



Evaluating & Researching University  
Participation Interventions

## Admissions, choice & student diversity

Friday 17 January 2020

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# Elitism in Higher Education

In the UK, a small number of schools dominate access to Oxford and Cambridge (often referred to collectively as Oxbridge), with just 8 top schools and colleges in the UK sending as many pupils to Oxbridge as 2,900 others put together

## Elitist Britain Sutton Trust 2019



**The University of  
Nottingham**

UNITED KINGDOM • CHINA • MALAYSIA

Around half of UK secondary schools and colleges did not provide any applicants to medicine over the 3-year study period. A substantial majority (80%) of medicine applicants came from around only 20% of schools or colleges: these were more likely to be selective schools (grammar or independent) or large sixth form colleges

**MEDICAL SCHOOLS COUNCIL: SELECTING FOR EXCELLENCE**

## Regulatory advice 6

### How to prepare your access and participation plan

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120. The three stages of the whole student lifecycle are access, success and progression.... Activities, and therefore outcomes of those activities, often span some or all of these stages, which are briefly described below:

- **Access** – relates to outreach with schools, **prior attainment activities**, work with employers, other education providers and regional skills associations. Strategic relationships and collaboration are important considerations for this lifecycle stage
- **Success** – relates to addressing the barriers that prevent underrepresented students from continuing and therefore succeeding in higher education. It is concerned with supporting students to continue their studies and **eliminating gaps in attainment between different groups of students**

- **The OfS's targets in full are to:**

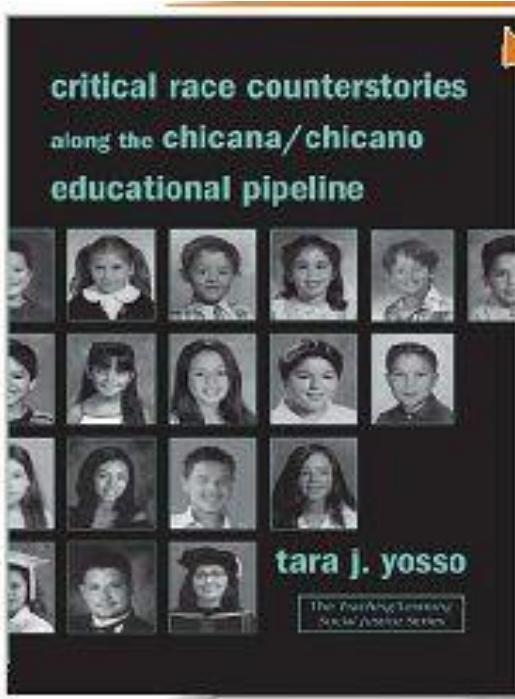
- eliminate the gap in entry rates at universities with the highest entry requirements between the most and least represented groups by 2038-39, reducing the ratio in entry rates for POLAR4 quintile 5: quintile 1 students from 5.1:1 in 2016-17 to 2.8:1 by 2024-25 (see [more information on POLAR4](#))
- eliminate the unexplained gap in non-continuation between the most and least represented groups by 2024-25, and to eliminate the gap entirely by 2030-31
- eliminate the unexplained gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between white students and black students by 2024-25, and to eliminate the gap entirely by 2030-31
- eliminate the gap in degree outcomes (1sts or 2:1s) between disabled students and non-disabled students by 2024-25.

# The NERUPI Framework

SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC CAPITAL		HABITUS	SKILLS CAPITAL	INTELLECTUAL & SUBJECT CAPITAL
PROGRESSION CURRICULUM		STUDENT IDENTITIES	SKILLS CURRICULUM	KNOWLEDGE CURRICULUM
KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND
Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education	Develop students' capacity to navigate Higher Education sector and make informed choices	Develop students' confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenges of university life	Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment	Develop students' understanding by contextualising subject knowledge



# NERUPI: Key theoretical influences



Bourdieu's capitals, habitus and field

Freire's notion of 'praxis'

Young and Maton's ideas of knowledge

Nancy Fraser social justice

Sen and Walker's concepts of capability

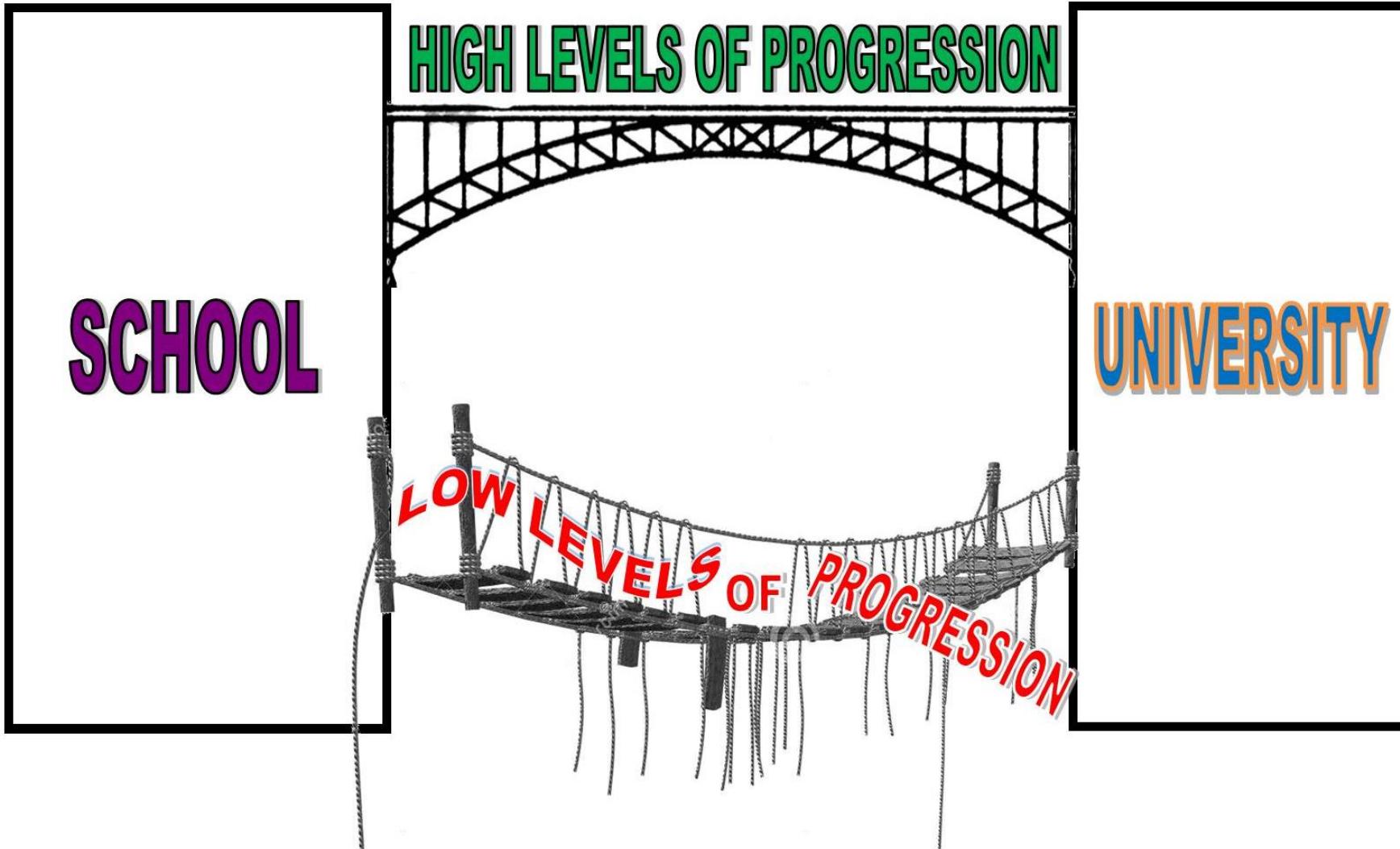
Yosso cultural wealths

Identities and future selves

Critical pedagogies



# Progression to HE



# Access to Higher Education

## Contingent choosers

**finance a key concern, no background of HE, some forms of support not available, difficult to access information**

## Embedded choosers

**finance not a problem, expected to go on to university, extensive support, easy access to information, ethnic mix not an issue**



*Resource differences and collective efforts and investments made or not within families become translated into individual 'ability'..... (Ball 2010, p.162).*

# Bourdieu's Theories

## Bourdieu – Field, Capitals and Habitus

- Cultural model of Widening Participation that locates interventions within a context or **field** of engagement
- **Capitals:** economic, cultural or social which impact on opportunities to engage with education, careers etc.
- **Habitus:** cultural identity& dispositions related to family & community

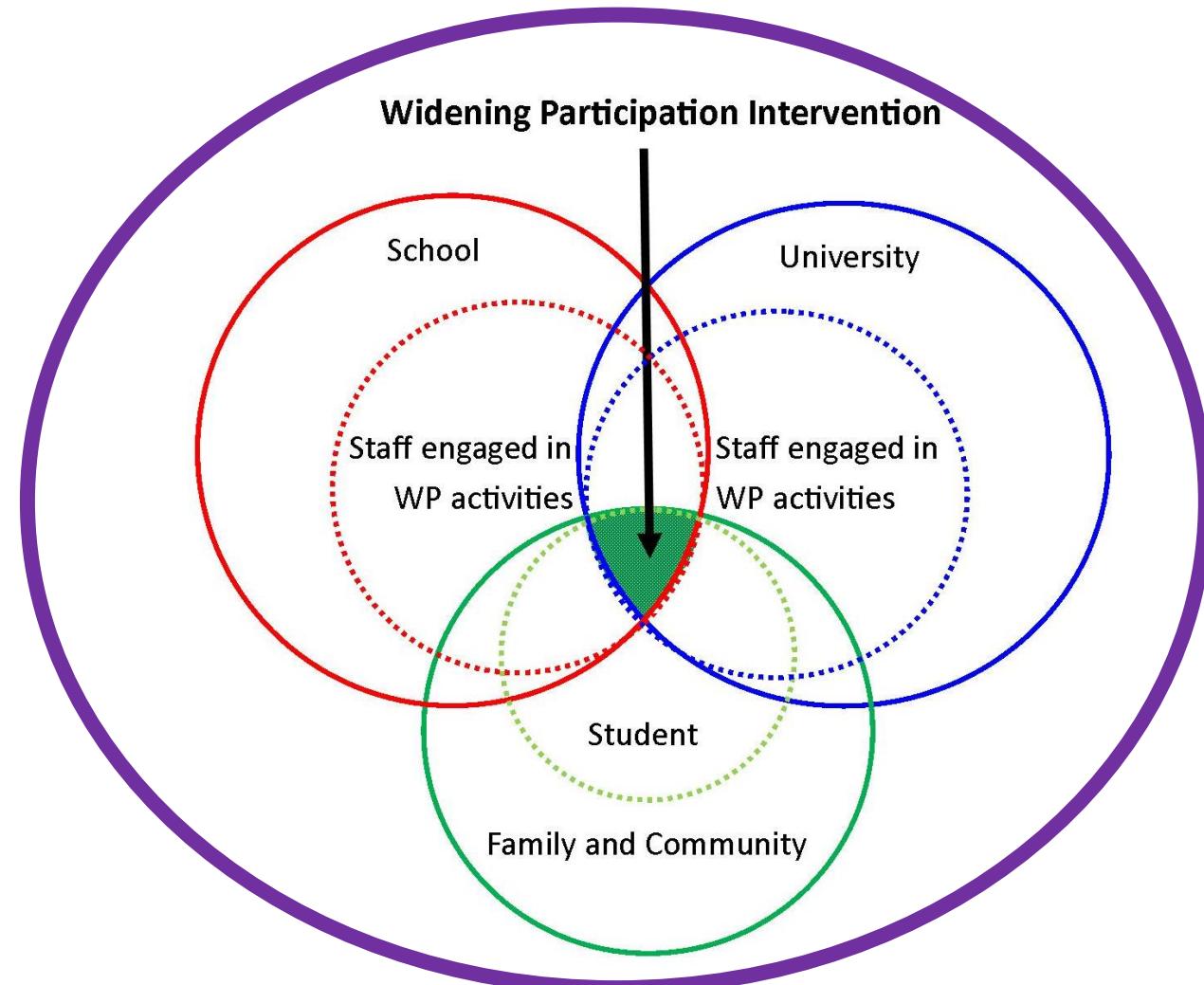
Theoretical basis for a great deal of academic research into widening participation e.g Professor Diane Reay,

# The field of HE progression

field



Rules of the game

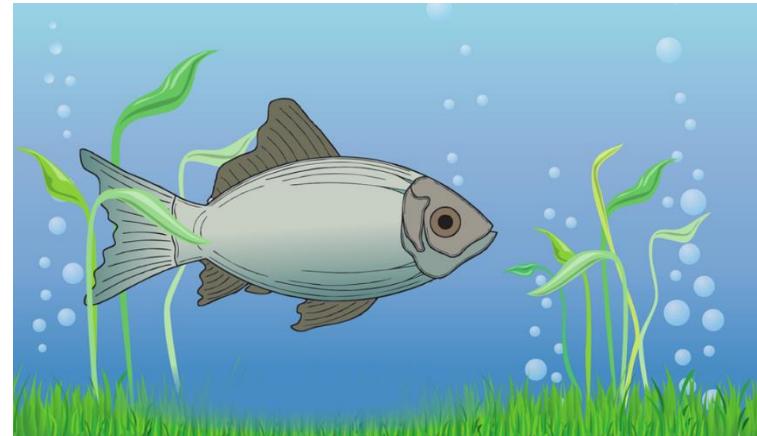


# Contingent and embedded choosers

**Raj**

*I was thinking, I don't, like fit into this whole university thing, to be honest. And are, are, they all the same, are they all like this? Why did I even think I would fit in here People like me don't fit into places like this. Why did nobody tell me? I cant believe this. What am I even doing here?*

fish in water ?



habitus

# The NERUPI Framework

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# Aim 1 Level 2: Objective & learning outcome

<b>Aim 1</b> <b>KNOW</b>	<b>Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment</b>	
<b>Level 2 (age 14–16)</b>	<b>Top-level objective</b>	<b>Explore academic, social, economic and personal benefits of progressing to higher education</b>
	Objectives or learning outcomes	Discover academic and social benefits of higher education
		Understand economic benefits of higher education and career opportunities for graduates
		Explore benefits of higher education in terms of personal development and cultural enrichment
		Discover study and research opportunities in higher education

# Aim 1 Level 3: Objective & learning outcome

Aim 1 <b>KNOW</b>	<b>Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment</b>	
<b>Level 3 (age 16–18)</b>	<b>Top-level objective</b>	<b>Investigate course &amp; placement options, and social &amp; leisure opportunities in higher education</b>
	Objectives or learning outcomes	Discover course and placement opportunities in higher education
		Find out about research areas, expertise and facilities in higher and new areas of development
		Explore social and leisure, and extra-curricular opportunities in higher education
		Discover career benefits of higher education and the employment opportunities for graduates.
		Find out about academic and information services, facilities and resources

# Aim 2 Level 2: Objective & learning outcome

<b>Aim 2 CHOOSE</b>	<b>Develop students' capacity to navigate higher education and graduate employment sectors and make informed choices</b>	
<b>Level 3 (age 16–18)</b>	<b>Top-level objective</b>	<b>Explore differences between higher education Institutions and study opportunities within subject areas</b>
	Objectives or learning outcomes	Distinguish between different types of higher education Institution
		Explore different types of university course and their entry requirements
		Explore university subject areas and the range of possible study opportunities
		Find out about student finance and additional financial support

# Aim 2 Level 3: Objective & learning outcome

<b>Aim 2 CHOOSE</b>	<b>Develop students' capacity to navigate higher education and graduate employment sectors and make informed choices</b>		
<b>Level 3 (age 16–18)</b>	<b>Top-level objective</b>	<b>Evaluate course, student finance &amp; graduate opportunities and make informed choices that align with personal interests and career aspirations</b>	
	Objectives or learning outcomes	Evaluate different types of higher education Institution in terms of personal interests and career aspirations	
		Compare degree courses and study options across a range of universities	
		Engage effectively with the UCAS process and generate and submit a strong university application	
		Compare student finance, budgeting support and student employment opportunities across a range of universities	

# Level 3 Aims & Objectives

<b>Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment</b>	<b>Investigate course &amp; placement options, and social &amp; leisure opportunities in higher education</b>
<b>Develop students' capacity to navigate higher education and graduate employment sectors and make informed choices</b>	<b>Evaluate course, student finance &amp; graduate opportunities and make informed choices that align with personal interests and career aspirations</b>
<b>Develop students' confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenge of university life and graduate progression</b>	<b>Anticipate challenges they will face in higher education and make a successful transition to university</b>
<b>Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment and successful graduate progression</b>	<b>Enhance academic skills that develop capacity for critical thinking, independent research and self-directed learning</b>
<b>Develop students' understanding by contextualising subject knowledge</b>	<b>Situate existing knowledge within wider fields of knowledge and apply to other contexts</b> <b>Situate existing knowledge &amp; interests within the context of university degree programmes and academic disciplines</b> <b>Access and experience appropriate attainment-raising interventions</b>

# Attainment-raising ‘outreach’ interventions

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1. Supplementing school/college provision: facilities, shortage subject teaching
2. Enhancing the school/college curriculum and building subject capital
  - contextualising school knowledge
  - linking to other subjects
  - active learning approaches, group work, projects
  - links to higher & further education and employment
3. Working in partnership with schools & colleges in the classroom
4. Supporting a whole-institution initiatives e.g. raising-attainment in maths

# Residential Summer School: attainment-raising

