

## 2017 Annual Programme Report

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| Overview       |                            |
|----------------|----------------------------|
| University     | University of Edinburgh    |
| Programme Name | Sutton Trust Summer School |
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### Section 1: Programme Background

*Please list the aims and objectives of the programme and how you met these through your activities*

The Sutton Trust Summer School is a residential academic programme for school students from a Widening Participation background across the UK, which has run successfully for five consecutive years, managed by the University of Edinburgh's Student Recruitment and Admissions team. The programme is aimed at young people from state schools with low attainment or progression into Higher Education, who are at the end of S5, or Year 12 in the rest of the UK, providing them with a realistic insight into Higher Education, and what they might expect at University in terms of both their academic and social lives.

Aims:

- Provide a realistic academic, social and residential programme so pupils can make informed choices about their futures
- Give information on admissions and courses at UoE
- Raise aspirations and promote selective universities

89% of those who applied for a place were eligible for consideration within the agreed selection criteria, including:

- First generation to go to Higher Education
- Below average attainment school
- STSS identified Low Progression School (only if not a Below Average Progression School)
- EMA eligibility (Scottish students only)
- POLAR postcode measure
- SIMD (Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation)

- Looked after child / In care

Once places were assigned, 100% of the attendees met at least one of these criteria. Applications were graded based on these using a points system, with a maximum of 7 points available.

The gender split of applicants to attendees were 355 female to 146 male applicants (with 1 preferring not to state a gender), and 81 female to 36 male attendees. Those who attended were from locations across the UK, with 67 from England, 45 from Scotland, 5 from Wales and 0 from Northern Ireland.

### Section 3: Programme Recruitment and Retention

*Please attach a list of attendees, including Sutton Trust application IDs, to your email when sending the report*

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| <b>Number of applications received</b>                            | 502 |
| <b>Number of places offered</b>                                   | 120 |
| <b>Number of attendees</b>  | 117 |
| <b>Attendees with original offers</b>                             | 110 |
| <b>Attendees from reserve list</b>                                | 7   |
| <b>Number of participants that did not complete the programme</b> | 3   |
| <b>Total completers</b>   | 114 |

### Section 4: Key activities and events

The week consisted of academic sessions, social engagement opportunities and generic advice and guidance sessions. The Academic sessions offered covered a range of topics, including: Economics, English Literature, History, Philosophy, Sociology, Religious Studies, Biological Sciences, Chemistry, Engineering, Informatics, Mathematics, Physics, and Ecological and Earth Sciences. Students chose two subjects to study, and one they would specialise in, taking part in further sessions conducting independent research and produce their findings in a poster session at the end of the week.

On two separate days during the programme, the SRA Widening Participation team delivered two information sessions. One of these sessions was aided by a members of the Careers Service. Students received information about applying to University, choosing a course, and aspects of

student life including finance and support, career prospects and the social elements of University.

As part of encouraging students to have a representative experience of University life, the programme included a social activity every evening. These included an ice breaker evening on the first day, a scavenger hunt in the form of a 'City Photo Challenge', a Ghost Tour in Edinburgh, a ceilidh workshop with a live band, and a private cinema screening of 'Wonder Woman'. The students had a 'Graduation' ceremony at the end of the week, in which they received certificates from Shelagh Green, Director of the Careers Service, followed by a graduation dinner and party.

### **Section 5: Participant feedback**

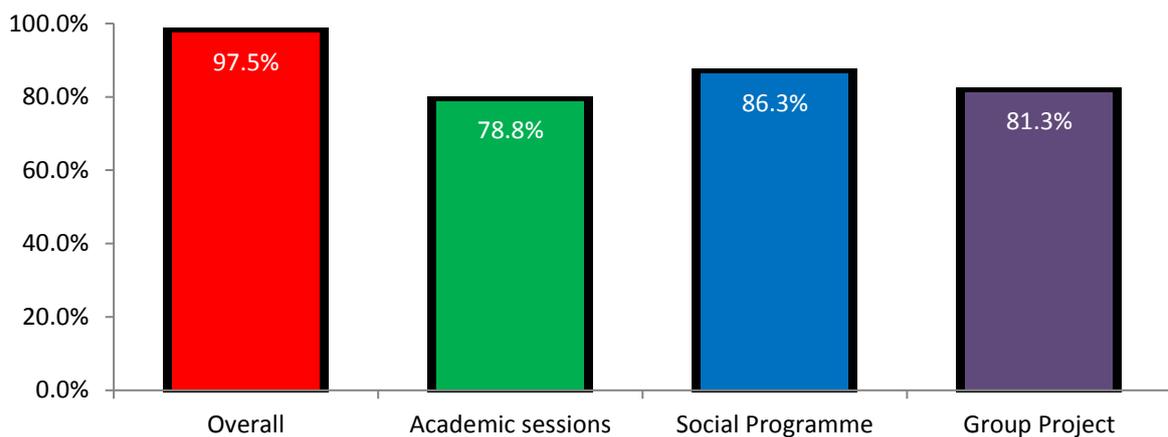
The SRA team gathered feedback from attendees at the end of the week via an online survey. The results are presented below.

#### **Key findings**

- Of the 80 survey respondents 97.5% (78) rated the overall experience of the summer school as either excellent or good
- The whole experience of the week and the academic programme gave attendees a better idea of what HE involves and what they would like to study at University. The approachable manner of the academic staff and their efforts to make the complex taught content engaging and understandable was highly praised
- 96.3% (77) indicated they would be very likely or likely to recommend the UoE Sutton Trust summer school and 71.3% (57) said they were now more likely to apply to the University of Edinburgh

Respondents were asked how they would rate the UoE Sutton Trust summer school overall, on a five point scale ranging from excellent to very poor. They were also asked if they would rate the week's academic sessions, the group project and the social programme, on the same scale. The following chart shows the percentage who rated the summer school overall, the academic sessions, the group project and the social programme as either excellent or good.

Chart 1 Experience of the UoE Sutton Trust Summer School



Of the 97.5% who rated the week overall as good or excellent, 72.5% rated the week as excellent.

Respondents were also asked to answer a series of open box questions on their experience of the academic taster sessions. Attendees appreciated the personal warmth and support the academic staff offered, as well as their efforts to engage and spark discussion amongst attendees.

*'Academic staff made everything very easy to understand and were lovely people.'*

*'The staff were incredibly supportive and friendly as well as engaging when delivering lectures.'*

*'All academic staff were enthusiastic and kind. Tutor in tutorial sessions was exceptionally supportive.'*

*'Really passionate lecturers'*

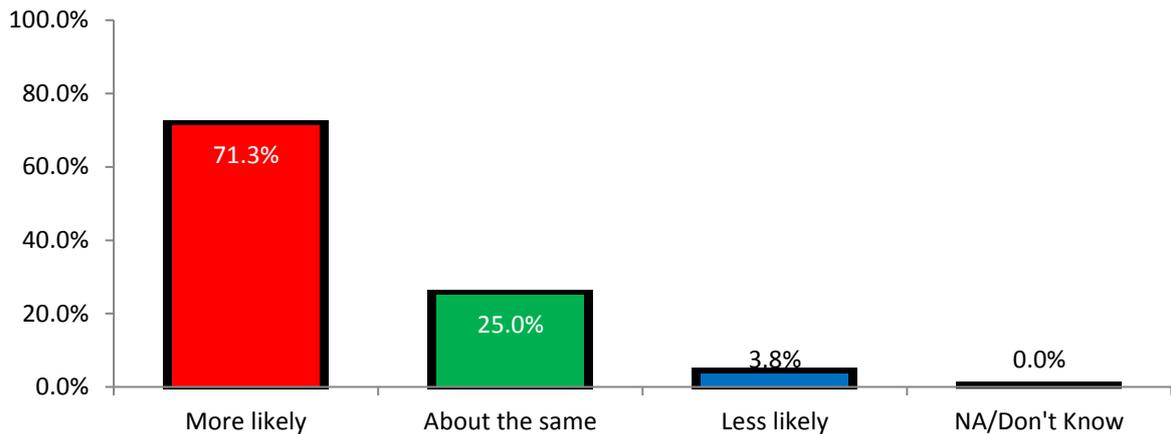
*'The English staff were all extremely friendly, chatty and informative. Everything was tailored to suit what WE wanted to get out of the summer school. The tutors were absolutely brilliant and engaging. I can't praise our tutor enough - he really was great at sparking discussion and seemed to genuinely care about us as people.'*

*'They were all very friendly and I enjoyed all my sessions with each person. Global History was especially engaging.'*

*'They were incredibly accommodating, and I felt safe and happy knowing that there were always great staff to help if I needed it.'*

Following the experience of the week, respondents were asked whether they were now more likely or less likely to apply to the University of Edinburgh.

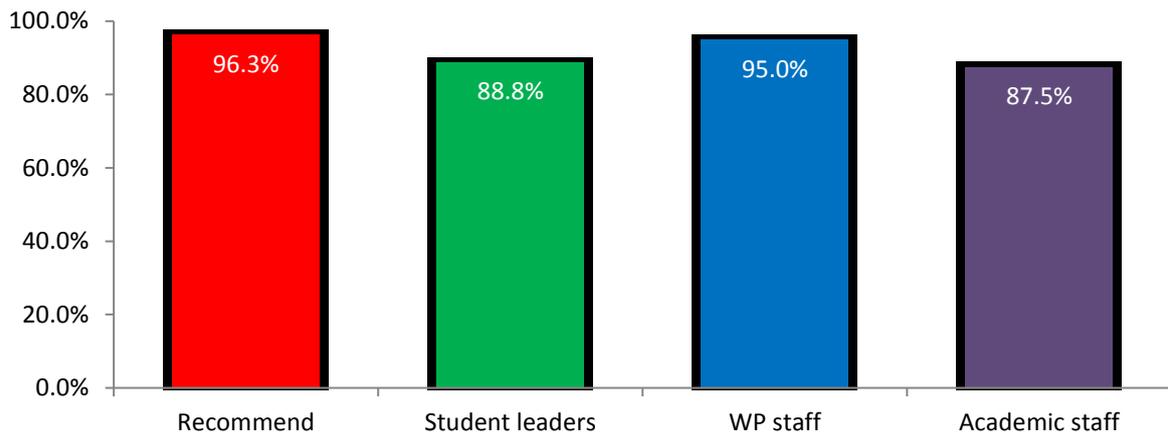
Chart 2 Are you now more or less likely to apply to the University of Edinburgh?



The majority (71.3%) reported that they were now more likely to apply to the University of Edinburgh. 25% indicated that they are now about as likely to apply as they were before. This figure would likely include those who were already seriously considering applying before they attended the summer school. There were 3 people (3.8%) who said they were less likely to apply to Edinburgh. Looking at the comments of those three, they overall really enjoyed their week but wanted more free time outside of activities and more emphasis on the taster lecturers over the group projects.

Attendees were asked how likely they would be to recommend the summer school, responding on a scale ranging from 5 very likely, to 1 very unlikely. They were also asked to how helpful they found the student leaders, the academic staff and the WP staff during the week, responding on a scale ranging from 5 very helpful to 1 not helpful at all. The following chart shows the percentage who said they would be likely or very likely to recommend the summer school and the percentage who rated the student leaders, the academic staff or the WP staff as either 4 or 5 (indicating that they were helpful/very helpful).

Chart 3 Recommending STSS and helpfulness of staff



96.3% stated that they would be likely or very likely to recommend the summer school. 95.0% found the WP staff helpful/very helpful. About the same percentage (88.8%, 87.5%) found the student leaders and academic staff helpful/very helpful the academic staff.

Overall, respondents reported that the whole experience of the summer school was a defining one and in particular the academic aspects (sampling lectures, the experience of contributing to tutorials, contact with lecturers) gave a real sense university life, which was highly valued.

*'Thank you for the experience!! It was amazing.'*

*'I liked the academic side of the summer school a lot and wish we had done more.'*

*'I am thankful that you gave me the opportunity to come to this amazing university and experience the life of a uni student.'*

*'The professors put so much effort into the lectures and seemed really passionate which I really appreciated. I also thought that the project presentation day was organised really nicely. It was great to be able to talk to the Head of Economics and all my Economics lecturers once again to answer any other questions I had.'*

*'I loved every minute of being there.'*

*'Although I thoroughly enjoyed the entire experience, I found the tutorial sessions the most enjoyable as it gave me the opportunity to go over the information we had been given during the lectures in more detail and also voice my own opinion. This was particularly enjoyable during the tutorial for philosophy as we got to debate questions presented during the lectures.'*

*'It was amazing to be able to live life as a university student and go to classes just as they would.'*

*'I enjoyed it because it gave me a chance to see what university would be like if I went there to study'*

*'It was good and gave me a great understanding of what university life will be like.'*

## **Section 6: Case studies**

### **Moza Ackroyd – Sutton Trust Summer School 2017 Student:**

I had a fantastic time on the Sutton Trust Summer School of 2017 at Edinburgh University. This experience has made me feel much more confident, excited and informed about applying to university.

There were useful information sessions about student loans, bursaries, the university's careers service and writing personal statements. Also, the leaders welcomed any additional questions that we had throughout the week.

I was still at a crossroads in deciding what degree to do so it was great that I had the chance to get a taster of different subjects on the 'Ecological and Earth Sciences & Physics' course. This has helped me decide which direction to take. Also, on this course it was interesting to find out about research currently going on at the university. This included a visit the UK Biochar Research Centre where they had a pyrolysis reactor.

It was great to make new friends and meet people from all over the UK. I'm still in touch with some of them and we're going to be meeting up early next year.

Throughout the week we did a group project which was based on 'The Drake Equation'. This stimulated interesting discussions among our group as well as when we presented our research to others on the summer school.

It was my first time in Scotland, let alone Edinburgh, so it was great that there were so many fun activities to take part in. Many introduced the city and Scottish culture including a photo challenge around Edinburgh; a ghost tour; traditional Ceilidh dancing; a private cinema screening and a spontaneous walk up The Craggs to watch the sunset.

We were made to feel so welcome and kept so busy that I didn't feel homesick for a second and to top off a great week we had a summer school graduation party which was so much fun and we danced the night away.

**Aidan Hubbard – Sutton Trust Summer School 2017 Student:**

The summer school was really well organised - this helped me and the other students relax and enjoy the programme.

We didn't have to worry about transport, being left on our own or finding something to do, there was always something going on or somebody to talk to.

The week went really quickly as we were kept busy with university lectures, field work, projects and even traditional Scottish Dancing.

Although we came from all corners of the UK, after a couple of ice breaker events we had made some good long lasting friendships.

The Summer School helped give me a much better idea of what to expect from University, both academically and socially. It was also an opportunity to gain valuable advice on financial issues and things like accommodation.

The week with the Sutton Trust definitely helped boost my confidence as I went alone, not knowing anyone and found that it was easy to engage with others as we were all in the same boat with a lot of the same concerns.

If anyone was considering going to University and was hesitating about whether it was the right choice for them then I would say that programmes like the Sutton Trust Summer School will give them a brilliant insight into Uni life, just like it did for me and hopefully everyone that was there in Edinburgh. So if you are thinking about applying, stop worrying and go for it. If you get in you won't regret it, you'll have a great week learning a lot and you'll make some top friends.

**Ali Kahn – Sutton Trust Summer School 2017 Group Leader:**

Having already been a group leader at a similar summer school the year before, I was quite excited to get started with a fresh batch of students. The doors that university has opened up for me and the lessons I've learned have come to define me in my adult life so far. And with that knowledge, came the desire to give the best possible start to students whose place I had been in once myself.

The week started off with a nice busy day of escorting people from across the country through Edinburgh and then a jam packed day of ice breakers and it was great to have a little laugh and become just a bit familiar with everyone there. However, for me personally, the best experience was the little conversations I had throughout the week. While finding our way through different campuses and waiting for other groups before we travelled or during lunch breaks. The questions everyone asked and the stories every student had to tell were enriching but also very inspiring. I was quite truly proud to have been a guide to university life for the students I interacted with as I saw the wealth of potential everyone carried. It was quite humbling to see young pupils far wiser than me at that age and it was a privilege to give them the best advice I could about what to expect at university while making sure in between all the social activities and walks to campuses everyone was looked after. I would do it all again in a heartbeat for sure and I think it was an enriching experience for group leaders and students alike.

### **Emily O’Dowd – Sutton Trust Summer School 2017 Group Leader:**

My week as a Group Leader at Sutton Trust Summer School, The University of Edinburgh.

Sunday:

I was stationed at Edinburgh Airport and I was struck immediately by how quickly the students began speaking to each other. At that age, most people would find it difficult to interact with complete strangers. But as the Sutton Trust students stood in a circle with their giant suitcases, I realised they weren’t just “most people”. The bus back from the airport was filled with the wonderful sound of new friendships.

We brought the students back to Pollock Halls, where they would be staying for the week. We were a little late, so walked into the large hall to the sight of over 100 teenagers, paying impressive attention to the welcome talk, considering how far most of them had travelled that day. After the talking came the Icebreaker games – and even though it had been a long day, everyone really seemed to enjoy them – particularly the one which involved silly photos of the Group Leaders!

Monday:

On Monday, I had a bit of a late start – the rota for group leaders was pretty much art, I’m not sure how the staff managed to sort it all out. I was to stay overnight in Pollock Halls that night, but before that came the evening social programme. On Monday, that was the Photo Challenge. This involved splitting in to groups, with one group leader assigned to about 12 students. We then had to run around the city, taking photos of the items on our scavenger hunt list. It had been a long day for the students, who were tired and a little bit reluctant at the start to traverse all of Edinburgh’s hilly streets, but they soon got in the spirit of things. They posed with haggis pizza and a kilt-wearing doorman, and got chased out of a souvenir shop for trying on hats! The challenge was a great idea, and I had a lovely sound sleep, with not one of the students needing my help that night!

Tuesday:

On Tuesday, I got to see some of the classes that the students were taking part in over the week. I was assigned to Computer Science, which was something completely alien to me, as a Psychology postgrad. The students who had signed up for it however were clearly showing great talent and interest in the subject. They were working on robots, which they had to programme to follow a path using lasers. It looked dreadfully complicated on the screen, but they were clicking away at the computers, and making the robots do their bidding. It always got a bit of a laugh when a robot seemed to have a mind of its own however and decide to wander away from its programmed path, or indeed just spin around in circles!

After Computer Science, it was ceilidh time! I’m Irish, so quite familiar with a good old ceilidh, but to most of the students, it was a brand-new experience. It wasn’t long before the windows were steaming up with all of the people dancing enthusiastically. Some students were not initially keen on dancing themselves, but the enthusiasm from the demonstrators (and some of the Group Leaders) was infectious, and all of the students at one point or another had a bit of a spin around the dancefloor.

After the ceilidh, the students had some free time around Edinburgh, before they were due to go to the cinema for a private screening of ‘Wonderwoman’. A lot of them scattered to the wind in groups, hunting out food (haggis pizza anyone?). Myself and the other Group Leaders took some other students back to Pollock Halls for food – now who is going to turn down a free dinner?! They scoffed down the food, dolled themselves up a bit, and headed back

off to the cinema. That was the end of my Tuesday with Sutton, and I somehow managed to drag myself home to bed, ready for the next day.

Wednesday:

Wednesday dawned a little bit earlier for me than the other days had... I was at Pollock by 8.45am, an hour almost unheard of in the life of a university student... Amazingly, all the students were bright eyed and bushy tailed, ready for their classes. This time, I was assigned to be with the Sociology group in the morning, and the Philosophy group in the afternoon – two subjects much more familiar to me than Robotics! Sociology was a fascinating lecture, however while the subject itself was very interesting, it was the students' engagement with the class which fascinated me most. It really astounded me how comfortable the students were in engaging in discussions about heritage and culture. It was not only that they were comfortable enough to speak, but also their intelligent and nuanced inputs into the conversation that was inspiring to me. They were clearly all benefiting from being surrounded by people with a similar level of interest in the topic. They seemed far beyond their 17 years in life experience in that class. Similarly, in Philosophy, I was asked during a tutorial if I had anything to add to the discussion, a good 20 minutes into the students carefully considering an ethical conundrum. I had nothing to say that was half as articulate as what the students had said, and so I (wisely) stayed quiet...

It was on this day, in which I watched the students attend classes in subjects that I am familiar with, that I truly appreciated the value of the summer school to these students. They were making friends, experiencing a new city, and having fun. However, most importantly, they were demonstrating to themselves how well they fit in to a university context, and showing to everyone else in the room the value and original thought that they were bringing to the summer school, and beyond.

Thursday:

Thursday was the final full day of the summer school. I once again chaperoned the students to Sociology and Philosophy for their final classes, before their poster presentation in the afternoon. This poster presentation was a culmination of all the hard work that the students had put in over the week. They each had been working on a project in one of their chosen subjects, and presented it in a poster session on the final day. As I walked around the posters, seeing students that I knew, and many more that I hadn't had the opportunity to work with, I was again struck by the amount and variety of talent in the room. There were projects on engineering cells to glow in the dark, on LGBT representation in literature, on testing the levels of pollutants in local rivers, and on so many more diverse topics.

The role of a Group Leader is mostly to help these students make the most of this week. However, I think the students did that by themselves. I wasn't working on the Friday, so Thursday evening, at the graduation dinner and disco, was my last experience of the Sutton Trust Summer School. As I left the hall, the dancing was just kicking off, and the students were letting go of their dedicated, academic selves, and just enjoying the remainder of their time with their new friends. I am delighted to have had the opportunity to work as a Group Leader for the Sutton Trust Summer School. I worked with amazing people, made some great new friends myself, and was privileged enough to meet and witness the talent of over 100 young students. Each and every one of those students has a bright future in their chosen field, and I believe their experience at Sutton Trust has given them even more reason to believe that themselves.