SELWYN COLLEGE

2016-2017

Annual Report on Widening Participation, Access and Outreach Activities
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To Our Colleagues

THANK YOU

Firstly, a huge thank you to all the teachers, HE/careers advisors, teaching assistants, library staff and minibus drivers for all your contributions to this year’s events. Whilst we aim to do our part in raising aspirations for young people, your work and contributions to the everyday lives of those young people is what makes the real, long-term difference. Our events could not run without your support, assistance and organisation. Thank you!

HIGHLIGHTS

This year, the size and scope of widening participation activities at Selwyn has increased significantly. Not only have there been more school visits to and from the College, but the addition of a new Year 11 Summer School and Law Residential saw many more students living in University and experiencing life at Cambridge. A Research Project Competition for primary school students also saw younger students and parents visiting Cambridge, helping to motivate and engage pupils at an earlier stage. Read on to find out more!

LOOKING AHEAD

2017 – 2018 looks to be an interesting year in University admissions. With changes in the GCSE curriculum becoming fully embedded and the new A Levels, education as a whole is in a state of flux which makes it ever harder for our students to make their future choices. We continue to be committed to our transparent and open admissions policy which assesses applicants holistically and contextually.

We hope to continue expanding our range of programmes next year. Capacity and support for further school visits, a new Easter residential for Scottish students and greater emphasis on starting younger means that next year will hopefully see even more students engaged in the work we do.

Next year, there will be a strategic focus on engaging parents as well as students, particularly parents to younger students (Year 9 and below). To this end, our conferences in Scotland will include a new parent session held in the evenings. Moreover, we are always looking for events already organized by schools such as parents evening, information evenings and HE Fairs; if you feel your event could benefit from having a representative from the University of Cambridge, then do get in touch.

We are always looking for further opportunities to innovate, engage and support students, so as always, do get in touch with any ideas for new programmes or new events. Here’s to an aspirational new year!

Michelle Tang
Schools Liaison Officer
August 2017
TO OUR COLLEAGUES

OUR YEAR IN NUMBERS

- 661 school engagements across 124 different events
- Including over 10,000 students...
- And over 500 teachers!

OUR IMPACT

After a visit to Selwyn College, students rated themselves, on average:
- 9% more confident about applying to University
- 30% more confident about applying to Cambridge
- 22% more confident about fitting in at Cambridge

*as assessed by ratings provided on pre-visit and post-visit evaluation forms

"I feel so much more informed and confident about the application process. I certainly don’t feel as apprehensive as before. I was able to gain insight into university life as well as develop interests for subjects I never thought I would!"

- ERICA DA SILVA | GLOBE ACADEMY

THIS YEAR WE’VE GIVEN OUT...

- 3000+ Selwyn prospectuses
- 680 Selwyn branded bags
- 800 Selwyn postcards
- 21 Selwyn teddy bears
School Visits to Selwyn

This year saw 45 different schools come for day visits to the College, totaling over 1400 visitors. Our day visits are designed to be aspirational, providing students with an opportunity to visualize themselves in a new environment. We provide information and guidance on university applications but visits to the University are the best way to dispel misconceptions and provide an insight into student life. In general, visits comprised of talks and workshops related to admissions/university, taster lectures conducted by academics, visits to museums and other departments as well as tours around the College and Cambridge city centre.

Some highlights include:

- The Cambridge Colleges Physics Experience Days which saw over 150 students visit Selwyn College for the day. Students looked around the college in the morning and had the opportunity to chat to current undergraduates, followed in the afternoon by hands on practical activities in the world-famous Cavendish Laboratory.
- A visit from the Kingsgen Foundation who work with BME students in London; the Cambridge University African Caribbean Society along with Selwyn College provided information and guidance for university applications as well as generating discussion around the experience of BME students at Cambridge.
- Our 300+ visitors (age 9 – 16) from the Brilliant Club’s Scholar Programme which sends PhD tutors to schools and works closely with students to help raise attainment.
- Visits from Selwyn alumni now working in schools, helping to bring schools like Northolt High and Harris Girls Academy Bromley into the Selwyn family!

TESTIMONIALS:

“Thank you for such an insightful day. I didn’t realise that Cambridge was an actual option for someone like me. I have come away feeling totally inspired and determined to keep learning and working hard.” Kieron Bonnick, Year 10, Harris Academy Peckham

“My visit has been very informative and has now given me a more open mind about the university.” Esha Tabasum, Year 11, Rastrick High School
“Very informative visit. The university focused more on helping students decide what they could do rather than promoting themselves.” Liwia Nosarlewska, Year 11, St Joseph’s Catholic High School

“I found my visit really useful as I’ve always said I’m not interested in university but I feel really motivated to try harder after this.” Anna Potts, Year 11, Sherburn High School

“Very well organized. A good range of activities that challenged the students, balanced by time to explore Cambridge. I have been on this visit 3 times. This year’s trip was the best organized I have experienced.” Alex Smickershill, Assistant Director of Sixth Form, St Mary’s Comprehensive School Menston
Summer Schools and Residentials

YEAR 12 SUMMER SCHOOL

Our Year 12 Summer School took place this year at the end of June. With 200 applications for the 50 spaces, this year was the most competitive year yet with an extremely high quality of applicants from schools across the UK.

The successful applicants were immersed in university life for four days, choosing from a range of different academic sessions including Law, Media and Politics, Astrobiology, Languages, Classics and Ancient Philosophy and Archaeology. They also visited one of Cambridge’s excellent museums, as well as departments such as the Institute of Astronomy to see historic telescopes or the Chemistry department to work on their own experiment.

As well as academic sessions, participants experienced student life through living in student accommodation, having meals (including a formal dinner) in the student Hall and taking part in a range of different social activities. An informal quiz night helped participants make friends and a fiendishly hard murder mystery puzzle put their reasoning skills to the test.

To finish off, a University Application workshop helped participants to understand their next steps and provide them with accurate information on what Admission Tutors look for in applicants.
We were delighted to host such a hard working and intellectually curious group of students and we hope they have come away from the experience with increased confidence in applying to top universities.

A wonderful short film was created by one of our participants, Jade Bowler, which highlights her time at Selwyn: [https://tinyurl.com/SelwynJade](https://tinyurl.com/SelwynJade)

TESTIMONIALS:

“It has been an opportunity of a lifetime and I am so grateful. I can’t thank Michelle and all the staff enough for organising this. I have loved all the lectures and felt really at home and inspired in this environment. I also feel very motivated to apply and work my absolute hardest as this has confirmed that this is where I would like to study and feel well-suited to the teaching style and course. I feel more confident that this is achievable if I work hard enough and I now know how to write a competitive application.” Elisha Bagg, New College Pontefract

“It was an amazing insight into the life of a student here at Cambridge. Throughout the summer school, I have been in awe by the facilities and the prospect of studying here. I’ve thoroughly enjoyed these 3 – 4 days and would absolutely recommend another student to apply. Thank you for the amazing experience, I cannot express enough my gratitude for this enlightening experience!” Elizabeth Nguyen, Peebles High School

“I feel that I have made very good friends who will become an encouraging prospective Cambridge hopefuls support network. Every moment was genuinely amazing and incredibly surreal at times to actually be in the Cambridge University. I feel more motivated and understanding of how to become a serious Cambridge candidate in the following months. It’s also been immensely reassuring to meet real Cambridge students and professors who are just lovely, normal intelligent people. I can’t thank you enough for this opportunity! It was academically invigorating but also socially fun. Even if I don’t get into Cambridge I’ll be very grateful for the confidence in my academic ability that this course gave me.” Ada Nourell, Woodhouse College
This year saw a new Year 11 Summer School for Arts and Humanities. With around 190 applications for 30 spaces, this was again another highly competitive summer school. Aimed at catching students before they locked in their subject choices, this summer school introduced students to new and interesting subjects available for study at Cambridge.

Themed as a ‘Tour of Italy’, participants virtually explored the Italian peninsular with Cambridge scholars as their guides in a series of lectures. Participants attended lectures in topics such as Linguistics, Film Studies, Cultural History as well as more traditional subjects such as Languages and English Literature. They even had a beginner’s 45-minute crash course in Italian!

Staying for 3 days, participants also got a feel for university life by living in student bedrooms, eating in student halls and having the opportunity to meet our current undergraduates who helped as Student Ambassadors.

A video of this ‘Tour of Italy’ Summer School can be found here: https://tinyurl.com/SelwynItalian
“The summer school helped me massively in gaining self-assurance and furthered my confidence in both my social skills and academic knowledge. I have learned a lot and received the foundations for learning more, because although there was plenty of subject content and factual information, the course was also crafted to teach me transferable, non-quantifiable aspects of learning that I would have found difficult otherwise. Thank you so much for this amazing opportunity and for making me feel confident both with other people and with the subject matter.” Antonia Harrison, Altrincham Grammar School for Girls

“I found the experience very inspiring and interesting. The accommodation and social activities were great and I really enjoyed the academic sessions. It made me feel really determined to apply to Cambridge in a few years.” Josie Hackney-Barber, Benton Park School

LAW RESIDENTIAL
The Law Residential held at Selwyn was designed to tie in with the Law Faculty Open Day and the University Open Days. Sandwiched between these two large events, the Law Residential was a smaller and more personal affair, aimed at providing greater insight into how Law is taught at Cambridge and give an opportunity for prospective students to ask questions and alleviate concerns. By staying for one night in College and meeting current undergraduates, the 29 participants experienced a taste of university life whilst also receiving tailored advice to applying for a Law degree.
Open Days

Selwyn held an Open Day in September 2016 where around 400 visitors came to see the College, tour the grounds and receive advice from Admissions staff on how to apply to Cambridge.

Selwyn also participated in the Cambridge University Open Days in July 2017. We saw a large increase in numbers this year, with an estimated 3000 visitors across the two days (up from ~1800 in 2016). We gave out 1200 prospectuses and 500 Selwyn branded bags, conducted over 100 College tours and met a huge number of wonderful prospective students. We hope to see some of them again very soon!
Primary Research Project Competition

This year saw the pilot of the Research Project Competition aimed at primary school pupils in Years 5 and 6 attending East Berkshire schools. There were 28 entries from 6 different primary schools, and 16 winners (along with parents/guardians) were invited up for a special celebration day in Cambridge. Projects covered a huge range of topics from "Why do people fall in love?" to "Are footballers paid too much money?" Selwyn would like to thank the schools and pupils who got involved in the pilot and the success of the scheme will hopefully see an expanded version being introduced in 2018.

"It was well organised, all the people helping were nice/kind and they were useful. Also in some places it was very funny. 😊 I feel like I have benefitted as I have been given a taste of Cambridge which is useful if we come here again. Also I have found out new facts as I have learnt from my own project." – Pupil, aged 9

"I would never have considered Cambridge Uni for my daughter as I thought too expensive, too posh, too white! But that doesn’t feel like the case at all. It’s now an aspiration." – Parent/Guardian
External Visits

Selwyn has always enjoyed strong links with partner schools in our link regions of West Yorkshire, East Berkshire and Scotland. This year sees the addition of two link schools in Cambridgeshire under the new Connect to Cambridge scheme, which aims to support local schools and build stronger links between the University and the local community. In addition to our link area schools, we are pleased to see our school relationships grow ever larger through numerous different avenues including through collaborations with other colleges, alumni connections and simple word of mouth.

**West Yorkshire**

Encompassing Leeds, Calderdale, Wakefield and Kirklees, Selwyn continues to have a strong relationship with schools across the region.

The HE+ consortia headed by Greenhead College saw regular visits from Admission Tutors throughout the year. As one of the biggest HE+ consortia with around 100 students, Selwyn remains committed to providing tailored support and guidance for the region. In addition to Masterclasses in a range of different subjects, around 70 students also visited Selwyn for the day where they experienced student life first-hand and had the chance to explore the city centre.

Selwyn continues the work from the now defunct AimHigher scheme with schools in Leeds and Wakefield, holding annual conferences hosted by Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College. In November 2016, representatives from both Oxford and Cambridge University came to Leeds for an interview workshop for Year 13s with around 80 students in attendance. In March 2017, an introduction to Oxbridge was held for Year 12s where around 100 students attended.

This year also saw the introduction of a new Selwyn Access Tour, organised and conducted by student volunteers. A small team of current undergraduates led by our JCR Access Officers Harry Blades and Amy Bland visited 12 different schools in one week and saw over 500 pupils. These visits were aimed at younger year groups (year 11 and below) to give pupils an opportunity to find out more about student life.

In addition, the Schools Liaison Officer and Admission Tutors visited over 30 schools over the year for various presentations, workshops and HE fairs.

**East Berkshire**

Selwyn College works closely with Brasenose College, Oxford, in working with schools in the East Berkshire region. The Schools Liaison Officer visited around 10 different schools in the area,
attending HE fairs, facilitating interview workshops as well as delivering various presentations about university.

Highlights include the Bracknell Forum organized by Bracknell Forest Council and hosted by Garth Hill College, which invited dozens of local schools to come for a Russell Group University Information Evening. Along with Southampton University, Selwyn College did a joint presentation with Brasenose College on the differences with Oxbridge. With several hundred parents and students in attendance, the evening hopefully dispelled many of the myths surrounding highly selective universities and helped to boost prospective students’ confidence.

Scotland

This year, the link to Scottish schools is now shared between Pembroke, Homerton and Selwyn College; a long-needed change demonstrating the increased commitment the University has to supporting Scottish students as well as English ones. With the combined manpower of three colleges, events in Scotland have gone smoothly with a good turnout at all events.

Last September, interview workshops for S6 students held in Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh saw around 400 students travel to hear advice on Oxford and Cambridge interviews.

For the new round of prospective students, a team travelled up from Cambridge to run Informational Seminars for S4 and S5 students again held in Aberdeen, Glasgow and Edinburgh. Leaving two Schools Liaison Officers (Emma and Michelle) behind, they then toured Scotland for two weeks following the seminars to visit schools who were unable to attend and work with students as young as S3. Representatives also attended the Oxford and Cambridge Student Conference in Edinburgh which saw a fantastic turnout of around 500 students. In total, in the month of March alone, we estimate seeing over 2000 students across Scotland at one of these events.

Although the geographical distance often means schools find it difficult to come down to Cambridge for a visit, there have been a number of overnight visits from various schools as well as from the Social Mobility Foundation (Glasgow) who brought 13 students to visit Oxford and Cambridge in August.

It was also pleasing to see a good number of Scottish students apply to our Summer Schools and Residentials, with many gaining a place and making the journey down to stay for a few days in Cambridge and experience student life.

Next year, we will once again be holding our Scottish Seminars but in addition to this, the Colleges are exploring the possibility of an all-expenses paid Easter Residential exclusively for Scottish students. Watch this space!
Cambridgeshire

Selwyn is pleased to welcome two new schools into our fold, North Cambridge Academy and Long Road Sixth Form. The new Connect to Cambridge scheme has linked schools in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough with different colleges in Cambridge, with the intention of fostering stronger relationships with the local area. The scope for Connect to Cambridge is also wider, with an emphasis on supporting all students in Cambridgeshire to achieve their aspirations, whether that is higher education or alternative routes. Through shared insights with Anglia Ruskin University, it is hoped that Connect to Cambridge will be able to provide a more consolidated programme for our local community.

Selwyn has supported the Year 12 students at Long Road to consider their future options in a subject exploration workshop. A small group of students also visited Selwyn for the afternoon to get advice and guidance on the Cambridge admissions process.

Work with North Cambridge Academy has begun with an initial meeting, with the idea that Selwyn College takes over the provision formerly provided by Anglia Ruskin University in the next academic year.

Our academics also continue to work closely with local schools (and some slightly further afield too!), with many of our Fellows visiting schools to give taster lectures and masterclasses tied to the curriculum.