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Creating aspiration through  
Information, advice and guidance

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Action on Access

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# Higher Education and School Partnerships Conference 25<sup>th</sup> May 2010 ‘Creating aspiration through Information, advice and guidance’

Phil Harley – Lead Adviser Schools: Action on  
Access

# Why encourage aspiration to higher education

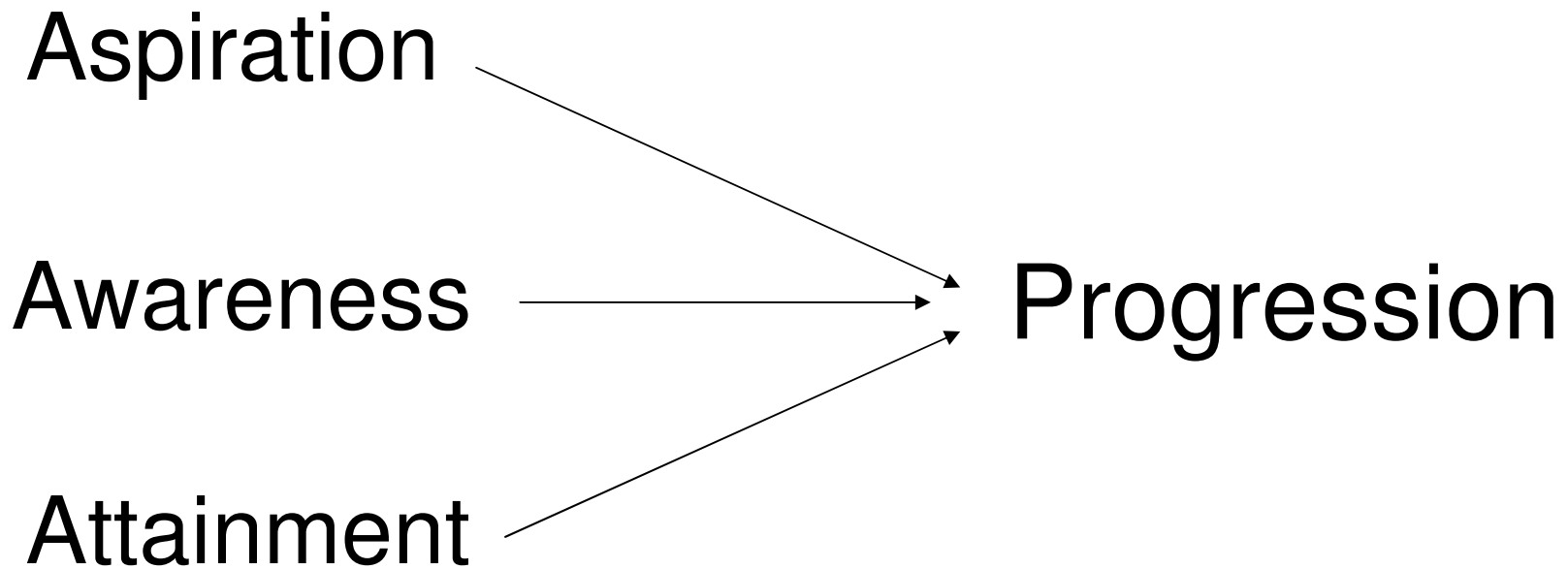


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- To improve social mobility
  - Those young people from low income backgrounds who come in the top 20% test results at age 11 are half as likely to attend university as those who have not
  - Life chances 3 times worse at 22 months!
- To support the economy and raise earning potential
- To change the social mix of some HEIs



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# Aspiration has



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- More young people want to go to university
  - 75% of year 7 pupils
  - Aspiration to enter HE higher in Aimhigher schools
- Schools have embraced Aimhigher
  - School culture is changing

# Improved awareness of HE



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## Success of Aimhigher & WP Initiatives

- Awareness raising starting earlier at primary level
- HE IAG sessions
- University campus visits
- Student Ambassadors
- Masterclasses
- Mentoring e.g. Aimhigher Associates
- Supporting the curriculum
- Staff development
- Progression Pathways information
- Summer schools

Type of activity	Number of activities provided	Number of beneficiaries
Campus Visits	3332	114682
Mentoring	10190	40462
Master classes	3826	134152
Student Ambassadors	2978	74810
IAG	5941	499860
Healthcare	1388	46166
Staff development	764	7718
Work Based Learning	635	5077
Work with disabled learners	62	1592
Working with learners in care	53	425
Working with primary schools	46	1161
Working with parents	26	9935
<b>Total</b>	<b>29241</b>	<b>936040</b>

# The Higher Education Progression Framework



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- Creates a coherent journey within flexible structures
- Based around learner outcomes
- Creates partnerships of quality and depth
- An Aimhigher curriculum map with multi-agency delivery
- At its best feeds into existing school frameworks e.g. CEG, ECM



# Increased attai



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- In schools with Aimhigher
  - attainment improved by 2.5 GCSE points over similar schools without Aimhigher, with an estimated 4.6% improvement in Key Stage 3 Maths,
  - for every 100 young people of average attainment there was around one additional university entrant,
  - young people with average attainment levels at Key Stage 4 were as likely to go to a high entrance requirement university as their counterparts in schools without Aimhigher

# Progressio



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Among 18-20 year-olds the gap in HE participation rates between those from higher and lower socio-economic classes reduced by 6% between 2002/03 and 2006/7

# Progression



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	Young People from disadvantaged neighbourhoods	Young People from advantaged neighbourhoods
Number of young people entering higher education	1 in 5	1 in 2
Increase in proportion entering higher education in the past 5 years	+ 30 per cent	+ 5 per cent
Increase in proportion entering higher education in the past 15 years	+ 50 per cent	+ 15 per cent

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# BUT



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- Young people from the 20% most advantaged homes in England were seven times more likely to get a place at the most selective universities than those in the poorest 40%.
  - The gulf has widened from 15 years ago, when the richest were six times more likely to get a place in the top third of universities
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# Why is this



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- Schools do not offer the subjects that 'elite' universities want, such as modern foreign languages or single sciences
- Students are sometimes influenced by a lack of good advice
- Options limited by choices made at 14

# With the resul



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- Youngsters from disadvantaged homes are disproportionately not applying to selective universities and so reducing their chances of upward social mobility
- The failure to improve social mobility perpetuates a two tier system

# What can we



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- Shift the emphasis from an awareness of HE in general terms to a specifically appropriate HE
- Earlier and more tailored IAG within a personalised curriculum
- Empower young people and parents to ask the right questions

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# And



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- Ask why some young people choose not to go to certain HEIs because it is not where they see themselves
  - Encourage selective HEIs to look at more flexible admissions processes
  - Change the language of exclusivity which demeans the achievements of many young people
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# There is a difference



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- Widening Participation
  - Giving targeted students from disadvantaged groups and backgrounds an appropriate experience of higher education
- Fair Access
  - Giving greater transparency in allowing students from less 'traditional' backgrounds into the 'top' often the Russell Group universities

## New minister Nick Gibb upsets teachers – already

Gibb is [reported to have told officials in the Department for Education](#) on Friday, the day after his appointment: "I would rather have a [physics](#) graduate from Oxbridge without a PGCE [teaching](#) in a school than a physics graduate from one of the rubbish universities with a PGCE."

# What of the fu



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- Squeeze on student numbers and funding
- Greater competition created by economic downturn
- Political uncertainty around the future of Aimhigher
- Higher fees could mean young people choosing courses on price rather than their own ability