

# FACTORS AFFECTING SOCIAL CAPITAL AMONG STUDENTS AGED 14-18 IN ENGLAND

## Authors

Charlie Atkins (Charlie.atkins@warwick.ac.uk)  
Supervisor: Rebecca Morris (Rebecca.E.Morris@warwick.ac.uk)

## References

Crawford, C. (2014) The link between secondary school characteristics and university participation and outcomes. The Centre from Analysis of Youth Transitions (CAYT), Department for Education. Available from: <http://www.ifs.org.uk/publications/7235>

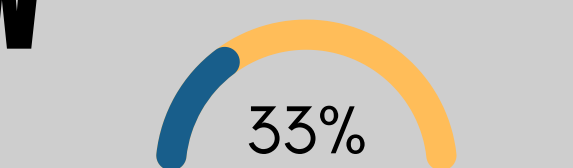
Handshake. Research Paper Netpotism. Available from: <https://joinhandshake.co.uk/netpotism>

Kirby, P. (2016) Leading People 2016. The Sutton Trust. Available from: <https://www.suttontrust.com/our-research/leading-people-2016-education-background/>

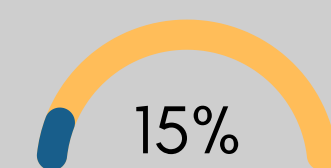
Macmillan, L., Tyler, C. & Vignoles, A. (2014). Who Gets the Top Jobs? The Role of Family Background and Networks in Recent Graduates' Access to High-status Professions. Journal of Social Policy, 44(3): pp.487–515. doi: 10.1017/s0047279414000634

## 01 LITERATURE REVIEW

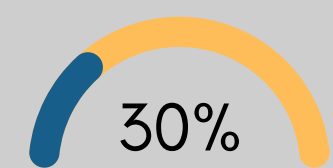
- A privately educated child has an advantage over a state-educated child with the same history and background (Macmillan, Tyler & Vignoles, 2014)
- Human capital is a significant factor (Macmillan, Tyler & Vignoles, 2014; Crawford, 2014)
- There is a "complex interplay between factors" including soft skills and social capital (Kirby, 2016)
- Students who are privately educated, or attend elite universities, still poses skills that will help them stand out - even in blind recruitment. (Kirby, 2016).



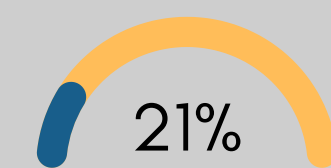
"students believe that job applications and interviews are biased towards those who have existing connections (Handshake: 16)



"feel excluded from job opportunities due to their background" (Handshake: 16)



students were not confident in using professional networking sites (Handshake: 22)



"unsure of the etiquette around connecting and messaging prospective employers" (Handshake: 22)

## 02 METHODOLOGY

A State Secondary School and Sixth Form in the Midlands

### QUESTIONNAIRE

- 80 responses
- 74% Year 10; 25% Year 12; 1% Year 13
- 26 Questions

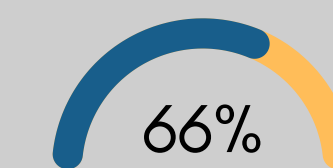
### INTERVIEW

- 2 Focus Groups - Semi-Structured
- Year 10 - 5 Students
- Year 12 - 7 Students

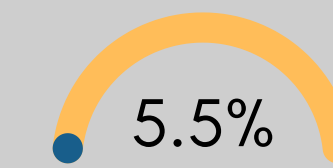
Only 6 students reported receiving free school meals.

## 06 CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

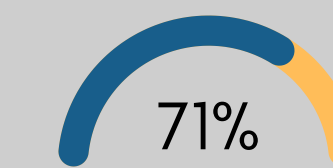
### KEY FINDINGS:



When asked to rank their confidence on LinkedIn, selected N/A



Of Year 10 Students had Work Experience



Of work experience placements were found through Parents, Teachers or Friends

## 03 THE VALUE OF SOCIAL CAPITAL

### INTERVIEWS:

#### YEAR 10:

- Limited value in extra-curricular activities
- Limited thought about how they can utilise relationships formed in extra-curricular activities
- Higher value placed on GCSE and A-Level results.

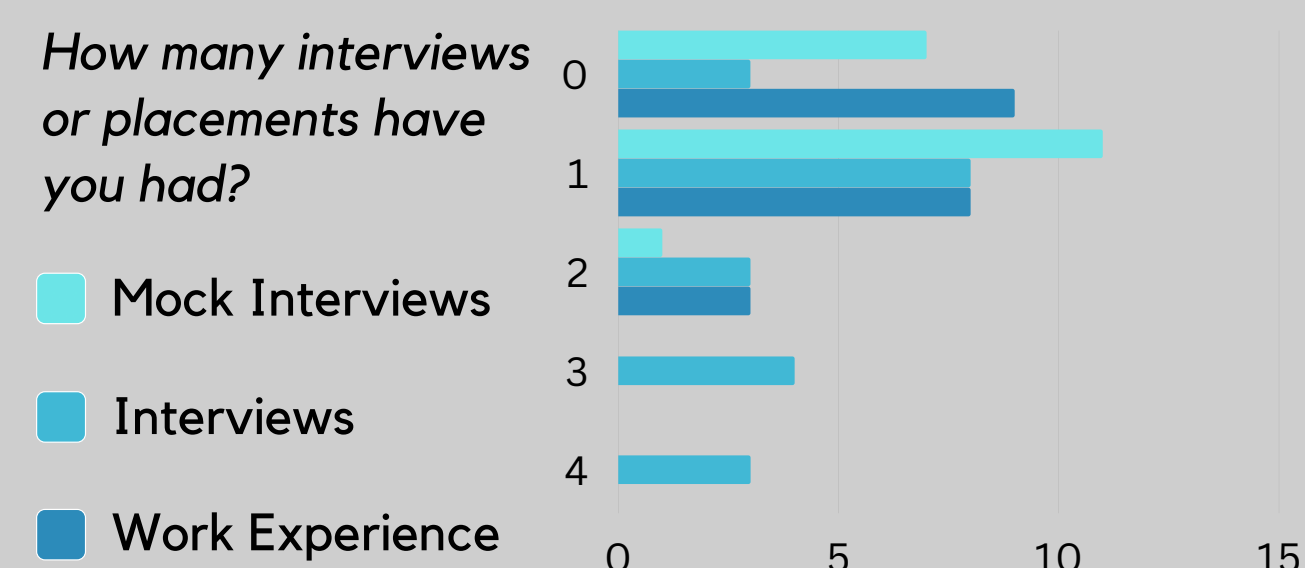
#### YEAR 12:

- More experience speaking to professionals in different roles
- Did not know how they could use LinkedIn or other networking sites
- Saw limited value in networking.

## 04 HOW YOUNG PEOPLE DIFFER

### QUESTIONNAIRE & INTERVIEWS:

- Overall, LinkedIn had the lowest confidence scores compared to other social media sites
- Little work experience; although Year 12 had more than Year 10
- Similar interview confidence for all students
- Work Experience Placements predominately found through family or friends

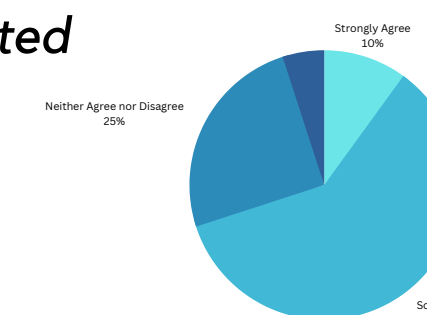


## 05 HOW YOUNG PEOPLE FEEL

### QUESTIONNAIRE:

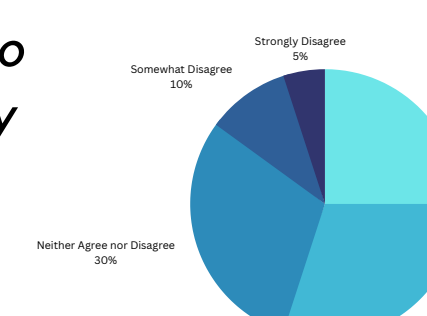
Do you feel prepared and supported to get the Job, Internship or University Place you want?

- Year 12 recorded higher confidence than Year 10



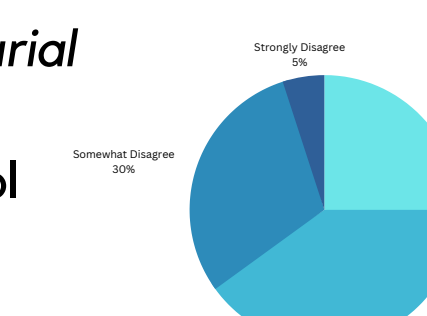
Do you think there are people who look like you in the role or industry you want to pursue in the future?

- Those receiving free school meals felt less represented



Do you think you are Entrepreneurial

- Students receiving free school meals reported lower scores



"Actual help from school"

Careers guidance should take a more holistic and practical approach.

"Networking has been mentioned in an assembly but I don't feel confident with it"

There should be an increased focus on soft skills, such as networking.

"A contact who is high-ranking in the field I am interested in"

Schools should help students develop the crucial networks to help them stand out.