

<b>8 March 2016</b>		<b>ITEM: 8</b>
<b>Children's Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>		
<b>Report on Entry into Higher Education in Thurrock</b>		
<b>Wards and communities affected:</b> All	<b>Key Decision:</b>	
<b>Report of:</b> Kate Kozlova-Boran – Engagement Manager Michele Lucas – Interim Strategic Lead Learning & Skills.		
<b>Accountable Service Manager:</b> Michele Lucas - Interim Strategic Lead Learning & Skills		
<b>Accountable Director:</b> David Archibald – Interim Director Children's Services		
<b>This report is:</b> Public		

## **Executive Summary**

This report provides an overview of the current entry of Thurrock young people into Higher Education. We request that the Committee note the challenges in accessing the data around entry into HE.

The report provides statistical information on entry to HE nationally and locally to give Committee Members the opportunity to consider how we can work in partnership with all interested parties in relation to increasing entry into HE from Thurrock young people.

This report also outlines ways in which the Local Authority is looking to support young people in accessing Russell Group Universities – utilising funding from the Education Commission.

### **1. Recommendations**

- 1.1 That the development of a strategy to raise entry into Higher Education for Thurrock Young People be endorsed.**
- 1.2 That the progress of the TAP (Thurrock Top Achievers Programme) in Thurrock be monitored.**
- 1.3 That a partnership approach involving London Universities, Essex University, colleges, primary and secondary schools and Thurrock Careers be supported in order to identify innovative ways in which the uptake of Higher Education could be increased in Thurrock.**

- 1.4 That the Committee support the development of an ‘Inspire – Into University’ event for Year 12 students in Thurrock to provide inspiration, support and guidance around entry into Higher Education and the opportunity to undertake higher level apprenticeship programmes.**

## **2. Introduction and Background**

- 2.1 The Government has recently raised the issue of differential rates of participation in higher education. The overall aim of this report is to present national and local statistics on entry to HE. The research has cited social class, ethnicity, gender and parental education as contributory factors that may influence a young person's likelihood of entering higher education.
- 2.2 The latest statistical data shows that national numbers enrolling into Higher education have been decreasing since 2010.

## **3. Findings**

- 3.1 The national statistics from HESA (Higher Education Statistics Agency) has identified a decrease in the numbers of young people accessing higher education across the country outlined in the table below:-

<b>Students by level of study 2000/01 to 2014/15</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>Postgraduate</b>	<b>Total</b>
2014/15	1727895	538180	2266075
2013/14	1759915	539440	2299355
2012/13	1803840	536440	2340275
2011/12	1928140	568490	2496635
2010/11	1913940	589070	2503010
2009/10	1914835	578915	2493750

The current applications for 2015 have seen a 4% rise in the number of applications in 2015.

The report makes the conclusion that though the number of young people applying to universities has increased; the number of young people enrolling has decreased. HESA do not hold information on the reasons why this trend is noticeable, however it should also be recognised that a number of young people are choosing a higher apprenticeship route which enables them to both gain a degree as well as earning a salary.

Recent examples of this are two young people from one of our local schools, who have been offered higher level apprenticeship programmes with a city bank.

## Local Picture

The Department for Education statistics for Thurrock, which are only available for 2013 are outlined below:-

The statistics identify that nationally 58% of young people progress into HE with 17% progressing into Russell Group Universities and 1% into Oxbridge (58%, 17%, 1%).

<b>Data 2013</b>	HE	RG	Oxbridge
Harris Academy	54%	13%	0%
Palmers College	46%	4%	0%
South Essex College	23%	0%	0%
Stanford & Corringham 6 <sup>th</sup> Form	49%	12%	0%
Ormiston Academy	0%	0%	0%
Ockendon Academy	no statistical information for 2013		

## Thurrock Careers Profile data

<b>2013</b>	<b>397 young people</b>
<b>2014</b>	<b>371 young people</b>
<b>2015</b>	<b>344 young people</b>

The above table data analysed figures taken from the Thurrock Careers database, Profile, and have identified that in the last three years entry into HE has declined. We attribute this decline to the raise of government tuition fees to £9000 per annum. However, these statistics do not include young people who reside in Thurrock but receive education outside Thurrock (approximately 260 young people in any one annual cohort). As outlined earlier in this report we have a number of young people who access higher level apprenticeship programmes when they have completed their A level studies.

## 4. Education commission – funding to support Progression into Russell Group Universities.

Working in partnership with the 11-19 Strategy Group we have recently been successful in securing funding to run a programme with the aim of encouraging young people to apply to Russell Group Universities – the project details are outlined below:-

- 4.1 Top Achievers' Programme (TAP) in Thurrock is a pioneering initiative funded by Thurrock Council. The programme aims to mentor and position selected high-achieving students from across Thurrock sixth-forms and colleges to make successful applications to Russell Group Universities, as well as other top non-Russell Group Medical and Dental Schools.

Designated as 'TAP Scholars', this group of students will also have shown some interest and/or good potential to succeed at university.

Selected Year 12 students will be enrolled on the programme as the first set of Thurrock TAP Scholars, and participate over a 2-year period throughout Key Stage 5 (KS5). Participants must maintain high academic grades during KS5, with predicted capability for continued academic success.

Total Number of Year 12 Students: 16

Student Selection Criteria:

The single most important criteria for enrolling students on the programme is high-achievement; guided by excellent GCSE grades.

In selecting the programme participants, additional consideration will be given to students from widening participation background who:

- Receive the 16 to 19 Bursary or Educational Maintenance Allowance (EMA) or Discretionary Learner Support
- Receive Free School Meals
- Receive the Full Maintenance Grant or full Special Support Grant
- Have been in Local Authority Care
- Live with a parent/guardian with no UK Higher Education qualifications
- Live with a parent/guardian in receipt of Income Support, Income-based Jobseeker's Allowance or Income-based Employment and Support Allowance
- Live with a parent/guardian in receipt of Universal Credit if the household income as stated on the award is less than £35k
- Live with a parent/guardian in receipt of Child Tax Credit where the student is named on the award and the household income as stated on the award is less than £35k

## **5. Issues, Options and Analysis of Options.**

- 5.1 One of the key areas of concern is in relation to securing accurate information both nationally and locally. However the overall picture has seen a decline in entry nationally and locally, which would need further investigation and is outside the remit of this report.

## **6. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)**

None

## **7. Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

- 7.1 This piece of work directly links with the 5 corporate priorities of Thurrock Council.

## **8. Implications**

### **8.1 Financial**

Implications verified by: **Kay Goodacre**  
**Finance Manager – Children’s Services**

The funding provide to TAP is from the Education Commission, monitoring of this expenditure takes place on a quarterly basis. We will need to consider in the light of continuing challenges on council wide budgets how we can support these types of innovative programmes going forward.

### **8.2 Legal**

Implications verified by: **Lucinda Bell**  
**Education Lawyer**

S 149 of the Equality Act 2010 imposes the “public sector equality duty”, or PSED. This requires that decision makers have due regard to the need to Eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that the Equality Act 2010 prohibits and advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those individuals who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Due regard means the amount of regard that is appropriate in all the circumstances. The Authority must weigh the duty against countervailing factors, such as finances.

### **8.3 Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Teresa Evans**  
**Equalities and Cohesion Officer**

Accessing Higher Education is one way in which we are ensuring that we are meeting our ambitious agenda around the work of the fairness commission, the outlined criteria for the TAP programme clearly illustrate how we continue to ensure that all members of the local communities can benefit from work that is being undertaken within the Council

This work also contributes to our raising aspirations agenda, which links in with work undertaken in a range of our council wide strategies including the child poverty strategy and the current work being undertaken on behalf of the Health & Wellbeing Board.

### **8.4 Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

None

- 9. Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

None

**10. Appendices to the report**

- None

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