

The image features a light blue background with a repeating pattern of the text "office for fair access" in a light, semi-transparent font. Overlaid on this background are two teal circles of different sizes. The larger circle is positioned in the lower right, and the smaller one is in the upper left. Both circles have a subtle drop shadow. The word "offa" is written in a large, white, lowercase, sans-serif font inside the larger teal circle.

offa

office for fair access

# **Professor Les Ebdon CBE**

**Director of Fair Access to Higher  
Education**

# OFFA's changing focus

---

- Greater challenge
- Greater support
- Joint strategy with HEFCE
- **Emphasis on outcomes  
(access and retention/student success)**
- Evaluation
- Outreach
- Student involvement
- Equality and diversity

# The importance of student success

---

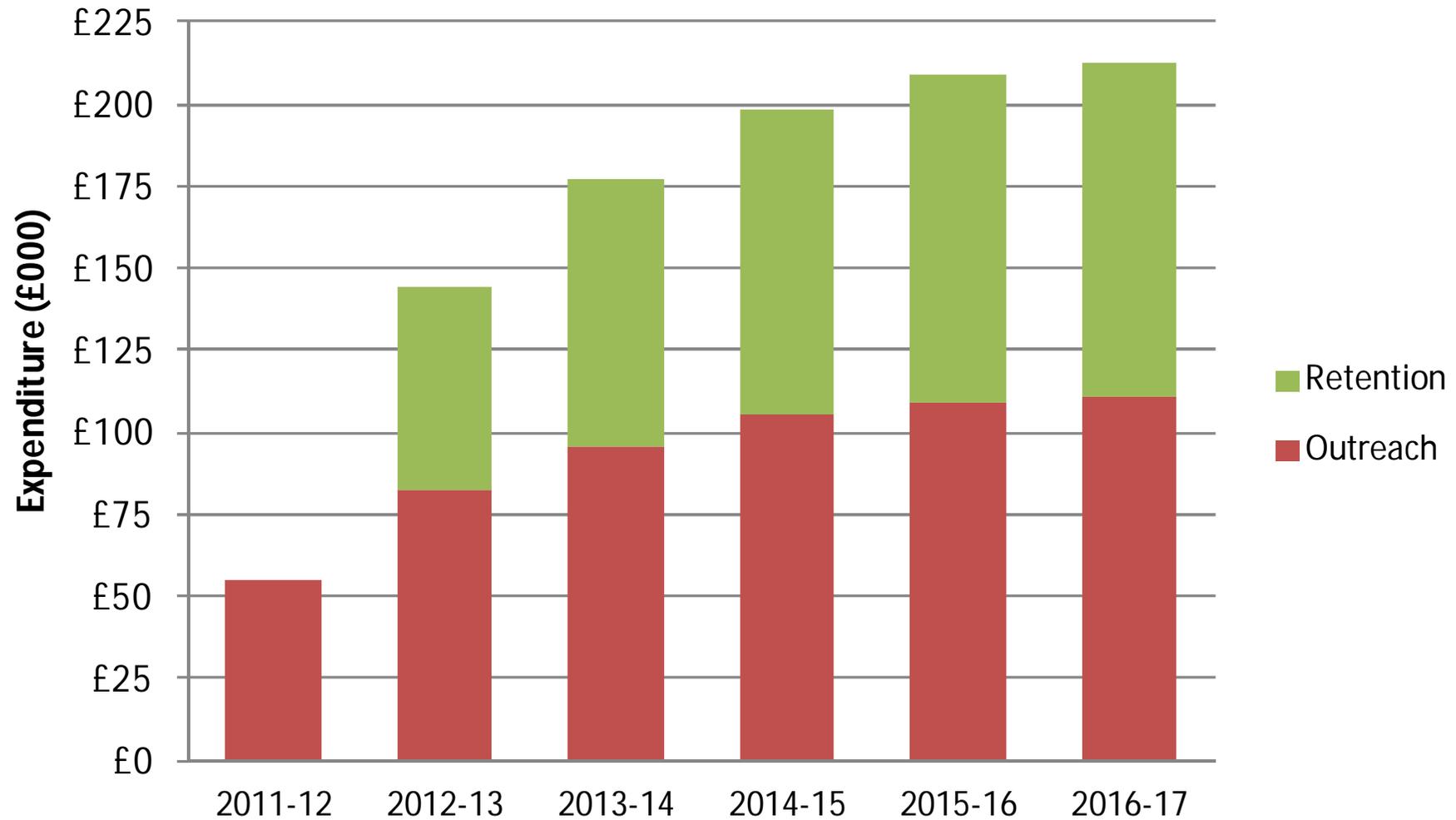


**“Access without support is not opportunity”**

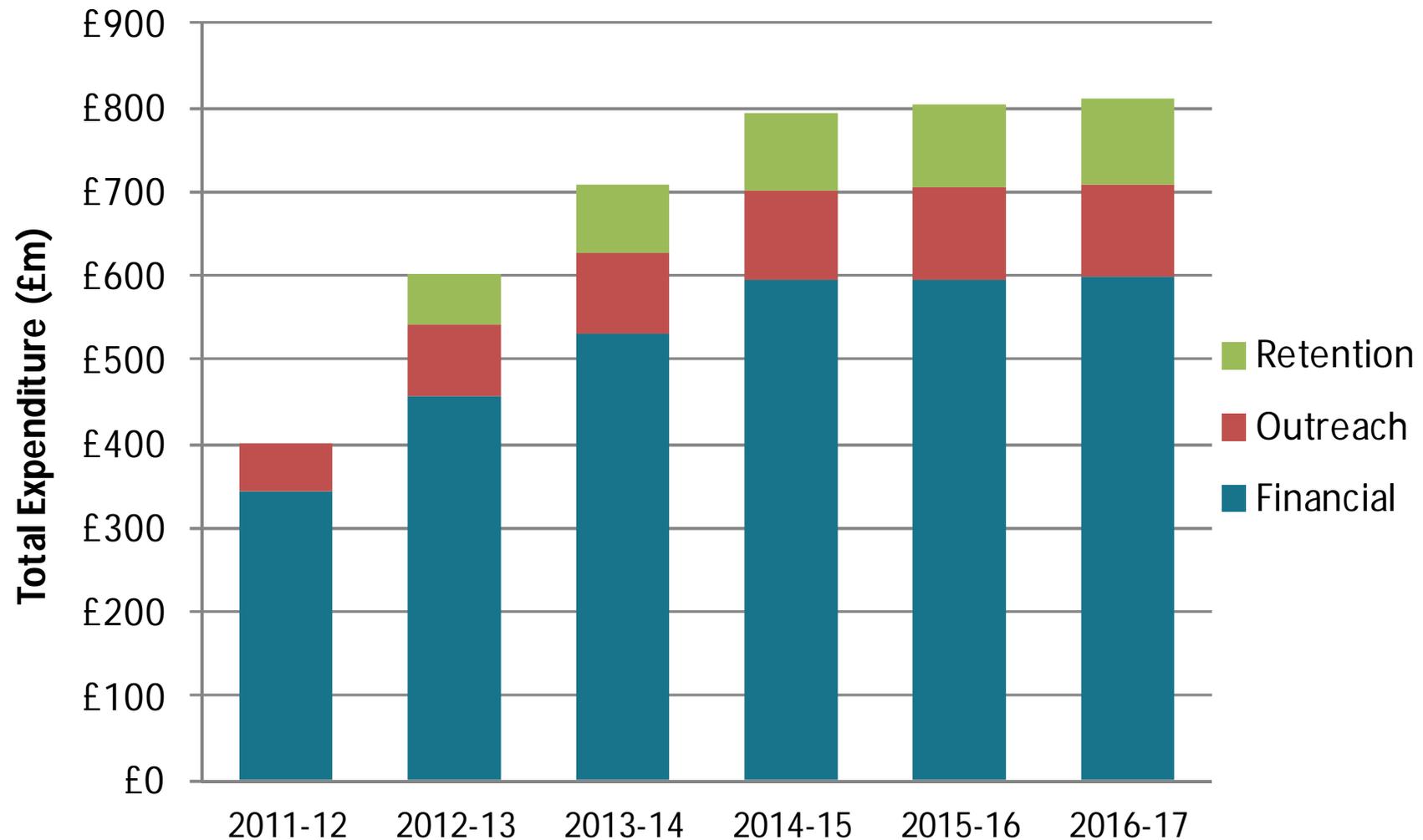
*Cathy Engstrom, Associate Professor of Higher Education and Chair of the Department Of Higher Education at Syracuse University, and Vincent Tinto, Distinguished University Professor at Syracuse University and a Senior Scholar at the Pell Institute for the Study of Opportunity in Higher Education.*

*Change Magazine, 2008*

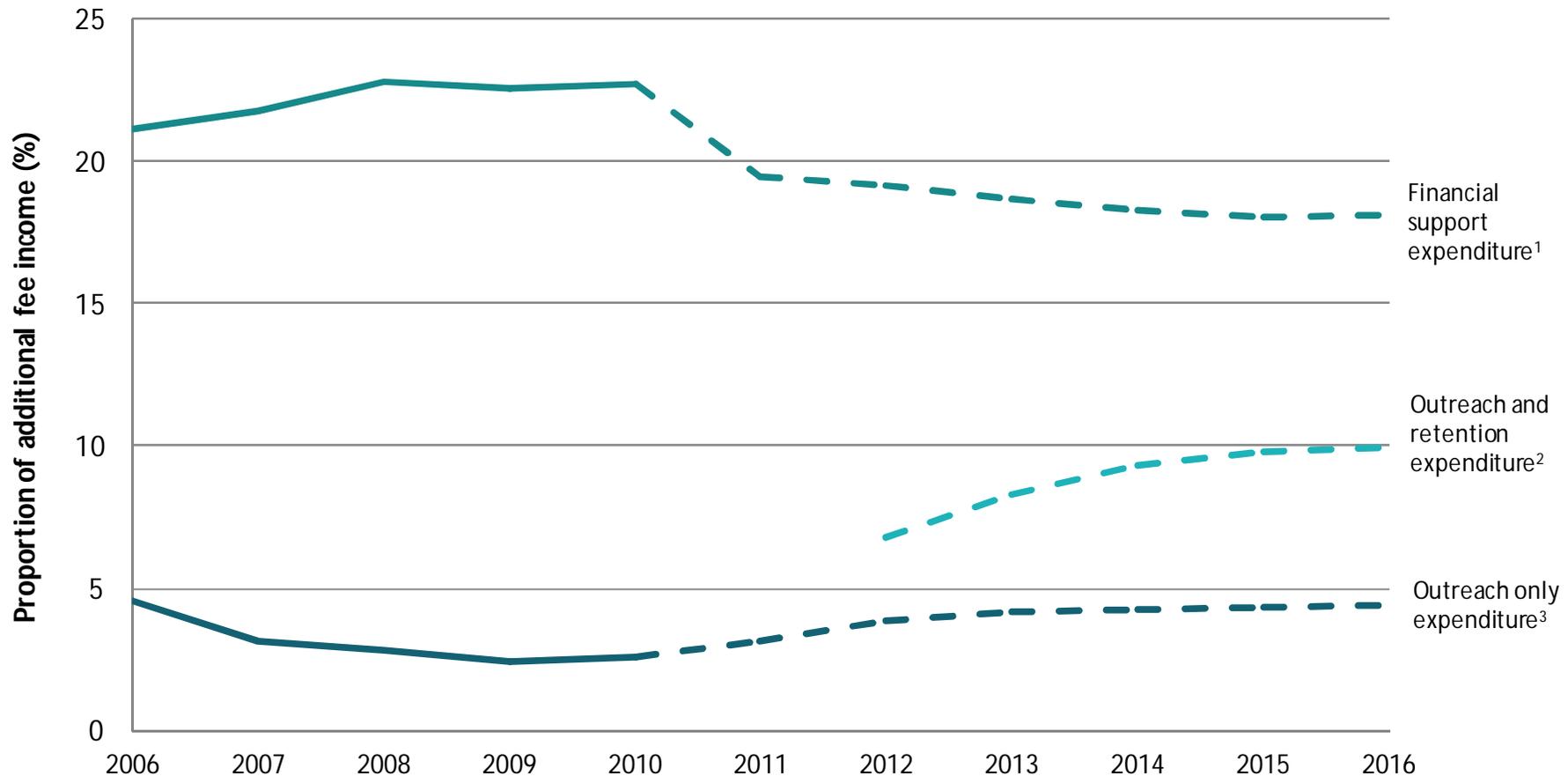
# Estimated access agreement expenditure on outreach and retention 2011-12 to 2016-17: HEIs and FECs



# Estimated access agreement expenditure including Government NSP allocation 2011-12 to 2016-17: HEIs and FECs



# Expenditure on OFFA-countable financial support, outreach and retention as a proportion of fee income above the basic amount\*: HEIs only



\* Actual (solid line 2006-07 to 2010-11) and projected (dashed line 2011-12 to 2016-17)

1'Financial support expenditure' includes access agreement spend on bursaries, fee waivers and other institutional discounts

2'Outreach and retention expenditure' includes access agreement spend on outreach plus additional expenditure on retention and employability which was introduced in access agreements for 2012-13

3'Outreach only expenditure' includes access agreement spend committed to outreach activities

# Evaluation

---

Increasingly important to access agreement approval and monitoring because:

- provides context
- demonstrates effort and illustrates performance of access measures
- (where successful) demonstrates progress underneath headline targets
- informs decisions on where to invest resources.

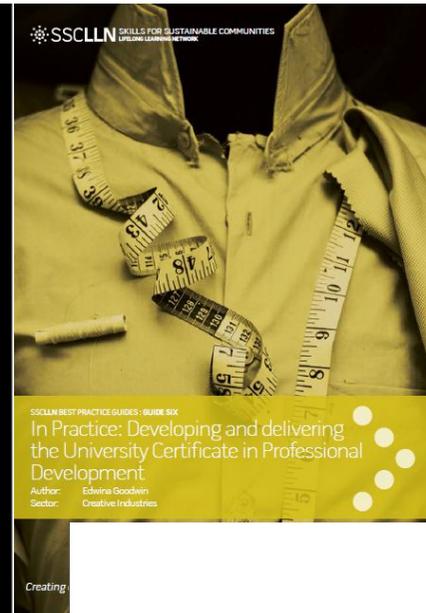




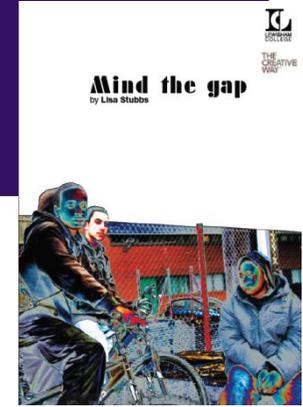
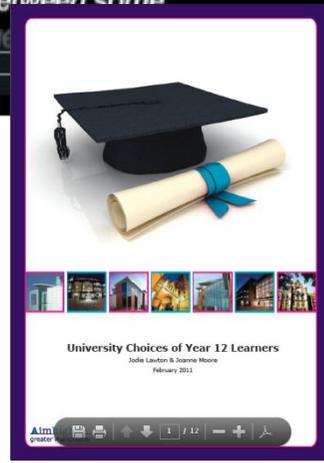
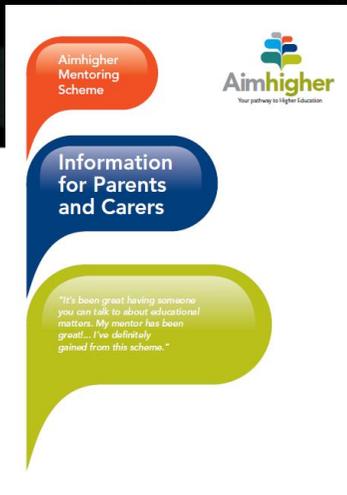
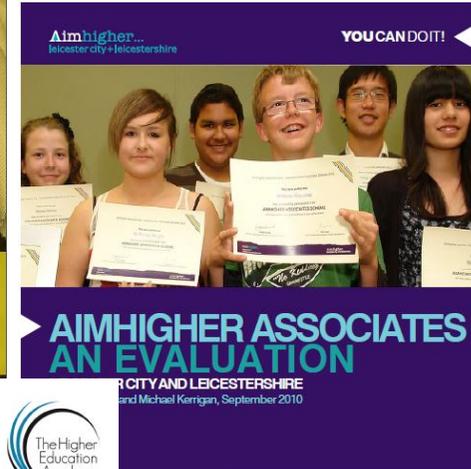
“I hope, over time, OFFA will have more and more evidence about what works and what does not, and can draw on that evidence when advising universities.”

Rt Hon David Willetts MP, Minister for Universities and Science, Select Committee evidence, June 2012

# WASRS archive



What Works? Student Retention & Success



[www.heacademy.ac.uk/retention-archives](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/retention-archives)

**offa**  
office for fair access

# Diverse students = diverse issues

---



# Bursaries/fee waivers

---



- Lack of hard evidence to date about which is most effective at improving access and student success
- Changing context of higher fees

# Mature students: student success issues

---

**34 per cent** of mature students who consider suspending their studies...

**22 per cent** of mature students who leave their course altogether...

... list **financial problems** among the top two reasons.

Source: *Never Too Late To Learn: Mature Students in Higher Education*  
(Million+/NUS, 2012)

# National strategy on access and student success

---

OFFA's and HEFCE, working with others, will:

“develop a shared strategy for promoting access and maximising the impact of the investment made by the Government, the Council and institutions”

Letter to OFFA and HEFCE from Vince Cable, Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, and David Willetts, Minister for Universities and Science, May 2012

