



Family Background and University Success: Differences in Higher Education Access and Outcomes in England

By Claire Crawford, Lorraine Dearden, John Micklewright, Anna Vignoles

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Why do fewer teenagers in England from disadvantaged backgrounds go to university than young people from better-off families? Once at university, how well do poorer students fare compared with other students - who drops out from university and who gets the best degrees? After university - who secures better jobs and higher pay? What really has been the impact on university entry of the controversial increases in tuition fees in 2006 and 2012, especially for students from poorer families? Is there no alternative to charging for university places and what do other countries do? What should governments, universities, and schools do to reduce the gaps in university entry and success by family background? And what advice can be given to families and young people themselves deciding between the costs and benefits of university? This book answers these questions using the latest available evidence, drawing on a wealth of data from administrative records of the school and university system and sample surveys of young people and their families. The authors' analysis of the situation in England is set against a background of evidence for other countries. The book provides much needed dispassionate analysis of issues that are at the forefront of both public policy and popular debate on higher education around the world today.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Claire Crawford joined the University of Warwick in 2014 as Assistant Professor of Economics. She was previously Programme Director of the Skills sector at the Institute for Fiscal Studies, London, where she remains a Research Fellow. She is managing editor of *Fiscal Studies*. She holds a PhD from UCL Institute of Education. Her research interests focus on the determinants of educational attainment and participation in higher education. She is particularly interested in how education policy can be used to improve the outcomes of children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Lorraine Dearden is Professor of Economics and Social Statistics at UCL Institute of Education and a Research Fellow of the Institute for Fiscal Studies (IFS), London. She joined IFS in 1992 as its first PhD scholar, becoming a staff member in 1995. She has a PhD from University College London and also studied at the London School of Economics and Australian National University. Her research focuses on the impact of education and training on labour market outcomes, the demand for schooling, and higher education funding.

John Micklewright is Professor Emeritus at UCL Institute of Education. He has a PhD from the London School of Economics. Before joining UCL, he was Professor of Social Statistics at the University of Southampton. He previously held chairs in Economics at the European University Institute, Florence, and at Queen Mary, University of London. He also worked for several years for the UN in the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre. His research interests cover poverty and inequality, labour market flows, education, charitable giving, and survey methods.

Anna Vignoles is Professor of Education (1938) at the University of Cambridge, a Fellow of Jesus College, and Trustee of The Nuffield Foundation. She was previously Professor of the Economics of Education at UCL Institute of Education and has been a member of the NHS Pay Review Body and of the ESRC Research Committee. She has a PhD from the University of Newcastle. Her research interests include equity in education, school choice, school efficiency and finance, the economic value of schooling, and participation in higher education.

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