation with the University, and in consideration of broader research, the College has begun to invest significantly in programmes that engage with pupils early, and over a sustained period. The Luton Project is our flagship pre-16 sustained programme, which we would like to expand, and develop in other regions. This project is based on a Year 12 sustained scheme that the College has been running at Newham Sixth Form College for the past 4 years.

The programme itself is designed to raise the aspirations of Year 10 pupils in Luton (aged 14-15) and to encourage them to think about applying to a 'top university' in the future. Wadham provides sustained support to these students in order to ensure that they can put themselves in a strong position once they complete their GCSEs.

“As the first person in my family to go to University, I am very aware of how education can transform the direction your life can take, and the opportunities it can provide. It would be a shame if able students were to be denied this simply by not being aware of what tertiary education involves and what it can offer. Oxford wants the best, regardless of background - I would like to think these events do their bit to spread that message.”

Dr Simon Yarrow (Medicine lecturer, Wadham)

The College launched the pilot project at Cardinal Newman School, Luton, in October 2015, and parents and interested pupils were invited by schools to hear more about the project. Following the launch, students were asked to apply for places. The 24 students selected then attended academic taster sessions after school in Luton, visited the College for a day trip, and completed a summer project in Year 10. The academic taster sessions were a particular highlight and involved subjects as diverse as Classics, Theology, Materials Science, and Medieval Languages. Support currently continues in Year 11, with the students due to take part in an A Level choices session, a study skills workshop, and a residential programme at Wadham in 2016/17.

“I mostly enjoyed learning about new subjects we don’t learn at school. I also enjoyed the research involved in the homework. Skills I have learnt include organising my time; more social skills; ability to learn and retain information; adapting to new learning environments and teaching styles; speaking in front of people”

Muskaan from Cardinal Newman School



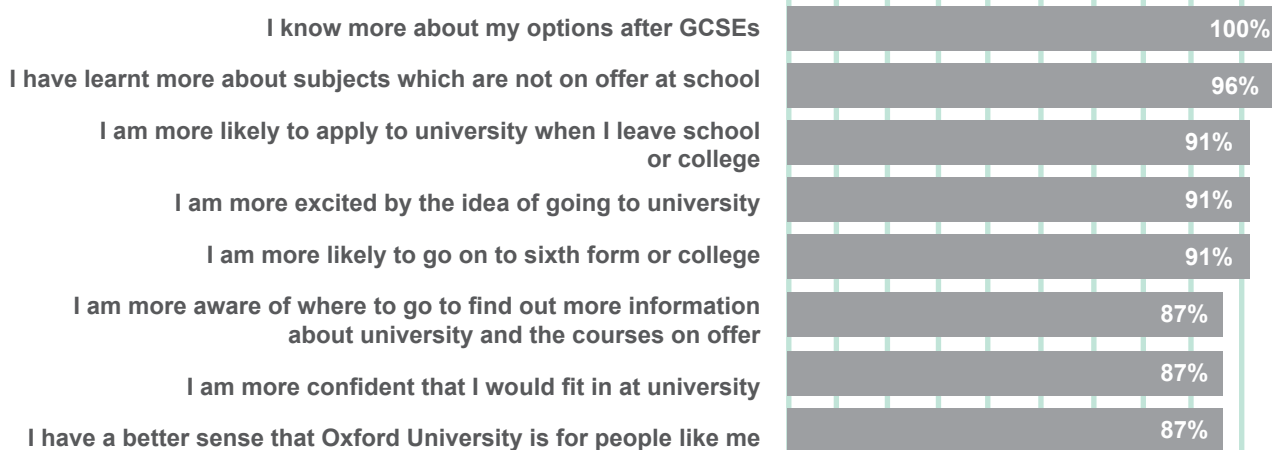
“I have learnt to be more confident with presenting and to be more independent”

Rohan from Stopsley High School

As a pilot pre-16 project, ensuring that a robust system of targeting was in place in 2015/16 was crucial. At the end of the first year of the scheme, the feedback has been promising:

- All participants felt that, because of the programme, they knew more about their options after GCSEs, showing a significant increase in knowledge since their participation in the project.
- 91.3% agreed or strongly agreed that, because of the programme, they were more likely to apply to university – and were more excited by the idea of going to university.
- Feedback regarding student perceptions of Oxford is especially encouraging: 87% of the students involved had a better sense that Oxford University is for people ‘like them’ (almost a 50 percentage point increase from before the project).

Luton Project end of Year 10 questionnaire (% Strongly Agree / Agree)



Classics, Politics and Engineering Summer Schools



The College's commitment to delivering summer schools is based on evidence about the importance of these more intensive opportunities. Our existing academic summer schools, in Classics, Politics, and Engineering, would not have been possible without the invaluable support of our alumni, and the energy with which the College community has embraced their delivery. Our Engineering summer school is run under the aegis of the University's wider UNIQ summer schools programme, while the Politics and Classics summer schools are run entirely in-house.

The purpose of the summer schools is to give Year 12 students a realistic experience of university life, to provide intensive academic training in their chosen subject-area (focussed on areas beyond the A-level syllabus), and to provide subject-specific guidance to help prepare students for making strong applications to university. During the Classics and Politics summer schools, the participants attended seminars, workshops (or language classes), and lectures and took part in social activities in the evening with undergraduate mentors. Towards the end of the week, the students were also asked to submit an essay, which was marked by a tutor and was then discussed in a tutorial.

To assess impact, students applying for both summer schools were asked to answer a questionnaire on the application form before they took part, along with a feedback form at the end.

"I enjoyed it much more than I thought I would. I especially liked the tutorial system, talking to likeminded people and the varied topics studied. I thought the actual engineering course would not be to my interest, as I was told it was very theoretical. But the course structure when explained has changed my mind, and now interests me."

Before the students took part in the summer schools, nearly all were motivated to do well in their studies (100% for Politics and 89% for Classics), but fewer felt confident about getting into a 'top' university (68% for Politics and 67% for Classics) or about 'fitting in' at Oxford (68% for Politics and 45% for Classics).

The post-event feedback highlights some encouraging results regarding the effectiveness of these resource-intensive events. Students from both summer schools felt more excited about attending university, and felt that they had a greater understanding of the differences between the styles of learning at school and university. The latter point is a key aim of both subject-specific summer schools.

In addition, all the Classics participants felt that, because of the summer school, they were more likely to move away from home to attend university. This may be because, encouragingly, all of the participants also agreed or strongly agreed that they had a better sense that the University of Oxford was for people 'like them'. For the Politics participants, 90% felt that they were more likely to move away from home and 82% felt that Oxford was for them. Perhaps the most exciting outcome of the summer schools has been the large number of participants, all from low-income backgrounds, and most from black and ethnic minority groups, going on to make successful applications to Wadham and to Oxford more generally. For each of the four years that the Classics summer school has been running, at least one (and usually two) of the participants has gone on to make successful applications for Classics at Wadham, and many other participants have received offers to read Classics at other Oxford colleges. It is now clear that our summer schools are driving a major (and wholly positive) demographic change in the Wadham Classics intake, and we hope to be able to roll out our summer schools to other subject areas in due course.

Generous donor support has also enabled the College to drive a major expansion of the University's UNIQ programme (a programme of free summer schools at Oxford, exclusively for pupils from lower socio-economic groups). The size of the UNIQ summer school in Engineering has been doubled, with 24 Engineering summer school participants being fully funded and hosted by Wadham. During the 5-day residential, the Year 12 students completed lab work, attended lectures,

"I enjoyed having the opportunity to experience a tutorial and the chance to experience language classes – I don't feel so intimidated about learning a new language now."



Mariam from Hackney Community College

and had a tutorial; they also had the opportunity to speak with undergraduate Engineering students to hear more about the course and Oxford University life. As with the Classics and Politics summer schools, applications are highly competitive, and 345 applications were received in 2016 (up from 221 in the previous year). Feedback was very encouraging, with time spent in the labs and tutorials receiving the most positive feedback. As a result of the summer school, 23 of the 48 participants across the UNIQ Engineering summer school made applications to Oxford this academic year, with 7 receiving offers to study at the University.



"Some young people simply do not see themselves as the "Oxford type". There is of course no such thing, and it is intimate contact between the College and individual students that will spread this truth. Summer schools are an especially effective way of demonstrating that Oxford is for anyone with academic ability, regardless of their background. Attracting the brightest applicants from the widest pool of talent will only happen with this sort of intimate and sustained contact."

Dr Matthew Williams, Lecturer in Politics, Wadham College

Ambitions for the Future

It is hard to overstate the sheer pleasure and excitement that comes from the day-to-day delivery of Wadham's access schemes: who would not want to spend one's working week with some of the brightest young people in the country? And the rewards of successful access work are spectacular. The examples of Wadham Classics and the Engineering UNIQ summer school show very clearly how subject-specific access work, targeted at high-achieving students from disadvantaged backgrounds, can bring dramatic changes to the application profile of particular subjects at a college such as Wadham. In the last few years, Wadham Classics has undergone a far-reaching demographic transition, with a growing stream of academically outstanding candidates making their way from deprived backgrounds onto this traditionally rather socially exclusive course; this massive shift is demonstrably the direct result of an early focus on Classics in Wadham's access schemes. Similarly, our sustained Pre-16 scheme in Luton vividly demonstrates the potential rewards of intense and focussed work with younger age-groups: we are excited to discover how our Luton course participants perform at GCSE this summer. Beyond helping to address inequalities, we know that increased diversity in the student body has a positive impact on the educational experience; multiplicity of perspective in approaching academic study is of benefit to all.

Nonetheless, Classics, Engineering and Politics are only three subjects among eighteen at Wadham, and Luton is only one link region among eleven: we have ambitious plans to scale up our subject-specific and sustained access programmes, donor funding permitting. For us to see a Classics-style demographic impact across

the College as a whole will require a long-term commitment to expanding our subject-specific programmes far beyond Classics, Politics and Engineering. Similarly, if we want to make a significant impact on the educational trajectories of brilliant but underprivileged pre-16 pupils in all of our designated link regions, we will soon have to turn our eyes beyond Luton. Economies (or rather inefficiencies) of scale will soon start to kick in, and we are actively exploring ways of making more use of digital resources (social media, online short courses) in our access work. Robust evaluation of our access programmes will continue to be critical, and we look forward to drawing on and learning from the experiences of our colleagues in other universities, at other Oxford colleges, and in the charitable and third-party sectors.

Four hundred years ago, Nicholas and Dorothy Wadham had the idea that the College founded by their legacy should leave 'every man free to profess what he liked, as it should please God to direct him'. This is not the idiom in which we would express our educational mission today; but we are proud to maintain the liberal and progressive ideals upon which the College was founded. Entrenched educational inequalities, and the social immobility that results, are profoundly damaging to our society as a whole: we simply cannot afford to throw away talent, wherever it may be found. This is what Wadham's Access to Excellence programme is all about.

We hope very much you will join us on this journey, and we look forward to working with you all in future.

Note of thanks

The continued growth and success of the College's access work is testament to the work of the College's access team, but also to our wide range of contributors, partners and supporters.

This naturally includes the College community, including students, academic colleagues and support staff. And, as ever, we are indebted to our wide range of philanthropic supporters, including the College's alumni; the ambition and scale of our work is only possible with their generous support.

We are also grateful to the University for its encouragement and collaboration, and to our external partners, and we look forward to developing these important relationships in the years to come.

Julie Christiane Hage

Fellow and Development Director

E: julie.hage@wadh.ox.ac.uk

Marco Zhang

Deputy Development Director

E: marco.zhang@wadh.ox.ac.uk

Julia Banfield

Head of Communications

E: julia.banfield@wadh.ox.ac.uk

Wadham College
University of Oxford
Parks Road
Oxford OX1 3PN

T +44 (0)1865 277 970

www.wadham.ox.ac.uk/alumni