



SOCIAL CLASS AND EDUCATION

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Introduction

- **Policy focus on social class and HE participation**
- **What is social class?**
- **Measurement of social class**
 - **Methods of estimation**
 - **Unreliable data**
 - **Concern about missing data**
- **Relationship between indicators and ‘lived reality’**
- **Impact of social class on education**

Research study

To explore relevance of NS SEC for HE

- **Stage 1: exploring UCAS ‘unknowns’**
 - Desk-based, 1000 ‘unknown’ sample, manual coding, other indicators
- **Stage 2: quantitative analysis at one institution**
 - Institutional data on ‘unknowns’ profiled
- **Stage 3: interviews with students**
 - representative sample across social spectrum, explore ‘lived reality’ and relevance to education

STAGE 1 FINDINGS: UCAS data

Codings	%
Allocated to NS SEC 1-3	34
Allocated to NS SEC 4-8	12
TOTAL ALLOCATED	46
Not working	19
No information	13
Self employed	13
Unclassifiable	10
TOTAL UNALLOCATED	54

- **46% allocated had similar profile to overall applicants**
- **Self employed includes professional and manual**
- **Over half of unallocated not working or no info**

STAGE 1: CONTEXTUAL INFORMATION

	Not working (185)	No info (131)	Self employed (131)	Unclassified (97)
40% most deprived	78	50	34	38
Low HE participation	57	48	27	36
Independent schools	1	1	12	8
Applied to post-92 HEI	71	82	52	63

- Different profiles: 1) not work & no info 2) self empl & unclassified
- Not working and no info come mainly from WP target areas
- Under-counting of applicants from LSEG
- HE applicants from LSEG could rise by c6%

Stage 2

Institutional Findings:

- **Age:** 54% of over 40s unknown - returners to learning less likely to have a codeable recent employment history
- **Deprivation** – students living in areas of high deprivation more likely to be unknown and more likely to come from workless and benefit-dependent households.
- **Direct entry courses** – FDs, DipHEs more unknown- data less readily collected from students bypassing UCAS system.
- **Minority ethnic groups** Higher % unknown than white.

Conclusions

- **WP target groups more likely to have missing social data**
- **Growth of unknowns linked to WP success**
- **Hidden WP impact**
- **Raises issues about use of NS SEC for HE**
- **Interviews to get behind the data**



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