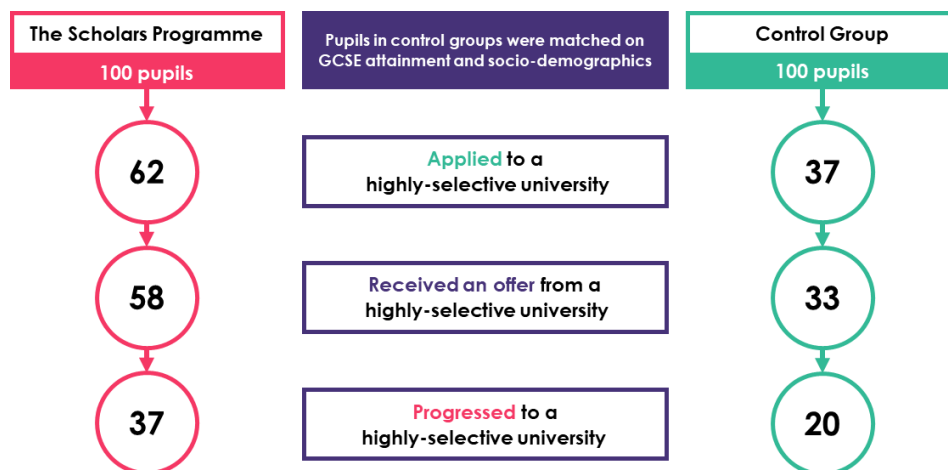


## The Scholars Programme – Independent Impact Evaluation Update

For the last four years, The Brilliant Club has worked with the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) to evaluate the impact of The Scholars Programme on progression to highly-selective universities.

For the fourth year running, pupils who completed The Scholars Programme are **statistically significantly more likely to apply, receive an offer and progress to a highly-selective university** than pupils from similar backgrounds.

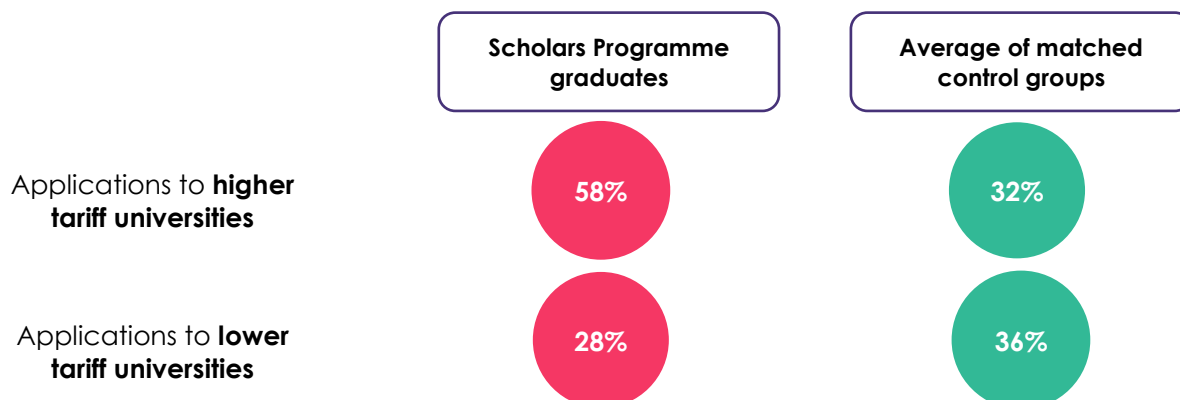
This year, UCAS compared outcomes for more than 800 Scholars Programme graduates with pupils in a number of matched control groups of a similar size. To provide a counter-factual analysis, pupils in the control groups were matched for a range of characteristics, including ethnicity, postcode and prior attainment at GCSE.



### Expanding the evaluation to younger age groups

For the first time this year, we include pupils who completed The Scholars Programme in Year 9, Year 10 or Year 12 (in previous years we only looked at Year 12), allowing us to evaluate **the impact of starting this type of intervention younger**. When including younger age groups, the overall difference remains significant for application, offer and progression to highly-selective universities. **As you can see above 37% of Scholars Programme graduates progressed to a highly-selective university compared to 20% of pupils in matched control groups.**

Further analysis shows a difference in application behaviour: **Scholars Programme graduates aim higher than their peers, with 58% of them applying to what UCAS call 'high tariff providers' compared to 32% in the matched control groups.**



### Continuous evaluation

Over the last four years, UCAS analysed the destination data of more than 1,900 pupils who completed The Scholars Programme in Year 9, Year 10 or Year 12 between 2015 and 2018. Of this group, 67% applied, 63% received an offer and 45% progressed to a highly-selective university.

## Technical notes

### Control group analysis

For this year's control group analysis, UCAS compared the intervention group of Scholars Programme graduates to about 500 matched groups of the same size with pupils from similar backgrounds. Differences between the groups are assessed for statistical significance. The headline statistics for applications to highly-selective universities of both groups are reported below:

Measure	The Scholars Programme (Y12, Y10 and Y9 pupils)		Average of matched control groups	Comparison
	Total	%	%	Statistical significance
Initial Cohort	808	-	-	n/a
Applied	500	62%	37%	Very significantly high
Offered (out of applied)	465	93%	88%	Very significantly high
Progressed (out of applied)	295	59%	54%	Significantly high

### Definitions

<b>UCAS STROBE</b>	UCAS completed this work as part of their STROBE service. More information is available at <a href="https://www.ucas.com/corporate/data-and-analysis/analytical-data-services/strobe">https://www.ucas.com/corporate/data-and-analysis/analytical-data-services/strobe</a>
<b>Matched control groups</b>	<p>UCAS used two data sources to build their matched control groups: First, a database of potential applicants was used to benchmark the application rate of the intervention group. Pupils were matched in terms of age, socio-demographics of the home address, and proportion of their nearest school being eligible for free school meals.</p> <p>Second, the UCAS application database was used to benchmark the progress of the intervention group through the application process (offer and progression rates). Pupils were matched by age, ethnicity, gender, socio-demographics of the home address, proportion of their school being eligible for free school meals, and GCSE attainment.</p>
<b>Significance level</b>	A significant result refers to a difference between groups, which is unlikely due to chance. This suggests that there is a 'real difference' between groups and the populations they are drawn from. A mildly significant result is more than 1 standard deviation from the mean, a significant result is more than 2 standard deviations from the mean, and a very significant result is more than 3 standard deviations from the mean. For example, 62% of pupils on The Scholars Programme applied to a highly-selective university compared to 37% of pupils in the control group. This was a very significantly high difference meaning that the result was more than 3 standard deviations from the mean.
<b>Highly-selective universities</b>	The Brilliant Club's mission is to increase the number of pupils from underrepresented backgrounds progressing to highly-selective universities, as outlined in our strategy, <a href="#">The Path to Outcomes</a> . For the purpose of this evaluation, we used the 'top third' list by the Department for Education, which can be found <a href="#">here</a> .

### Further information

For more information about this evaluation or about how The Brilliant Club measures its impact for pupils and stakeholders, please email the charity's Impact and Reporting Manager, Paul Rünz at [paul.ruenz@thebrilliantclub.org](mailto:paul.ruenz@thebrilliantclub.org)