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# My Journey

## Lecturer – MU- Foundation Year

Coordinator of Foundation Year Turn to Teaching Project – developing a project to diversify teacher education

## Psychology BA & PhD

The neuro-cognitive processes which contribute to successful abstinence from addiction- experimental Phd, lots of stats and lots of computer tasks and some fMRI analysis

## Early School Leaver

15, pregnant and homeless in Birmingham

## Coordinator Research

Longitudinal study of widening participation project in TCD 1500 students over 3 years and 300 teachers

## Post Doc

Royal College of Surgeons – Health research – prediction models – great experience but not my topic

## Research and Lecture role

NOT FOR ME!

## Foundation Year TCD

FY for young adults and Mature students – entry to variety of course



# My Research Areas

01

## Human Development & Capabilities

Exploring the impact of widening participation activities on students developing capability set. Exploring the Human Capability approach as an alternative to human capital focused policy rhetoric

02

## Alternative Entry Routes to HE

International examination of alternative entry routes to elite HEIs and the role that foundation years can play in the broad widening participation content

03

## Elite Professions

Who gains access to elite professions and how can we intervene

04

## Digital skills

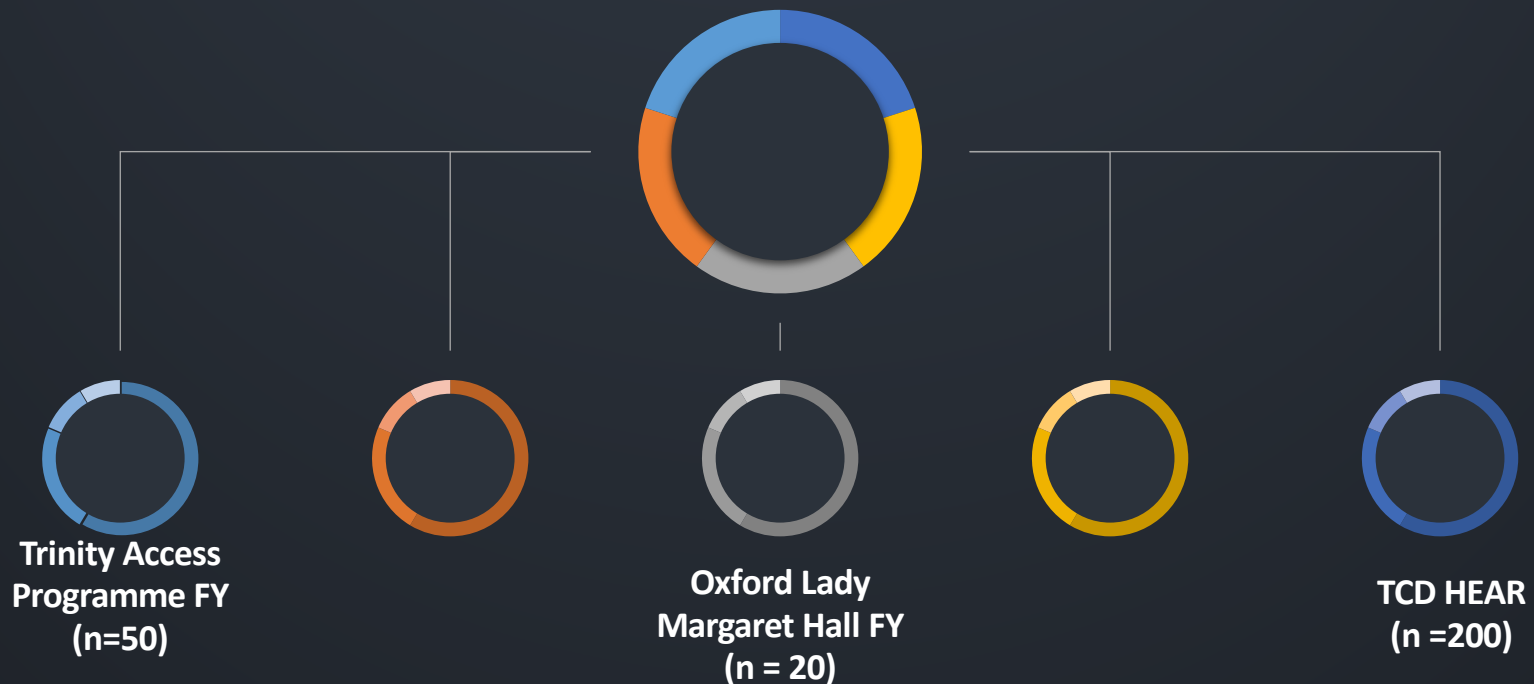
Who gets to access STEM



# IRC for Research for Policy and Society International Comparison of Alternative Access Routes

**WHAT:** How do alternative routes contribute to the students capability to participate in HE? What factors are predictive in supporting success in HE? How does institutional prestige effect capability of student to participate?

**HOW:** Longitudinal tracking of 3 groups over 2 years – QLR and quantitative, Oxford FY TCD FY and TCD HEAR





	Foundation Year, Selective University in England	Foundation Year, Selective University in Ireland	Ireland Contextualised Admissions
Application Method	Direct Application to the University Application + Written Work + Interview(s)	Direct Application to the University Application + Written Work + Interview(s)	Application via Central Applications Office (CAO)
Eligibility & Indicators/Flags	Applicants must have studied at a state school for entire school career, AND/OR have been in the care of a local authority AND/OR meet the Individual and socio-economic indicators	Applicants must have attended a school linked to the access service in the HEI, as well as meet the household income threshold, and meet two other indicators of disadvantage.	Applicants must meet the household income threshold, and meet two other indicators of disadvantage
Household income	Household income below £42,875 (€48, 905)	Household income below €45,790	
SES	All parents present must belong to an under-represented socio-economic group in HE		
Medical Card		In receipt of a medical card for at least 12 months	
Social Welfare Recipient		In receipt of a means-tested social assistance payment	
School	The school that you attended for your GCSEs scored below the national average for GCSE Results OR the school that you are attending for your A Levels scored below the national average for the ‘Average Point Per Academic Entry’	Applicants must have attended a school linked to the access service in the HEI, have completed 5 years in a DEIS school – a school with a concentration of disadvantaged students.	Have completed 5 years in a DEIS school– a school with a concentration of disadvantaged students.
Area	POLAR: ACORN code:	Live in an area that is disadvantaged, very disadvantaged or extremely disadvantaged	
Academic Entry Requirements	Yes, one grade typically below the traditional offer from the university of AAA.	Yes – 5 x O6/1 x H5. Applicants must have passed English and Math Distinction in the LCA, or QQI-FET Level 5.	Reduced LC points basis. Sliding points scale in play typically 10% reduction of points – deductions greater for higher point courses.
Residency	Applicants must be eligible for ‘home fee’ status.	Applicants must be eligible for the Government Free Fees Scheme or EU Fees.	
Age	Applicants must be aged 19 or under		
Duration	1 year, full-time	1 year, full-time	3-4 year depending on the Degree
Level of study	Level 3, same as A levels	Level 6 Special Purpose	Levels 6-8
Institutional Responsibility for FY Students	College responsibility for FY students (not Departments)	Responsibility of the University	
Direct entry to Degree course	Progression not guaranteed. Application made through UCAS in November	Progression is guaranteed. Application made through CAO February	Entry into degree
Tuition and Accommodation	Free Tuition + Stipend	Free Tuition + Bursary	Some HEIs offer a stipend; students may be eligible for a grant.



# Question?

**Do Foundation Years allow students into University who are different to those who usually go?**

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	Foundation Year (FY)		Contextualised Admissions (CA)
%	Selective University England	Selective University Ireland	Selective University Ireland
<b>Number</b>	18	54	187
<b>Gender</b>			
Female	72.2	66.7	64.6
Male	27.8	33.3	31.8
<b>Family Structure</b>			
Single Parent Family	50.0	41.5	42.0
Two Parent Family	38.9	49.1	58.0
Living with Grand Parent/Relative/Foster Care	11.1	9.4	0.0
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>			
White	38.9	75.0	77.4
Minority ethnic/racial groups	61.1	25.0	22.6
<b>Previous Attainment</b>			
Average attainment	436 (A,A,B)	344	458
<b>Parental Education</b>			
Primary level only	16.7	24.5	8.6
Junior Cert/GCSE	16.7	0.0	7.5
Leaving Cert/A Levels	5.6	18.9	25.1
Some college/FE	11.1	17.0	21.9
Degree/Higher Degree	22.2	5.7	13.9
Masters or Phd	0.0	3.8	5.8
Don't Know	11.1	11.3	8.6
<b>Parental Employment</b>			
Unemployed	15.4	11.8	2.8
Employed	84.6	88.2	97.2
<b>% Employed on an hourly pay basis</b>	30.8	35.3	49.5

More likely to come from one parent family-  
In the UK the percentage of dependent children living in lone parent families is 21% and in Ireland 18% of all family units are one parent families (CSO, 2016).

## Do Foundation

Foundation year captures a greater share of students coming from unemployed households

are different to those who usually go?

Greater proportion of FY students whose parents have very low levels of education

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## Question?

**What motivates under-represented students to want to go to selective institutions?**

“It actually drove me -the teachers negative view. I just wanted to show that I can. I can make a difference like ... **I’m not just a nobody.**”

“Well, my school, we did have an Oxford-like event, where we had a couple of sessions after school... they (the teachers) were just, like, I think it’s a waste of your time if you apply to Oxford you will probably get a rejection...”

**“So I strong-armed my way there... I initially applied for Cambridge and my head rejected it and sent it back to me and wrote an email to me saying that “You should lower your standards”... I still said “It’s my choice. I am going to apply anyway. I just want to... I’ll somehow be able to manage myself so I sent it back. It went through. I got an interview in Cambridge and my application was rejected but I had an interview in other universities and my application was accepted there.**

....I was at a disadvantage (compared to affluent students). I don’t have the same skill set because I haven’t been groomed the same way... to talk in a proper way, make conversation in a certain way um... just like, in my secondary school, I was never encouraged to read loads of books

“I have a close friend ... she got into Oxford to study and she’s in her second year now and it’s like, with me, I am bit of a dreamer, so I tend to like imagine where I want to be later on in life and I realise like how far I have to go to get there and that kind of motivates me being able to actually see someone that has gone through that”

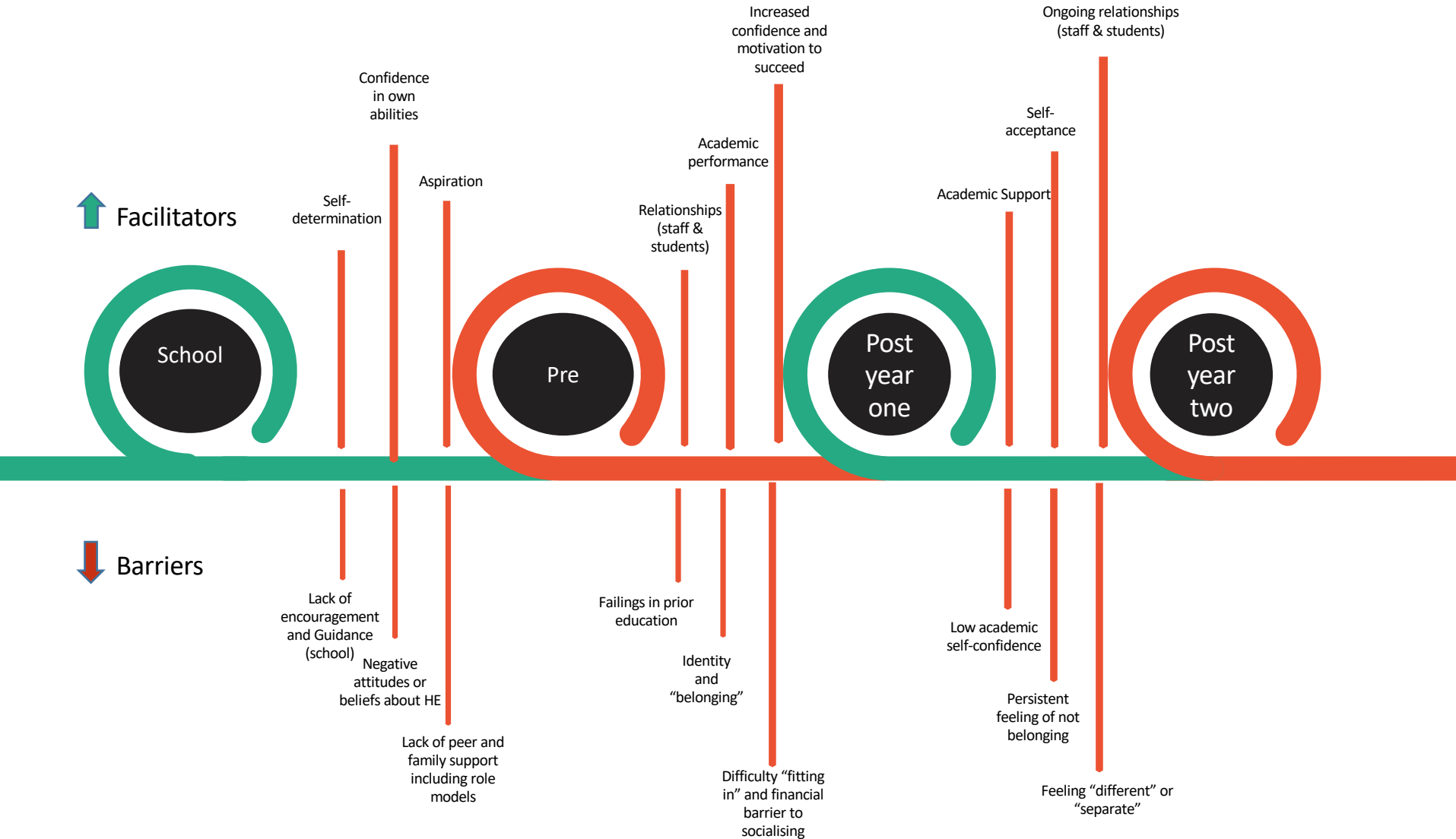
“... mum did go to university... despite the fact my granddad didn’t really want her to, my grandma said that education is something that nobody can take off of you... it’s something that like, when you have it, you have it”



## Question?

**Do we need foundation years? Do they add to the widening participation agenda in selective universities?**

# Its complicated! My View – Yes!



Same grade distribution as direct entry students- average 2.1 grades



## **My view for the future!**

- Reduce entry requirements as the A,A, A or A, A, A\* requirement is still very high**
- challenge the stigma associated with FY (back door) – celebration events**
- Challenge admissions to see student capabilities in a different way- FY provision is too dependent on individuals valuing WP**



**Thanks**