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# Expectation and Motivation: How do we widen participation and encourage the 18-21 demographic to access Higher Education

The aim of this investigation is to understand why the 18-21 demographic in Barnsley is under-represented within HE by comparison with the UK norm for this age group. It also aims to identify ways to motivate and encourage the 18-21 demographic to access HE

...in order to allow groups to fully participate in the benefits of education one must first raise their aspirations.  
(Watts and Bridges, 2006, p32)

...there is a plethora of research which demonstrates that socio-economic status, along with and linked to educational background, is a key factor associated with higher education participation rates.  
(Bibbings, 2006, p.76)

More generally, social context can influence young peoples' perception of what is and what is not 'for the likes of them'.  
(Bibbings, 2006, p.76)

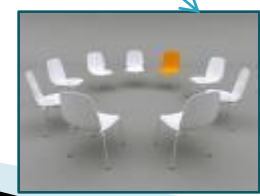
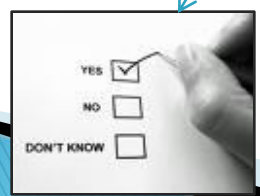


Widening participation addresses the large discrepancies in the take-up of higher education opportunities between different social groups.  
(HEFCE, 2009)

Callender (2003) argues that students from working class backgrounds are more likely to be averse to being in debt and reluctant to accept the debt attached to being a student.

**Research Methods**

Reay (2001) proposes that many young people show no incentive to access HE as academic failure has been inscribed upon their life whilst at school.



**Interviews      Questionnaires      Focus Groups      Case Study**

**University Centre  
Barnsley**

This investigation will seek to ascertain the expectations, motivations and aspirations of a group of 18-21 year olds that have chosen not to enter HE. It will consider what prevents students from the 18-21 demographic from entering HE. Particular focus will be placed on the social, cultural and personal factors that contribute to the group's decision making processes with respect to HE entry. Recommendations will include an outline of the ways in which to encourage and motivate the 18-21 demographic to access HE.