



THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE INSIGHTS PROGRAMME

CJ COCHRAN, ELIZABETH MORTIMER, AND NEIL M
SPEIRS, UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH



INTRODUCTION

- Our widening participation students are highly able students, and when matriculated 'WP-indicated students were as likely to complete an HE qualification and achieve an Honours degree as non-WP students' (Croxford et al, 2014).
- Due to the societal structures that frame and reproduce inequality, we know that students from lower socio-economic status communities are more likely to have lower volume social and cultural capital, as a result they are more likely to be unfamiliar with the 'rules of the game' or have a 'feel for the game' (Bourdieu, 1984; Bourdieu, 1990; Lareau, Evans & Yee, 2016).
- While the classroom environment will be known and understood through many years of experience in school or college, the extra and co-curricular – the 'other curriculum' as Kuh (1995) refers to it – is less familiar.



INTRODUCTION

- This leads to what Pierre Bourdieu (1977, p. 83) defines as hysteresis; the ‘lag between opportunities and the dispositions to grasp them’ (Speirs et al, 2017).
- The extra and co-curricular opportunities that we might think of are; volunteering, part time work, representational roles, professional experience and international experience.
- We know that employers are keen for students to develop practical abilities – but via professional experiences rather than undergraduate study (Davies et al, 1999).
- We are also very aware of the value of the international experience (Salisbury et al, 2013; Paige et al, 2009; Mapp, 2013).



PROGRAMME OVERVIEW

- Partnership project between the Careers Service, Development and Alumni, Edinburgh Global, and Widening Participation
- Fully funded and supported local and international work-based learning experiences for widening participation students – hosted by UoE alumni
- After a successful pilot in 2017/18, the programme was doubled this year, and launched in Asia. 2019 student participants have just returned from their Insights experiences, in Scotland as well as eight global host cities.



SUPPORT TO SUCCEED

- Supported student application process
- Pre-departure workshops on e.g. building resilience, professional behaviours, networking
- Reflective learning process via structured Edinburgh Award
- Building connections and community via Platform One
- Facilitating growth in self-efficacy
- Active role in University community – sense of belonging



PILOT YEAR AND YEAR ONE STATISTICS

STUDENTS	2018/19	2017/18	ALUMNI	2018/19	2017/18
Male	26%	27%	Male	57%	55%
Female	74%	73%	Female	43%	45%
Year of study					
1st	23%	24%			
2nd	46%	45%			
3rd	30%	31%			
4th	1%	0%			
College			College		
CAHSS	59%	67%	CAHSS	72%	78%
CSE	32%	27%	CSE	24%	18%
CMVM	9%	6%	CMVM	4%	4%



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VALUE AND IMPACT OF ALUMNI RELATIONS AND PHILANTHROPY

Insights is a key engagement opportunity for our global alumni body - offering a personal and meaningful way to engage with the University community and support current students. The programme has been brought to life thanks to the generosity and support of alumni donors and volunteer hosts.

“This programme changes lives.”

“It felt to me like a short, efficient way to have a potentially disproportionate impact on a number of students' future careers.”

“I really enjoyed it and found it to be rewarding in examining how my education connects me not just to my own career but to those of the broader Edinburgh community. I was humbled by the impressive group of students and their authenticity and keen interest in developing themselves.”



FUTURE PLANS

- Growth strategy - including priority access for key student cohorts
- Wider WP initiatives
- Philanthropic support



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“It’s hard to pinpoint what I’ve gained because I honestly feel like I’ve gained a lot.

I’ve had my first experiences in a professional environment of sectors I want to pursue a career in. I’ve met brilliant people, both my fellow travellers and the alumni. My confidence has built immensely and I’m now aware of pathways I didn’t think were accessible to me.”

Insights student



Influencing the world since 1583



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insights.programme@ed.ac.uk

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/alumni/services/getting-involved/the-insights-programme>

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/careers/looking-for-work/internships/employed/insights-programme>