

# The Panel on **Fair Access** to the **Professions**

---

**Phase 1 Report: an analysis of the trends and issues relating to fair access to the Professions**

**April 2009**

This paper has been prepared by the secretariat supporting the Panel. This Phase 1 Report contributes to the independent review and is not a statement of HM Government policy

Supported by the  
 **CabinetOffice**

# Contents

---

## Executive summary

Introduction

Why is fair access to the Professions important?

What are the barriers to access to the Professions?

Conclusions and next steps

## This report identifies a number of key issues and trends

### Key issues and trends in access to the Professions

- The analysis in this report draws on an extensive exercise that included formal evidence hearings, youth forums, and a national Call for Evidence. The Panel received more than 120 formal submissions comprising over 13,000 pages. A Phase 2 report to be published in May will provide a summary of all the consultation evidence including a review of best practice and the implications for public policy.
- The evidence confirms that the Professions are important to the UK's economy and society, and there is a strong case for government and the Professions to do more to ensure fair access for all.
- The Professions are made up of a diverse range of occupations. The number of professional jobs grew considerably over the course of the last century. Professions need the very best entrants to continue to thrive.
- While the Professions have made some progress on diversity issues such as the gender pay gap, the data shows that: (i) professionals typically grew up in families with incomes well above the average family's income; and (ii) relatively fewer people who grew up in families with around average incomes got into the Professions from the generation born in 1970 (i.e. educated in the 1980s, entered the labour market in the early-to-mid 1990s) compared to one born in 1958 (i.e. educated in the 1970s, entered the labour market in the 1980s).
- For the most recent generation born in 1990 trends in access to the Professions will not be known until the early 2010s, but improved education results provide new opportunities for improved rates of access to the Professions in the future.

## The evidence suggests that for access to the Professions to become fairer, action must be taken across the five entry steps

### Five entry steps into the Professions ...

1. Help for young people to better understand the Professions and raise their aspiration to join one. For example, only 1 in 5 young people from average backgrounds, and 1 in 8 young people from poorer backgrounds, currently aspires to be a professional – three times fewer than young people from professional backgrounds.
2. Support for young people through the education and talent development pathways to entering the Professions. For example, 7 in 10 young people are unhappy with the careers support they receive. In addition, while soft skills are increasingly valued by employers, not all young people have the opportunities to acquire these.
3. Opportunities to gain practical experience of the Professions. Internships are becoming a more important entry route to the Professions, although many are unpaid, and more sourced through connections than advertisements. Currently, 4 in 5 employers recruit former interns, and over 9 in 10 young people say that an internship helped to raise their aspirations and improve their CV.
4. Recruitment and selection processes that give everyone an equal chance of becoming a professional. For example, 7 in 10 of the top graduate recruiters target only 20 of the 167 UK universities.
5. Flexible routes for aspiring professionals to enter and progress in the Professions – at different life stages, or with different qualifications and career experiences. For example, while vocational qualification routes have been expanded, only 0.2% of apprentices progress to further or higher education and few direct to the Professions.

## The evidence is clear that support across the five entry steps into the Professions is important for all young people, not just those from less well off backgrounds

### Many of the issues require support for young people from all backgrounds ...

- High quality information, advice and guidance about what the Professions do and how to get into them
- Opportunities to gain practical experience of the Professions
- Opportunities to develop crucial soft skills and wider capabilities
- Fair selection processes and open and accessible marketing of positions
- Flexible entry and progression routes in

### ... while some specific issues are more important for young people from less well off backgrounds

- Support to develop professional aspirations, and to navigate the routes into the Professions, particularly for young people without parents, or wider family and friends in professional occupations
- Certain financial barriers such as the impact of unpaid internships
- Support for those entering the Professions from non-traditional routes such as those wishing to learn while working for financial reasons

This suggests that ensuring fair access into the Professions will mean combining measures that are **universal for all**, with other support that is **targeted to some**

## The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions was established by the Prime Minister in January 2009

### Scope

- The Panel was announced as part of the New Opportunities White Paper to examine what more can be done to “ensure fair access to careers in key professions”
- The Panel’s remit is to:
  - review the processes and structures that govern recruitment into the Professions
  - make recommendations to HM Government and the Professions on actions to improve access for all groups
- The Panel’s focus is on social mobility. It is not looking in detail at (i) wider issues of diversity such as gender and race; or (ii) education issues such as the school curriculum or the higher education finance system

### Structure

- An independent review chaired by the Rt. Hon Alan Milburn MP
- Comprised of a panel of 18 representatives from a range of professions and 2 expert members – and consulting widely with all professional groups
- Supported by a Cabinet Office secretariat

### Timeline

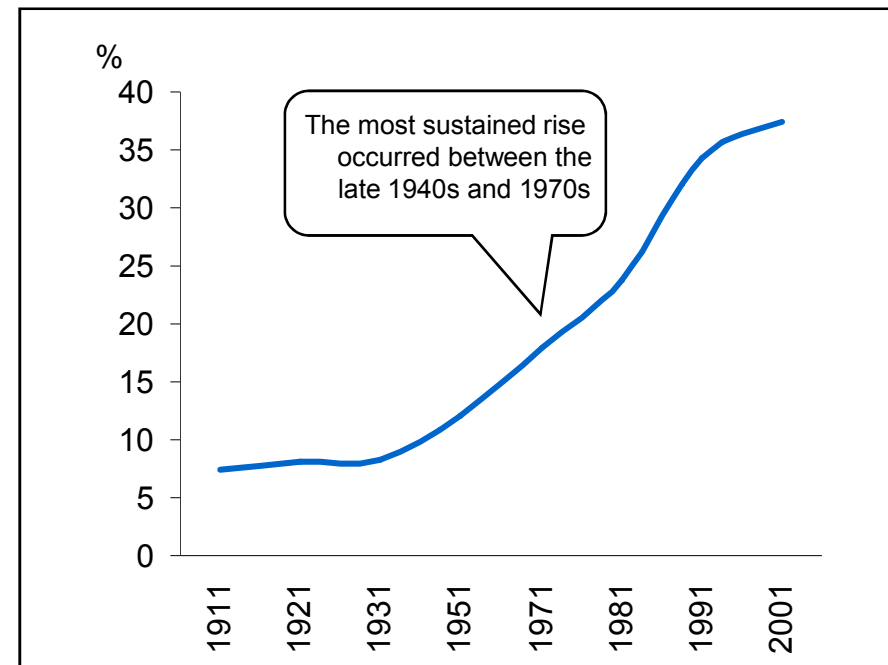
- From January until May, the Panel are conducting an extensive evidence gathering exercise including a national Call for Evidence through which more than 120 submissions amounting to over 13,000 pages have been received, a series of youth forums, evidence hearings and wider consultation and research
- This is a Phase 1 Report which analyses the main trends and issues in relation to fair access to the Professions. A Phase 2 Report, to be published in May, will summarise all evidence received and review current best practice. The Panel’s final report is due in Summer 2009

## There is no single definition of the Professions, although there are a number of common features

- Common features include recognisable entry points, a code of ethics, a system of self-regulation and a strong sense of vocation and professional development
- Different typologies or groups of the Professions include:
  - Traditional and vocationally trained professions: such as medicine and the law
  - Management and Business Services professions such as executive positions in accountancy, banking, consultancy, and business advice
  - Creative industry professions: including the top levels of journalism, publishing, media and the arts
  - Public service professions: such as the senior and managerial levels in the civil service, local government, armed forces, police and academia

### There has been a steady rise in the number of professional and managerial posts in the UK

% professional and managerial occupations in the labour force<sup>1</sup>



(1) UK Census data 2001

## Professions are important to the UK's economy and society, and there are clear reasons why fair access to them is important

### The Professions are important to the UK's economic, social and civic life

- Professions remain vital to **economic** success. With long term structural growth likely to continue to be in knowledge intensive jobs, the UK will require new professionals to enter the labour market between now and 2020 – some studies suggest up to 7 million new professionals will be needed by 2020 (including retirement and replacement and structural change)<sup>1</sup>
- Professionals make an important **social contribution**, for example through delivering public services, representing and serving the public interest, and volunteering their time and expertise to the third sector
- Professions are a vital part of the UK's **civic life** and its institutions – such as the National Health Service, the legal system and schools and universities

### There are clear reasons why fair access to the Professions is important

- Ensuring fair access to professions is important for a number of reasons:
  - The Professions are **growing in numbers** and need access to the widest possible pool of talent
  - The principle of **fairness and equality** of opportunity is itself almost universally accepted as an objective
  - Enabling a wider pool of talent to reach their potential will increase **economic efficiency** and productivity
  - Giving everyone fair chances may contribute to **social cohesion and inclusion** objectives
- There is a **strong business case** for employers to help ensure fair access for all groups

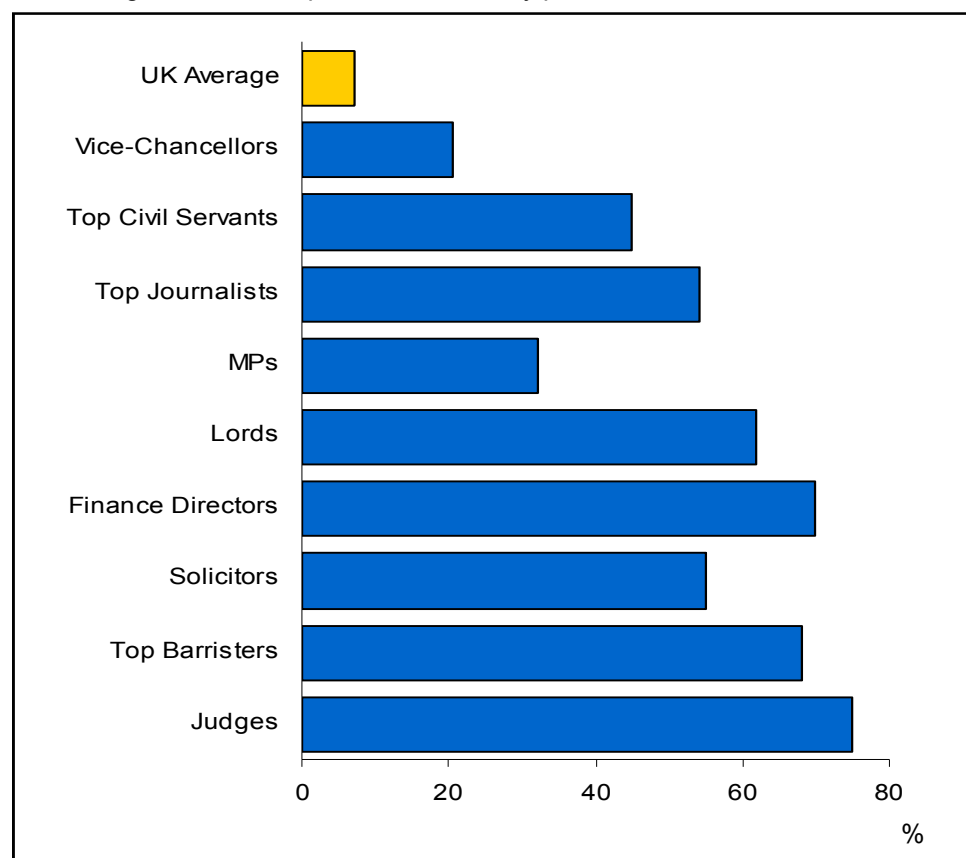
(1) Leitch Review of Skills, HMT (2004)



# At present the Professions are not representative – for example over half the professionals in a range of occupations went to independent schools

**7% of the population attend independent schools up to age 16 (and 20% to age 18) yet those who attended independent schools represent over half of many professions**

% having attended independent schools by profession<sup>1</sup>



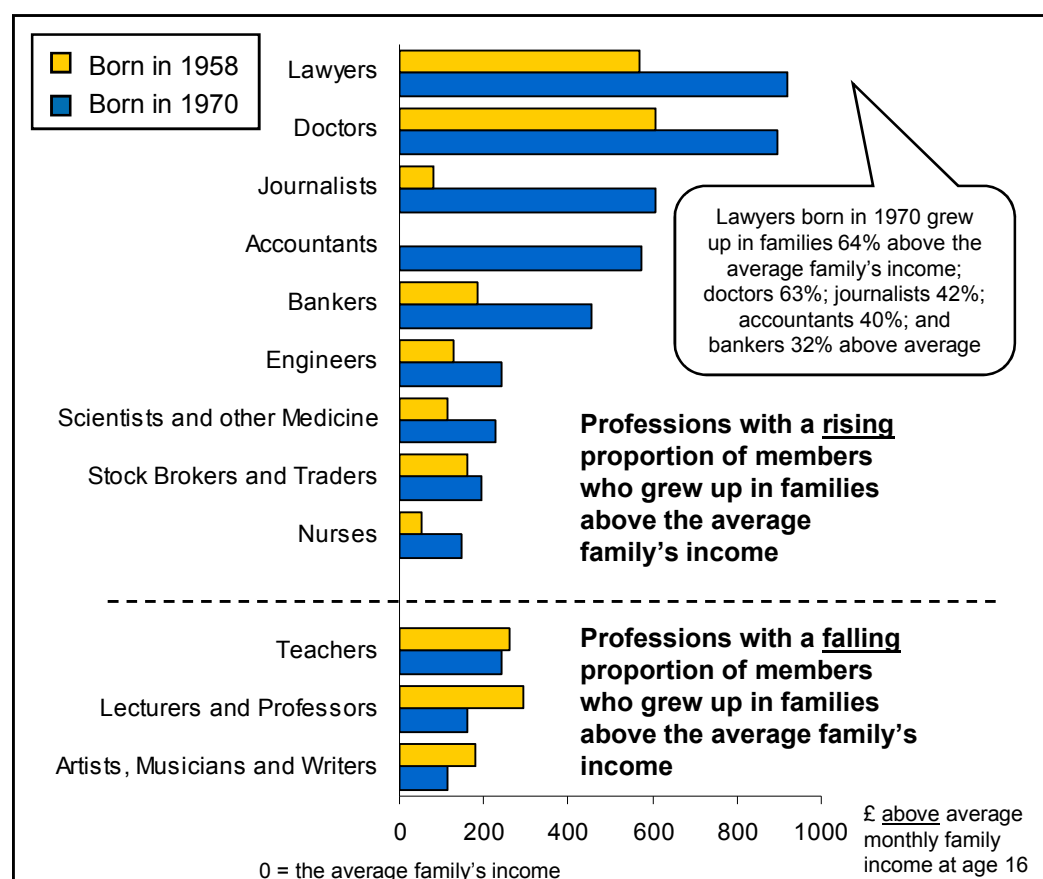
- Fair access is about ensuring people have equal chances to entering Professions – and have a level playing field to make choices about how they fulfil their potential
- Yet at present there is strong evidence that wider factors, such as family background, influence these life chances
- For example, 75% of judges, 70% of finance directors, 45% of top civil servants, and 32% of MPs were independently schooled
- This contrasts to only 7% of the population attending an independent school up to GCSE (rising to 20% at A-Level age)
- However, it is important to note that at these very senior levels of the Professions this reflects trends from entry into the Professions dating back to the 1960s and 1970s

(1) Sutton Trust, amalgamation of various reports on educational backgrounds (various years)

# Current professionals typically grew up in families with incomes well above the average, and the generation of professionals born in 1970 grew up in even better off families than those born in 1958

## Professionals born in 1970 grew up in better off family backgrounds than the previous generation born in 1958

£ above average monthly family income at age 16 by professional status at age 33<sup>1</sup>



- The 1970 birth cohort were educated in the 1980s and entered the labour market from the early-to-mid 1990s. The 1958 birth cohort were educated in the 1960s and 1970s and entered the labour market from the early 1980s
- In all professions sampled, and for both cohorts, professionals typically grew up in families with incomes well above the average
- In 9 of the 12 examined, the data records an increase in people coming from better off families between the 1958 and the 1970 generations
- For the 1970 birth generation, lawyers, doctors, and journalists on average grew up in families with the highest income of all professionals
- The greatest relative change in professionals growing up in above average family incomes has been for journalists and accountants

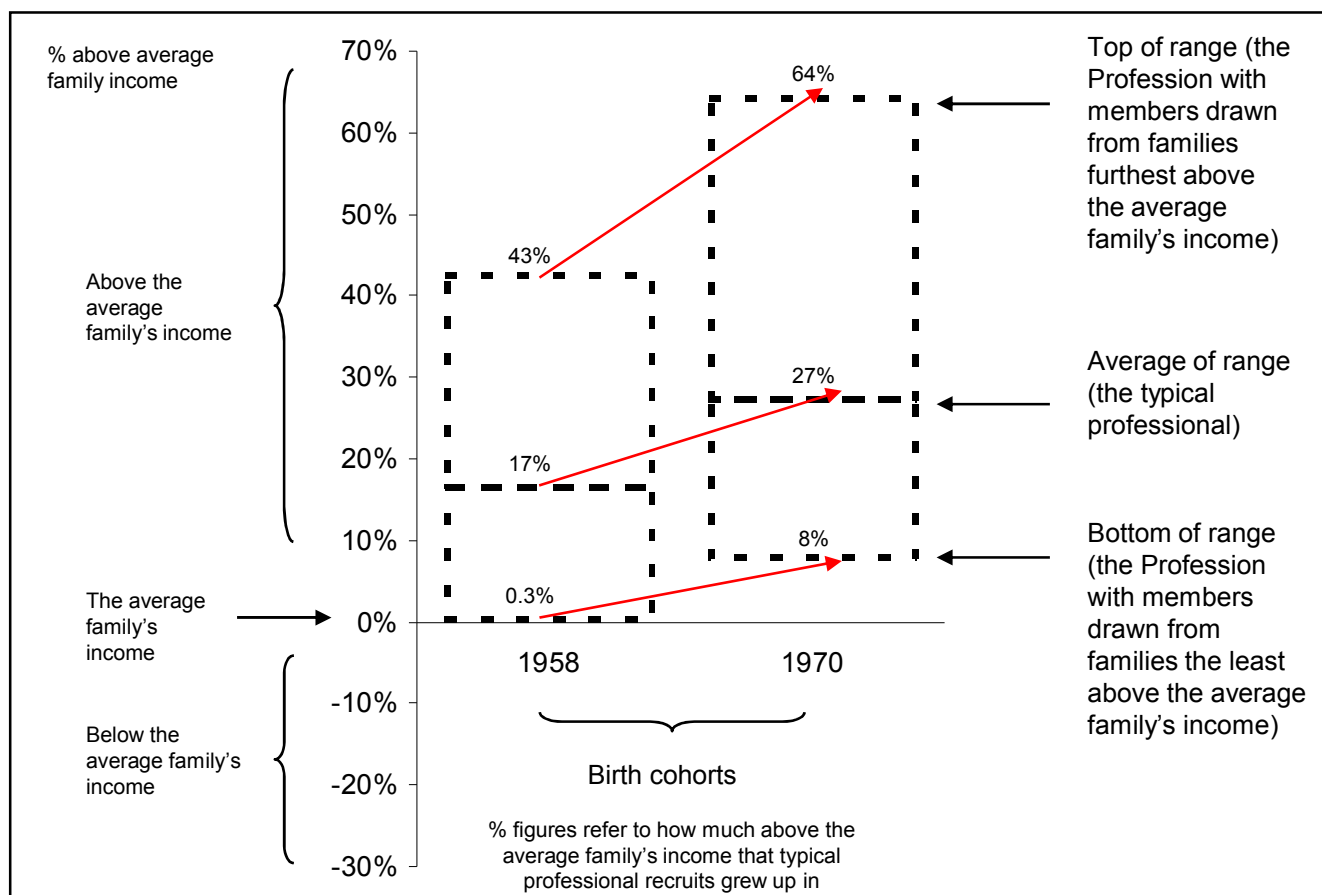
Notes: this data looks at people's professional occupation at age 33 and examines the family background they grew up in (specifically their family's income at age 16). It compares two cohorts – those born in 1958 (from the National Child Development Survey) and those born in 1970 (from the British Cohort Survey).

For both cohorts the average family income is indexed to 2001 prices

# The data shows that fewer people who grew up in families with around average incomes got into the Professions from the 1970 birth generation compared to the 1958 generation

## The Professions recruited more people who grew up in families with, on average, from higher income in the 1970 generation than the 1958 group

% above average monthly family income at age 16 by professional status at age 33, range by professions

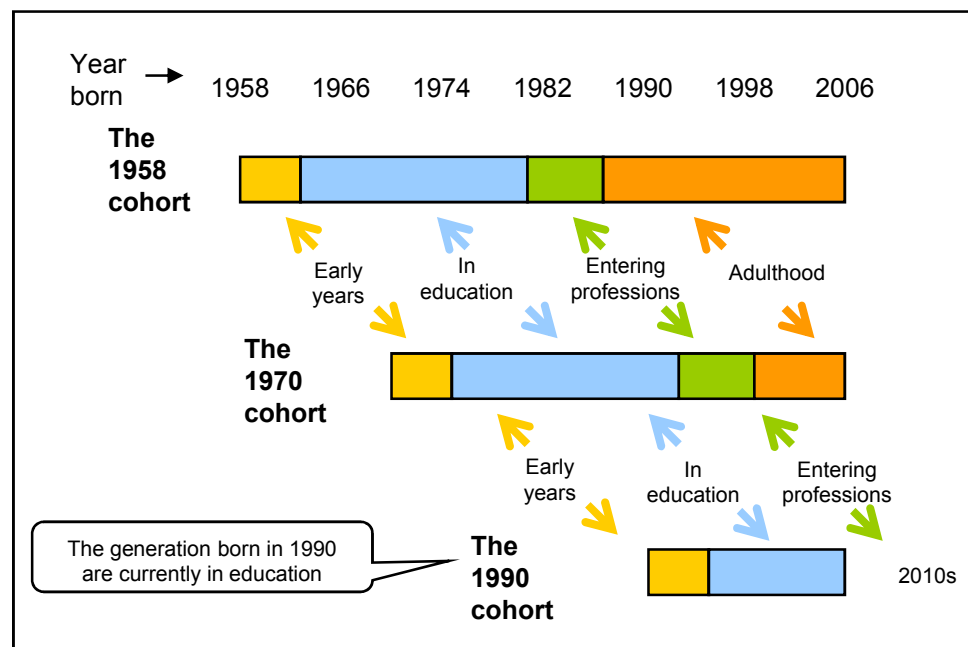


- The typical professional born in 1958 grew up in a family 17% above the average family's income
- The typical professional born in 1970 grew up in a family 27% above the average family's income
- The spread of family backgrounds that the Professions recruited from shifted toward more well off, and away from average income families, between the '58 and '70 generations
- For the '58 generation the range was between 0.3% above the average family's income (accountants) to 43% above the average (doctors)
- For the '70 generation the range was between 8% above the average family's income (writers and artists) to 64% the above average (lawyers)

# Trends in access to the Professions for the generation born in 1990 will not be known until the 2010s, but improved education results provides a prospect of higher rates of access in the future

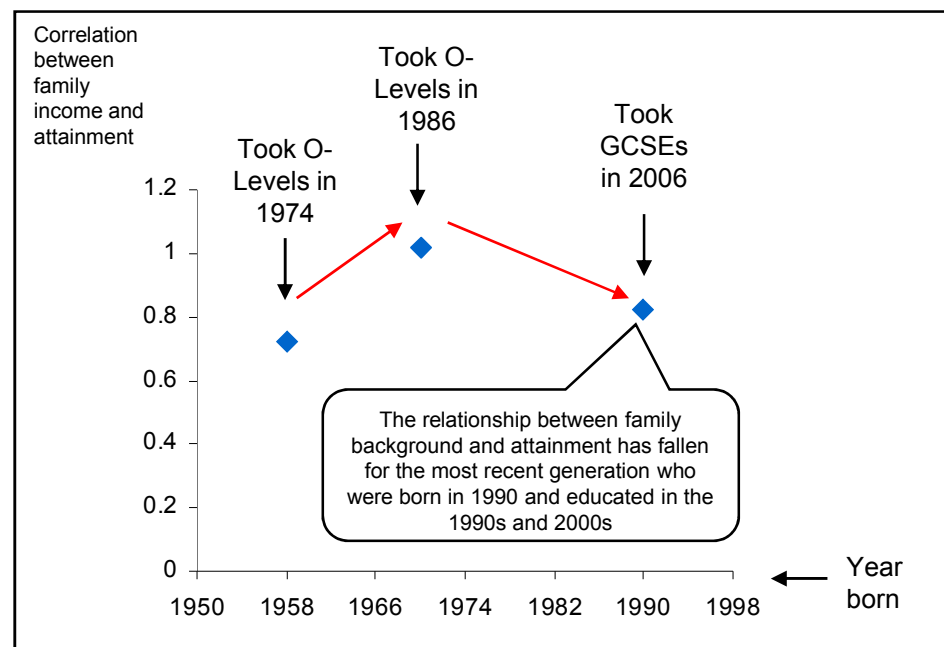
**The generation born in 1990 are currently in education, so trends about entry into the Professions won't be known until the early 2010s...**

Life phase by birth generation



**... but with the importance of family background on attainment falling, this provides an opportunity for future improved access rates to the Professions**

Relationship between family income and GCSE/O-Level attainment<sup>1</sup>



- Given people typically enter professional occupations from their mid 20s, and the importance of taking a whole life course approach to access to the Professions, it is difficult to assess trends in access rates to the Professions for the most recent generation and the impact of policy decisions in education for those not yet in the labour market
- But education is a key entry step and recent improved results provide new opportunities for the current generation

(1) Gregg and Macmillan (2008) Intergenerational Mobility and Education in the Next Generation

# Ensuring fair access means everyone having an equal chance to realise potential – which will require tackling a number of related barriers across the five entry steps into the Professions

## 1. Knowledge and aspiration

These relate to gaps in the knowledge young people have about the Professions, what they do, how to get into them, and to the support young people have to develop aspirations to be a professional

## 2. Education and talent development pathways

These relate to missed opportunities from choices made about education and training options, and to the opportunities young people have to develop the wider capabilities and skills that are increasingly valuable

## 3. Practical experience and managing uncertainty

These relate to the opportunities to gain practical experience of the Professions, for example, through internships, and promotion of the long-term benefits of entering professions alongside support through the first steps in

## 4. Selection processes and policies

These relate to selection processes and policies used in the recruitment of professionals – for example how widely targeted recruitment and marketing schemes are, and what types of interview and selection processes are used

## 5. The flexibility of entry and progression routes

These relate to the flexibility of entry and progression routes in the Professions – for example for aspiring professionals at different stages of life, or with different qualifications and career experiences

# Contents

---

Executive summary

**Introduction**

Why is fair access to the Professions important?

What are the barriers to access to the Professions?

Conclusions and next steps

## The Panel on Fair Access to the Professions was established following the New Opportunities White Paper in January

---

- The New Opportunities White Paper (January 2009) put forward proposals to address social mobility at every stage of a person's life, and established the Panel to look at entry to the Professions. It committed to:
  - Extending a pilot scheme to ensure access to high quality early learning and childcare for two-year-olds
  - Launching a £10,000 incentive to encourage the most effective teachers into the most challenging schools
  - Rolling out employer led Group Training Associations to offer Apprenticeships in their sectors
  - Beginning to introduce up to 10 new Apprenticeship training associations
  - Starting to increase the number of Apprenticeships available within the public sector
  - Launching volunteer programmes
  - Starting to pilot new earned rights for those caring for adults and children
  - National roll-out of mentoring for care-leavers and families starts
  - Guaranteeing young people from a low income background with the potential to benefit from higher education a package of support and mentoring to help them reach their full potential
- Since then the Government has committed to fund a further 21,000 apprenticeships in the public sector
- A key announcement in the White Paper was the setting up the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions. The Panel was set up to look at the processes and structures that govern recruitment into the Professions, with a focus on the contribution and actions the Professions, supported by government where required, could undertake to improve fair access for all

# Professions encompass a range of different roles

## Common features of the Professions

- There are many different professions, which each operate in different ways – for example there are over 130 professional bodies in the UK
- Nonetheless common features include:
  - Recognisable entry points: for example with standard qualification requirements
  - A code of ethics: that sets out a code of professional responsibility
  - A system of self regulation: for example setting and regulating standards for professional development
  - A strong sense of vocation and professional development

## One can think of various different groups or typologies of professions

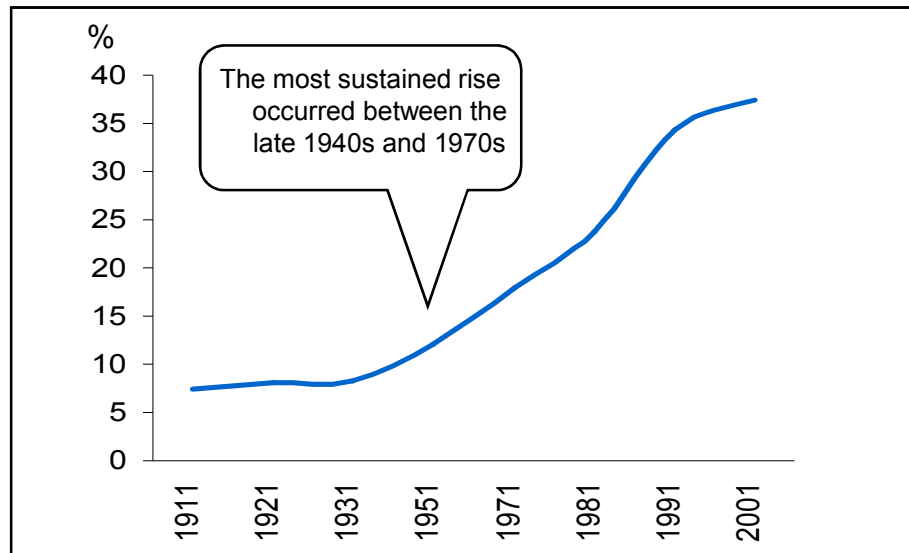
- Traditional and vocationally trained professions: such as medicine and the law
- Management and Business Services professions such as executive positions in accountancy, banking, consultancy, and business advice
- Creative industry professions: including the top levels of journalism, publishing, media and the arts
- Public service professions: such as the senior and managerial levels in the civil service, local government, armed forces, police and academia



# There has been a substantial rise in the number of professional and managerial positions in the UK, from 1 in 13 at the turn of the last century to 1 in 3 now

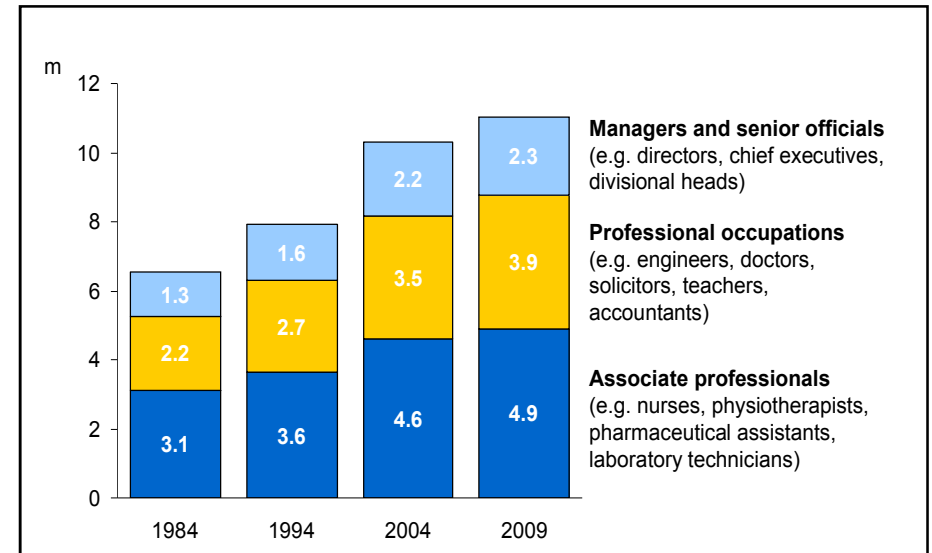
## There has been a steady rise in the number of professionals in the UK

% of labour force professional and managerial occupations<sup>1</sup>



## The rise in the number of professional and managerial posts occurred across all categories

Million professionals in labour force by classification<sup>2</sup>

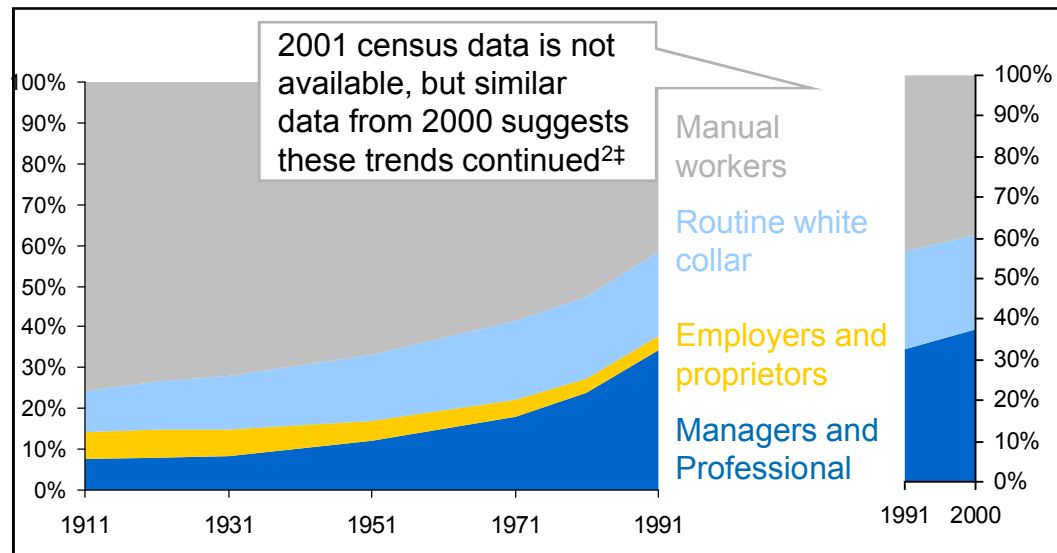


- Professional and managerial jobs have become steadily more important to the UK economy over the past 100 years. In 2001, over 25% of the labour force held professional and managerial jobs
- There are around 11 million people in the UK currently in professional and managerial occupations, equivalent to 1 in 3 of the labour force, and around 4 million in specific vocational professions
- Despite the recent downturn, the world economy is still expected to double in the next twenty years – the UK is well placed to continue to benefit from with a corresponding growth in the number of professionals

## This rise in managerial and professional jobs in the second half of the twentieth century gave rise to a large wave of social mobility

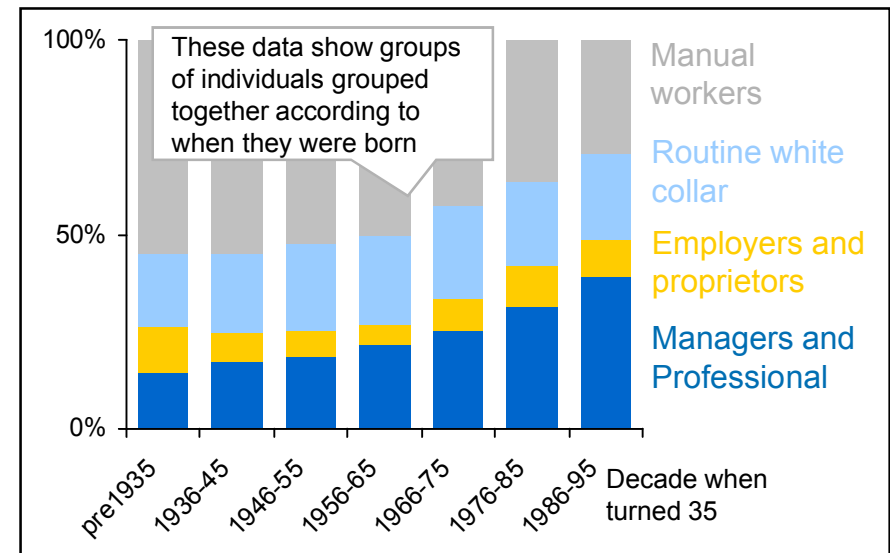
**As the economy changed, manual work increasingly gave way to managerial and professional jobs**

Occupational classes 1911-91<sup>1</sup>



**Therefore, successive generations have been more likely to get higher quality jobs**

Occupational class of adults aged 35 and over<sup>2</sup>

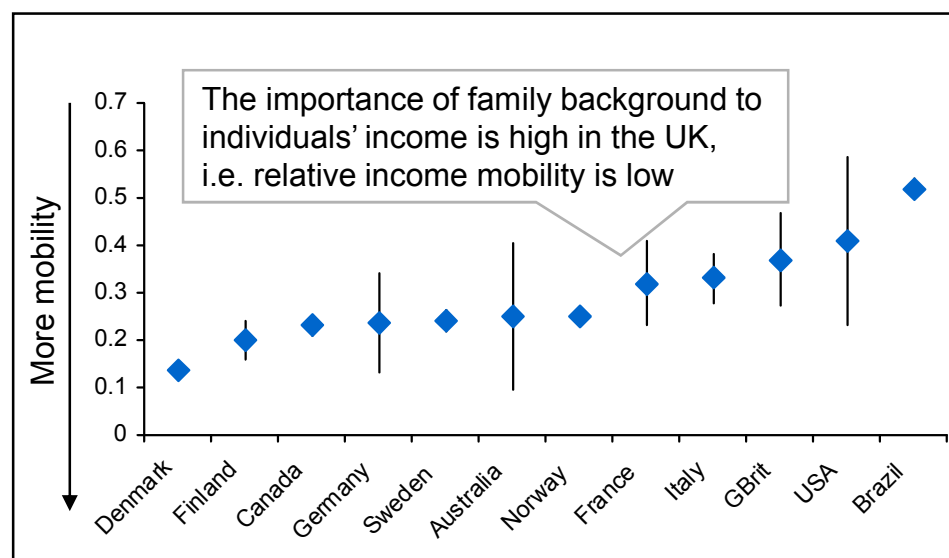


- When classifying the UK population into occupational classes (above left) it is clear that there was an acceleration in the creation of better jobs after the war, and that these jobs have continued to be created rapidly
- As would be expected, when classifying successive generations into occupational classes (above right) there was also an acceleration in the number of people in each generation attaining good jobs after the war. Later cohorts were, therefore, more likely to gain a better job than their parents and achieve social mobility
- Those born in the 1950s and early 1960s were three times as likely to be a professional at age 35 compared to those born during or before the Second World War

## Despite this, family background has historically been more important in predicting outcomes in the UK than some other countries

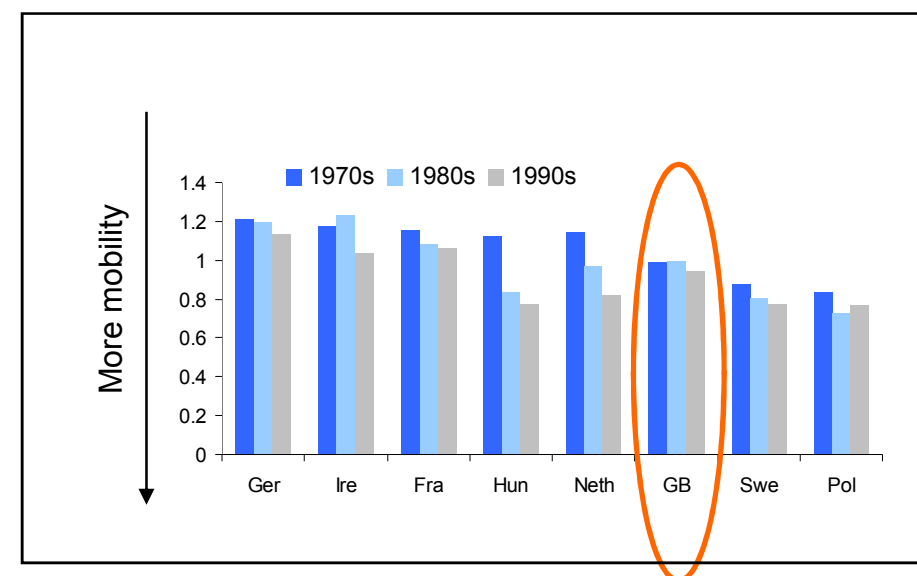
**For those born around 1960, parental income was a bigger determinant of an individual's income in Britain, than in places such as Denmark and Canada**

Intergenerational income elasticities, by country, lines 5% confidence intervals<sup>1</sup>



**But father's occupation was a smaller determinant of British people's occupation in Great Britain in the 1970s, 80s and 90s than in countries like Germany**

Parameter estimates of class fluidity in each decade, by country<sup>2</sup>



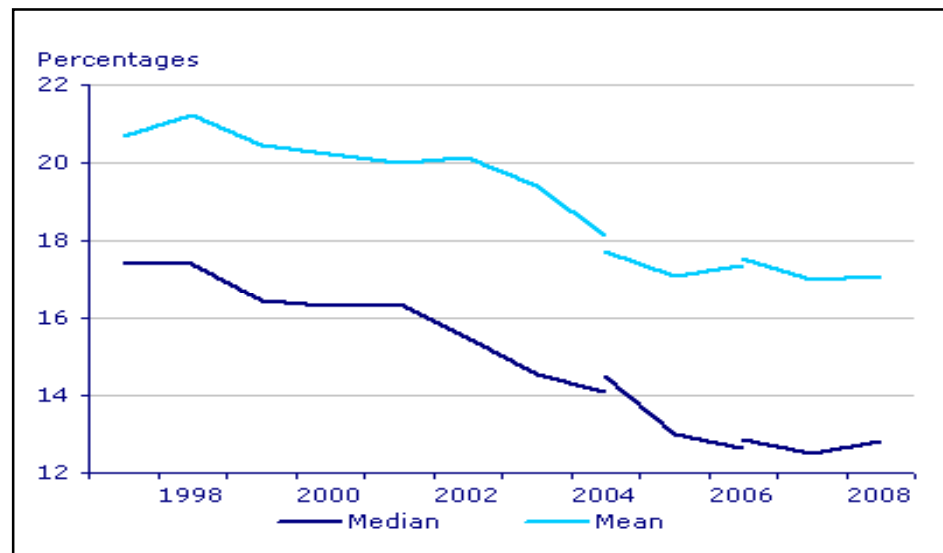
- International comparisons of the importance of family background to both income and occupational class rely on data from the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s and are very uncertain<sup>1</sup>
- One study suggests that for children born in the 1960s, the UK was at the top of a list of nine industrialised countries in terms of the importance of family background on individuals' incomes<sup>3</sup>
- But recent literature reviews show that other data suggest the UK is closer to the middle of the pack<sup>1</sup>

(1) Blanden and Machin (2008) Up and Down the Generational Income Ladder (2) Breen and Luijkx (2004) Social Mobility in Europe between 1970 and 200, (3) Corak, 2006 - This material is drawn from the discussion paper 'Getting on, getting ahead', Strategy Unit, Cabinet Office (2008)

## While more needs to be done, the Professions have made some progress on wider diversity and equality issues such as tackling the gender pay gap

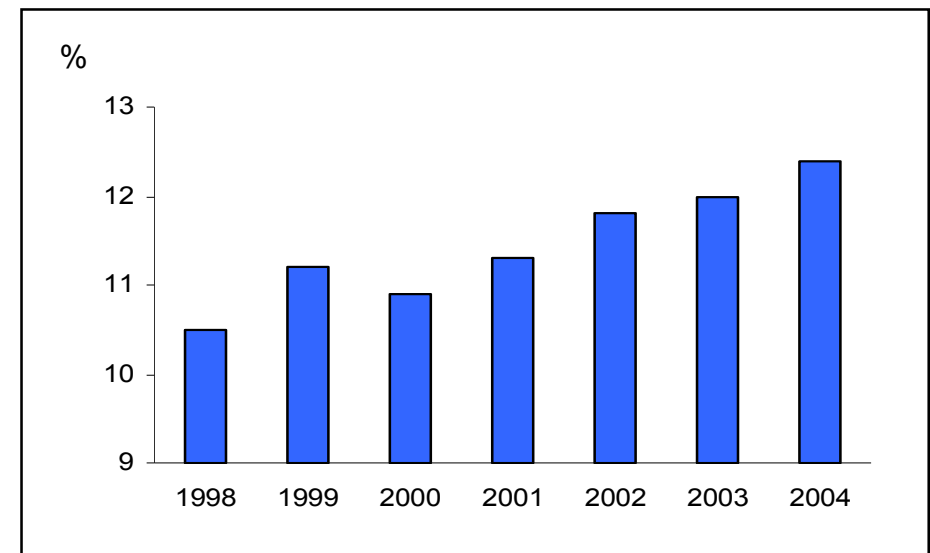
### A gender pay gap still exists but has been considerably reduced over the last decade

% mean and median difference in pay by gender<sup>1</sup>



### The number of disabled people employed in professional sectors has increased

% of all employed disabled, employed in the public sector<sup>2</sup>



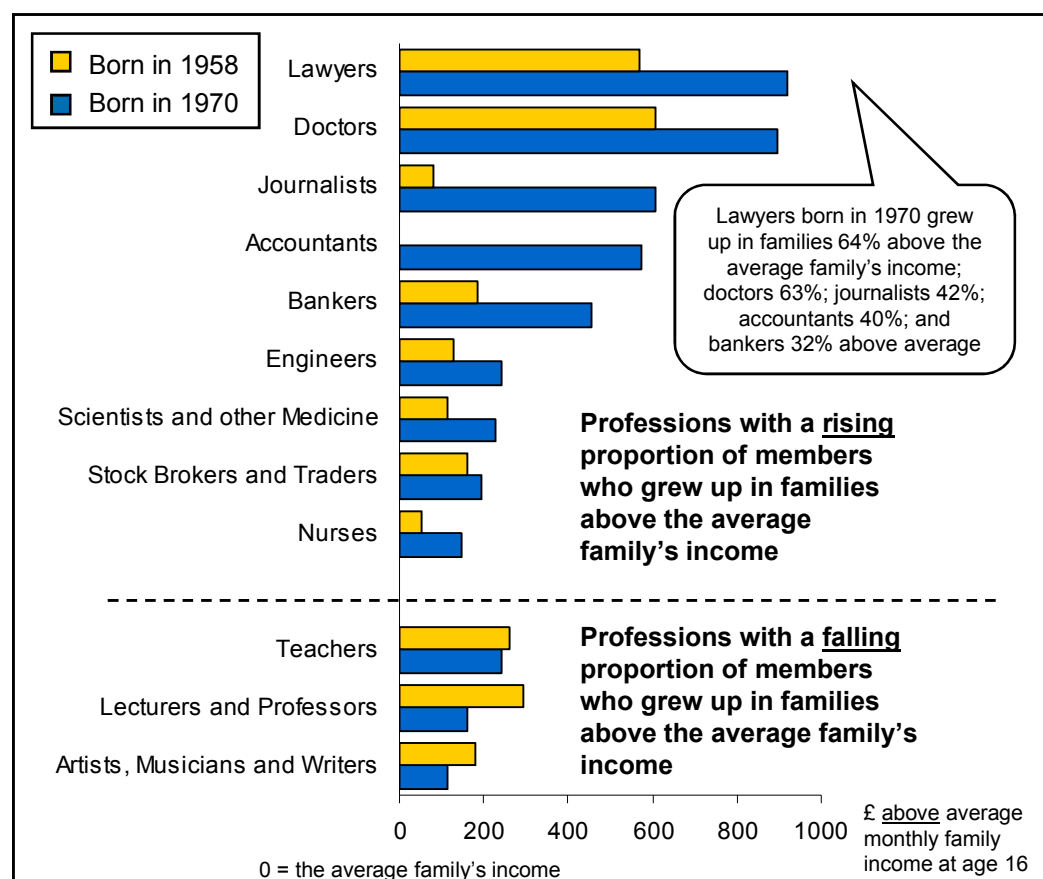
- The gender pay gap (as measured by the median hourly pay excluding overtime of full-time employees) narrowed between 2006 and 2007 to its lowest value since records began<sup>1</sup>
- Over 840,000 disabled people were employed in the public sector in 2004, a third more than in 1998<sup>2</sup>
- Women represented over 40% of those employed in the Legal and Health professions in 2000 and over 60% of those employed in the teaching profession<sup>3</sup>

(1) ONS FOG (2007), (2) ONS Labour Market Trends (2005), (3) ONS (2000)

# Current professionals typically grew up in families with incomes well above the average, and the generation of professionals born in 1970 grew up in even better off families than those born in 1958

## Professionals born in 1970 grew up in better off family backgrounds than the previous generation born in 1958

£ above average monthly family income at age 16 by professional status at age 33<sup>1</sup>



- The 1970 birth cohort were educated in the 1980s and entered the labour market from the early-to-mid 1990s. The 1958 birth cohort were educated in the 1960s and 1970s and entered the labour market from the early 1980s
- In all professions sampled, and for both cohorts, professionals typically grew up in families with incomes well above the average
- In 9 of the 12 examined, the data records an increase in people coming from better off families between the 1958 and the 1970 generations
- For the 1970 birth generation, lawyers, doctors, and journalists on average grew up in families with the highest income of all professionals
- The greatest relative change in professionals growing up in above average family incomes has been for journalists and accountants

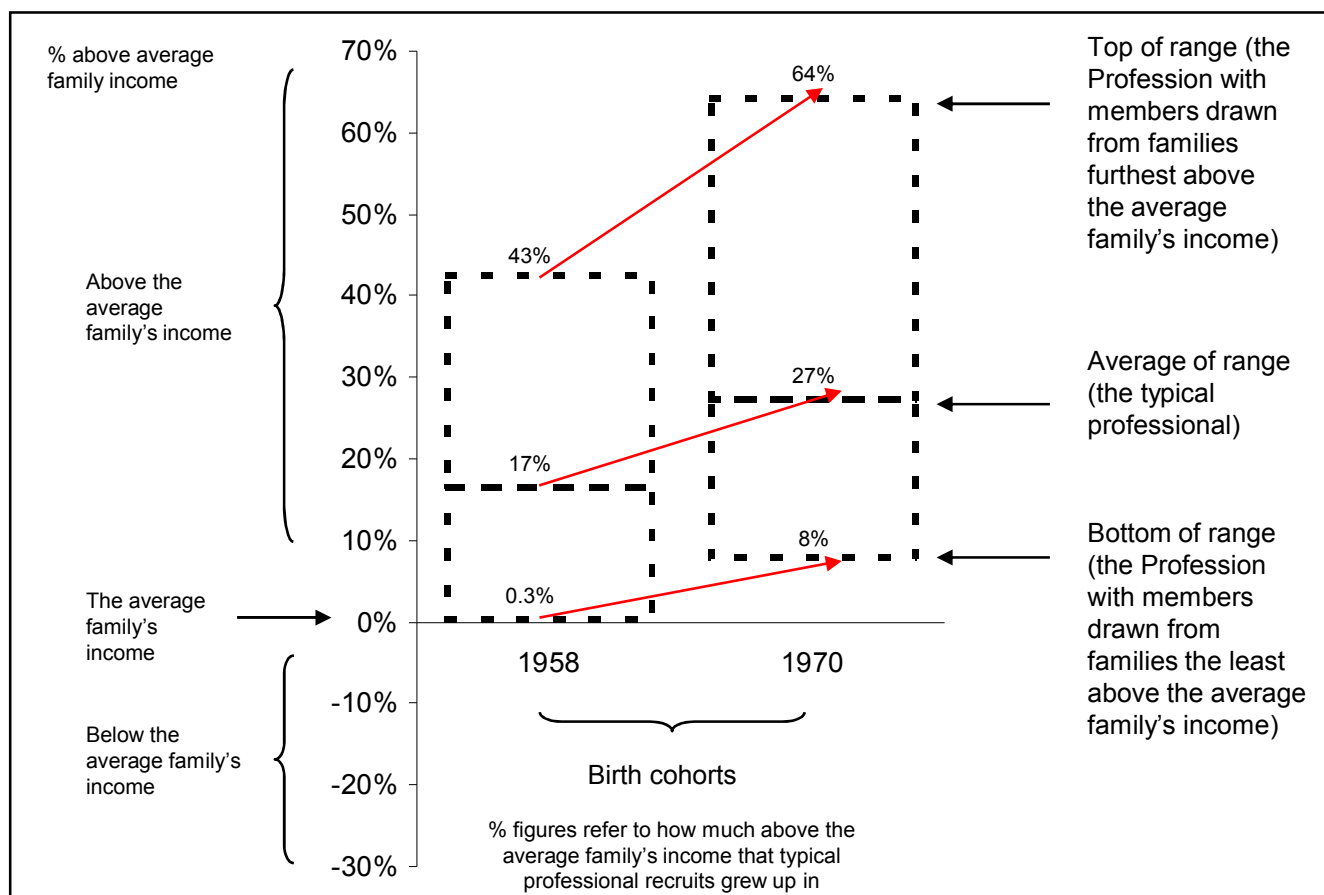
Notes: this data looks at people's professional occupation at age 33 and examines the family background they grew up in (specifically their family's income at age 16). It compares two cohorts – those born in 1958 (from the National Child Development Survey) and those born in 1970 (from the British Cohort Survey).

For both cohorts the average family income is indexed to 2001 prices

## The data shows that fewer people who grew up in families with around average incomes got into the Professions from the 1970 birth generation compared to the 1958 generation

### The Professions recruited more people who grew up in families with, on average, from higher income in the 1970 generation than the 1958 group

% above average monthly family income at age 16 by professional status at age 33, range by professions

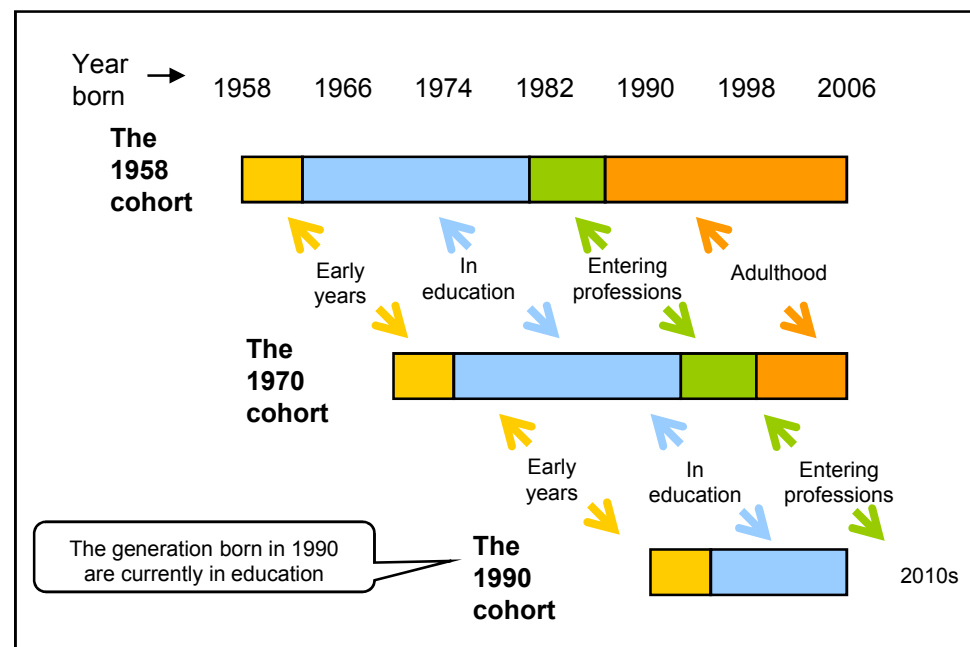


- The typical professional born in 1958 grew up in a family 17% above the average family's income
- The typical professional born in 1970 grew up in a family 27% above the average family's income
- The spread of family backgrounds that the Professions recruited from shifted toward more well off, and away from average income families, between the '58 and '70 generations
- For the '58 generation the range was between 0.3% above the average family's income (accountants) to 43% above the average (doctors)
- For the '70 generation the range was between 8% above the average family's income (writers and artists) to 64% the above average (lawyers)

## Trends in access to the Professions for the generation born in 1990 will not be known until the 2010s, but improved education results provides a prospect of higher rates of access in the future

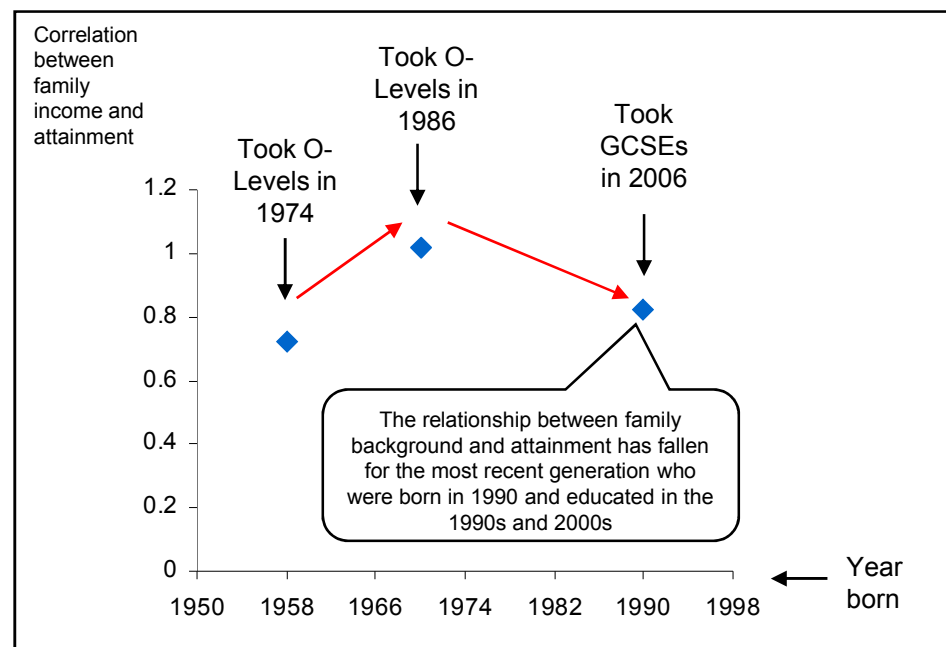
The generation born in 1990 are currently in education, so trends about entry into the Professions won't be known until the early 2010s...

Life phase by birth generation



... but with the importance of family background on attainment falling, this provides an opportunity for future improved access rates to the Professions

Relationship between family income and GCSE/O-Level attainment<sup>1</sup>



- Given people typically enter professional occupations from their mid 20s, and the importance of taking a whole life course approach to access to the Professions, it is difficult to assess trends in access rates to the Professions for the most recent generation and the impact of policy decisions in education for those not yet in the labour market
- But education is a key entry step and recent improved results provide new opportunities for the current generation

(1) Gregg and Macmillan (2008) Intergenerational Mobility and Education in the Next Generation

# Contents

---

Executive summary

Introduction

**Why is fair access to the Professions important?**

What are the barriers to access to the Professions?

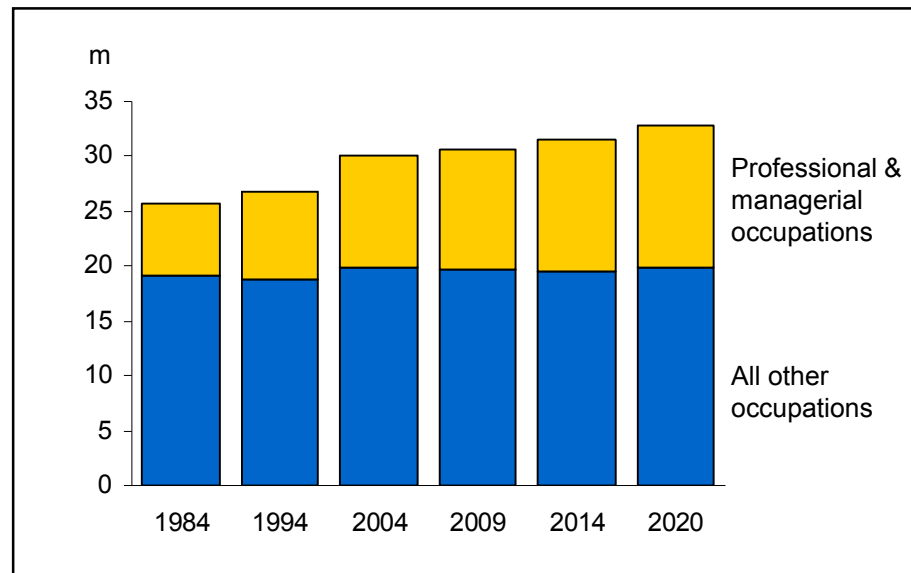
Conclusions and next steps



# Access to the Professions is crucial to economic success – some studies suggest in the long term the economy will need up to 7 million new professionals from structural change and replacement needs

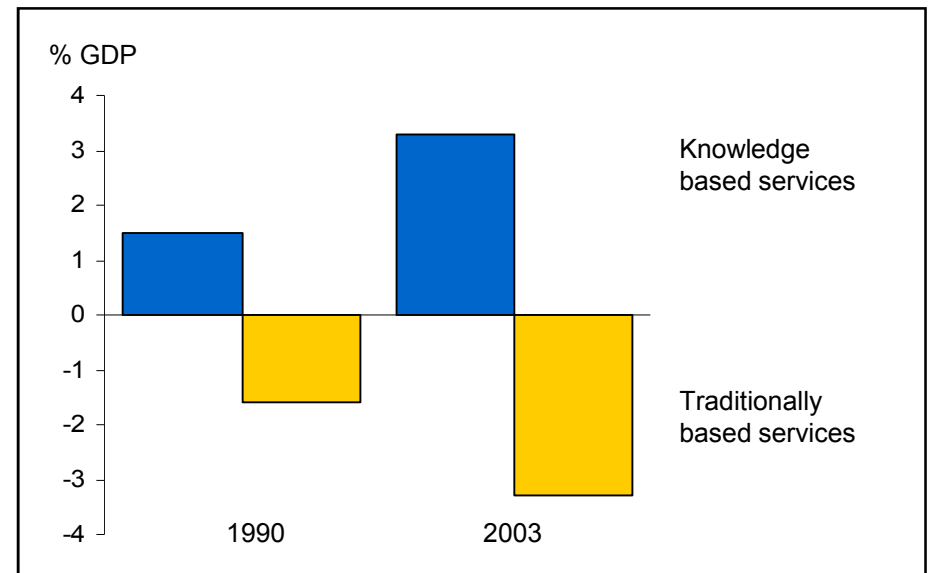
## The UK will need 6.8m new entrants into the Professions by 2020

Historical and forecast labour force by occupation<sup>1</sup>



## The UK will need to compete most fiercely in the knowledge intensive sectors of the economy

Components of services income in UK balance of payments, %GDP<sup>2</sup>



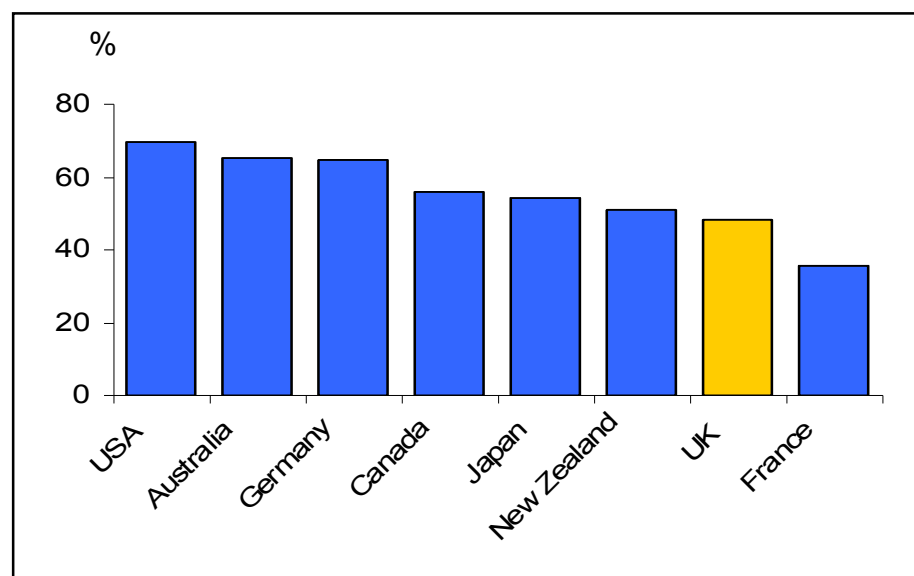
- Some studies suggest long term structural growth will be most concentrated in the professional and managerial sectors of the economy, with up to 9 in 10 of the jobs created likely to be in these sectors
- Demands through structural change and replacement needs can be met through new entry to the labour force (e.g. graduates), from the existing labour force (e.g. through upskilling), and from other sources (e.g. re-entry to the labour force or net migration)

(1) Warwick Institute of Employment Research and Leitch Review of Skills (2004), (2) Rowthorne et al.

# Ensuring everyone has a fair chance to achieve their potential in life is an almost universally accepted principle

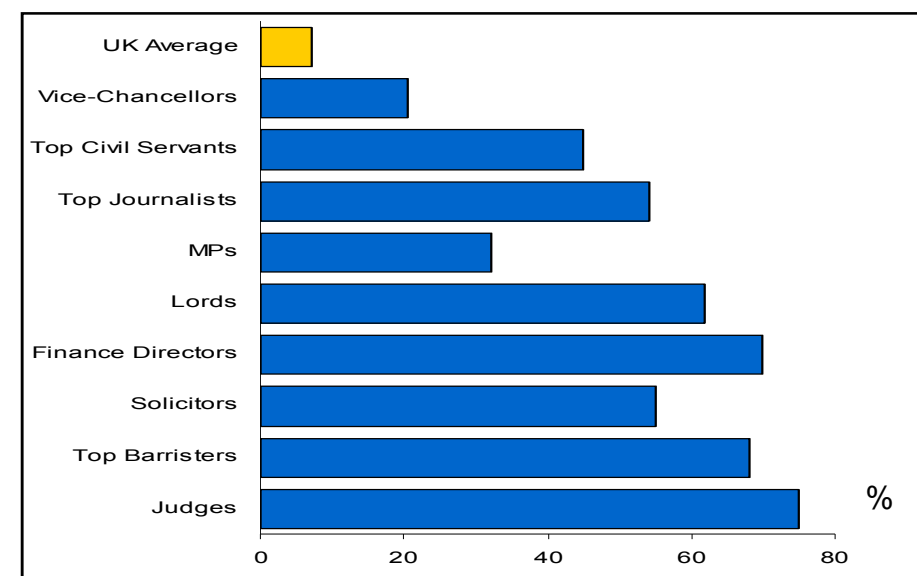
## Under half the UK population think there are fair rewards for skills, lower than in many other countries

% agree/ strongly agree that 'people get rewarded for skills'<sup>1</sup>



## Over half the professionals in many of the top Professions were independently schooled

% having attended independent schools by profession<sup>2</sup>



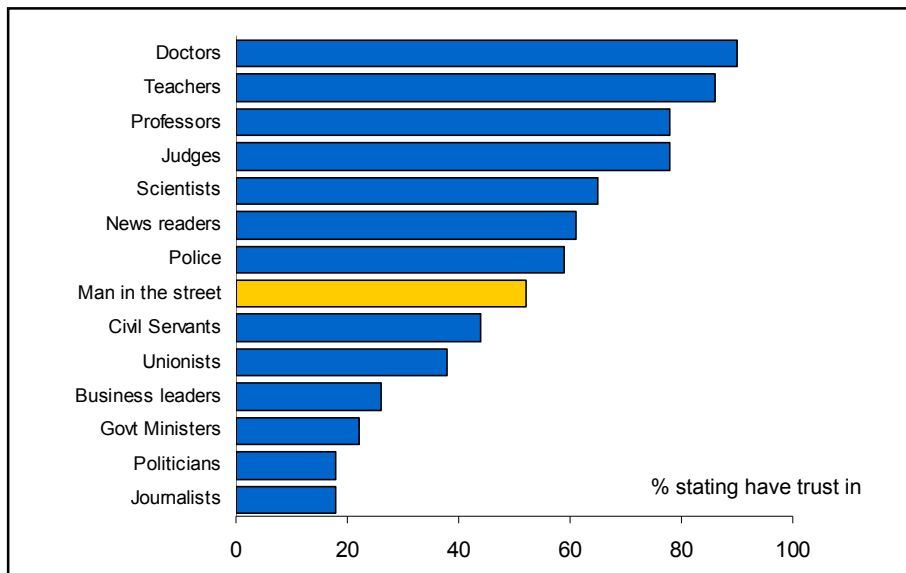
- Fair life chances is about ensuring people have choices about how they fulfil their potential. Yet at present there is strong evidence that wider factors such as family background influence these life chances
- For example, despite only 7% of the population attending a independent school up to GCSE age (and 20% at A-Level age), in many professions well over half have done so (Note: this does in part reflect historical patterns)

(1) International Social Survey Programme, (2) Sutton Trust, amalgamation of various reports on educational backgrounds (various years)

## Fair chances to access the Professions can also contribute to wider social and civic objectives

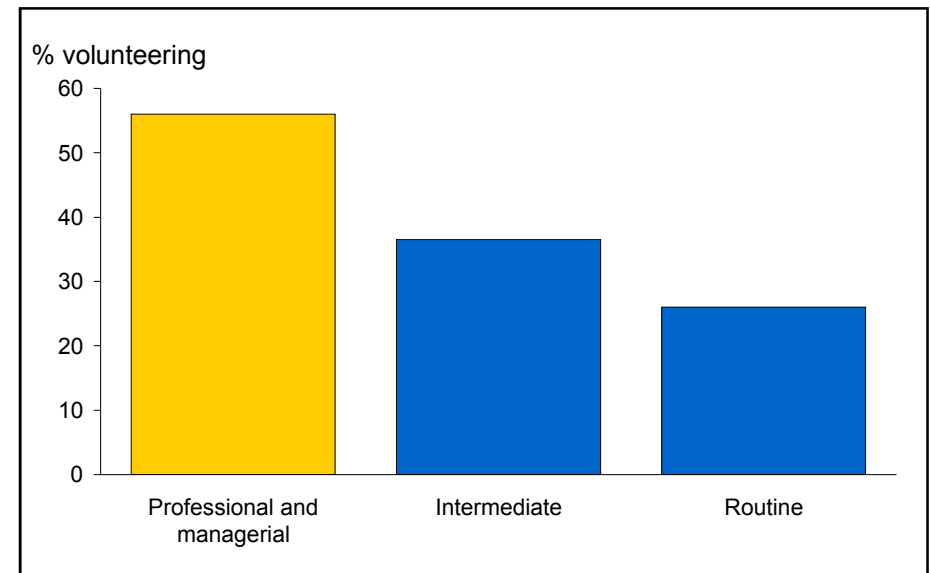
### The public hold many professions in high esteem, although this does vary

% of public expressing trust in, by profession<sup>1</sup>



### Professionals play an important role in civic life, for example with much higher volunteering rates

% volunteering by socio-economic group<sup>2</sup>



- A society in which everyone has a fair chance to achieve their potential may also have higher levels of cohesion because people have confidence that there are no artificial limits on what they can do in life
- The public have high esteem for many professionals, reflecting the social leadership positions these occupy. There may be legitimate expectations that professions should reflect the most talented from all backgrounds
- Professionals also contribute to wider civic life. Skills gained in professional activity are invaluable to charitable and third sector organisations and many volunteer their time and expertise e.g. to trustee and committee work

(1) Mori (2008) Trust in Professions, (2) Household Survey (2008)

## There is a strong business case for employers and the Professions to increase fair access

### The Fair Access Business case

```
graph TD; A[The Fair Access Business case] --> B[Improved productivity and quality of service]; A --> C[Simple and affordable measures can make a big difference]; B --> D[1. A wider talent pool: between now and 2020 over 90% of total jobs growth will be in professional and managerial occupations – getting the very best talent to aspire to and enter will be key for productivity]; B --> E[2. Diverse professions cater better for a diverse society: professionals drawn from a range of backgrounds may be better placed to deal effectively with more diverse community and individual needs]; B --> F[3. A more representative workforce is likely to be more trusted and valued: public facing or front-line professions which are more representative may benefit from higher levels of trust and satisfaction]; C --> G[1. Simple and low cost measures can go a long way: there is a body of existing best practice across a range of the Professions that show the practical and simple ways in which fair access can be aided]; C --> H[2. These can be development opportunities for employees: many professionals enjoy 'giving back' and helping to ensure fair chances for all such as through mentoring young people]; C --> I[3. Helping to ensure fair access adds to an employer's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) portfolio: for example through working with schools and colleges to promote the Profession];
```

#### Improved productivity and quality of service

1. A wider talent pool: between now and 2020 over 90% of total jobs growth will be in professional and managerial occupations – getting the very best talent to aspire to and enter will be key for productivity

2. Diverse professions cater better for a diverse society: professionals drawn from a range of backgrounds may be better placed to deal effectively with more diverse community and individual needs

3. A more representative workforce is likely to be more trusted and valued: public facing or front-line professions which are more representative may benefit from higher levels of trust and satisfaction

#### Simple and affordable measures can make a big difference

1. Simple and low cost measures can go a long way: there is a body of existing best practice across a range of the Professions that show the practical and simple ways in which fair access can be aided

2. These can be development opportunities for employees: many professionals enjoy 'giving back' and helping to ensure fair chances for all such as through mentoring young people

3. Helping to ensure fair access adds to an employer's Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) portfolio: for example through working with schools and colleges to promote the Profession

# Contents

---

Executive summary

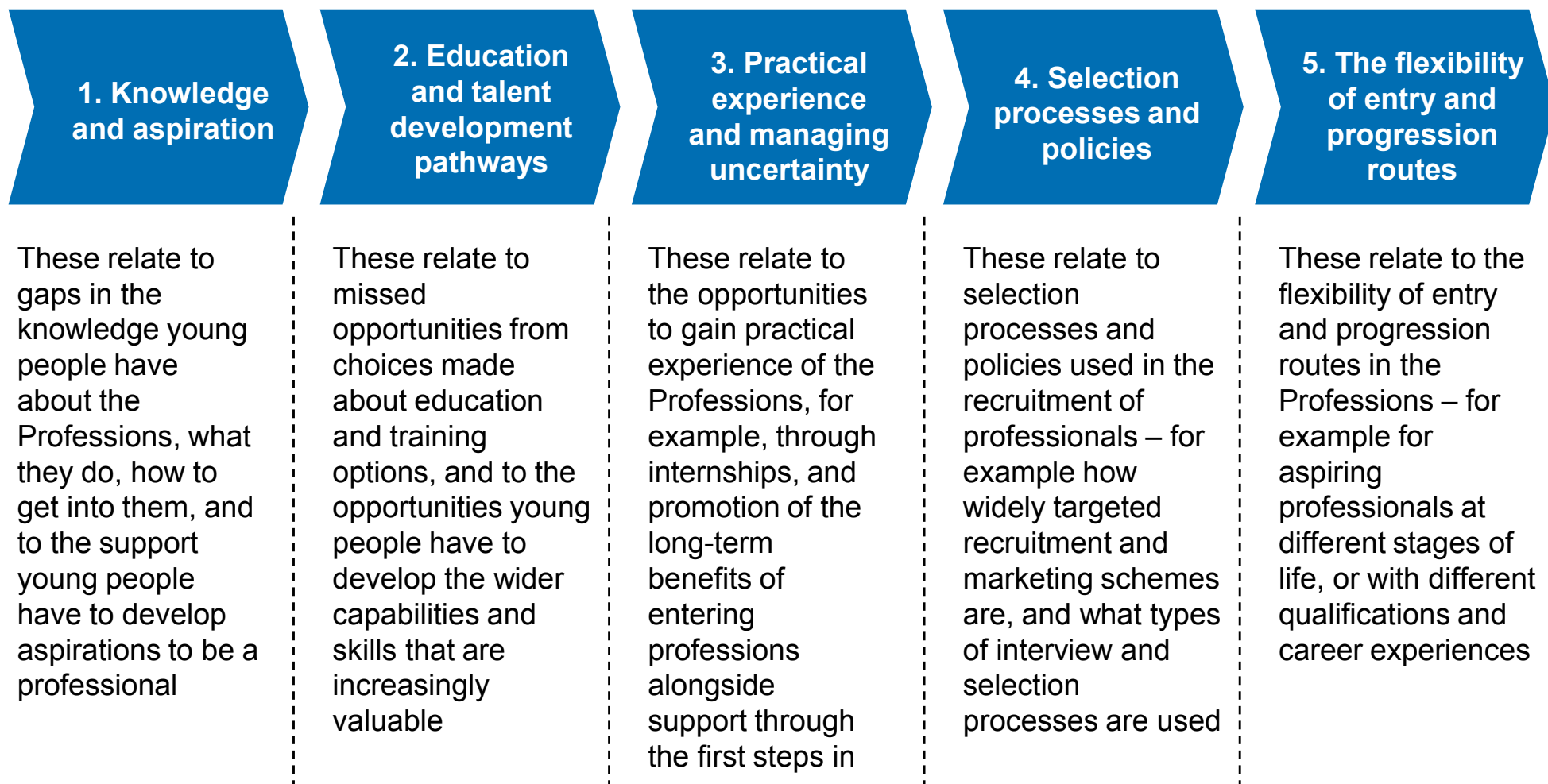
Introduction

Why is fair access to the Professions important?

**What are the barriers to access to the Professions?**

Conclusions and next steps

## Ensuring fair access means everyone having an equal chance to realise potential – which will require tackling a number of related barriers across the five entry steps into the Professions



## Under each of these are a number of related issues that can make access to the Professions difficult for some

### 1. Knowledge and aspiration

- Access to social networks and support
- Quality of, and access to, information about the Professions
- Extent of outreach and engagement from professions
- Support from family, peers, mentors and significant others

### 2. Education and talent development pathways

- Support structures to help navigate choices – such as through information and advice services or career role models
- Support for developing wider skills and capabilities through curricula and extracurricular activities

### 3. Practical experience and managing uncertainty

- Availability and funding of internships
- Geographical mobility (e.g. undertaking internships in London and SE)
- Information and support to deal with specific risks involved with professional entry

### 4. Selection processes and policies

- Selection processes and techniques
- Targeting of recruitment and marketing
- Quality and training of selectors

### 5. Flexibility of routes for entry and progression

- Entry routes for non-graduates
- Routes for mid or late career entrants
- Opportunities for internal progression and career conversion
- Transferability of existing qualifications and accreditation

These barriers relate to factors around ...

## The evidence in this section is clear that support across the entry steps into the Professions is important for all young people, not just those from less well off backgrounds

---

### Many of the issues require support for young people from all backgrounds ...

- High quality information, advice and guidance about what the Professions do and how to get into them
- Opportunities to gain practical experience of the Professions
- Opportunities to develop crucial soft skills and wider capabilities
- Fair selection processes and open and accessible marketing of positions
- Flexible entry and progression routes in

### ... some issues are relatively more important for young people from less well off backgrounds

- Support to develop professional aspirations, and to navigate the routes into the Professions, particularly for young people without family or friends in professional occupations
- Addressing of particular financial barriers such as the impact of unpaid internships
- Support for those entering the Professions from non-traditional routes such as those wishing to learn while working for financial reasons

---

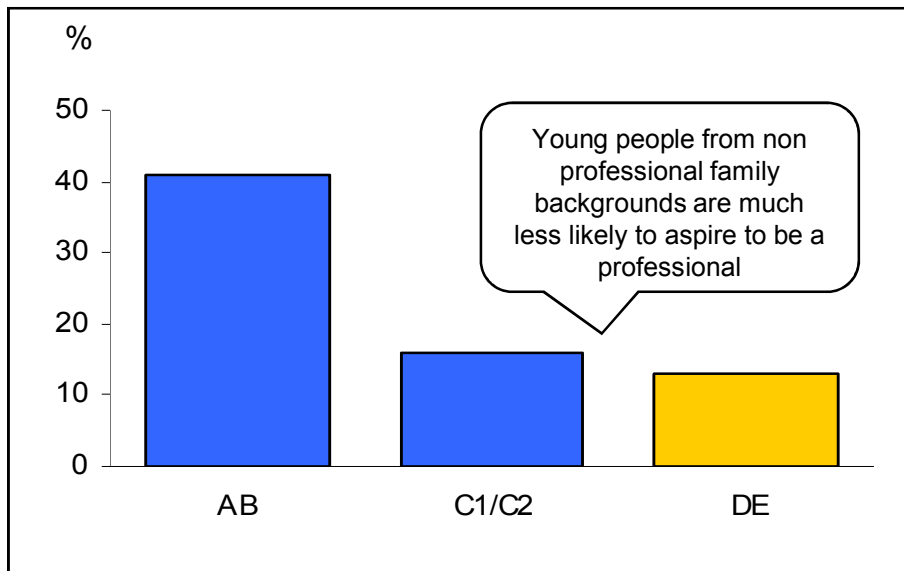
The following section provides further detail on each of these factors



## Developing the aspiration to become a professional is the crucial first step on the pathway in

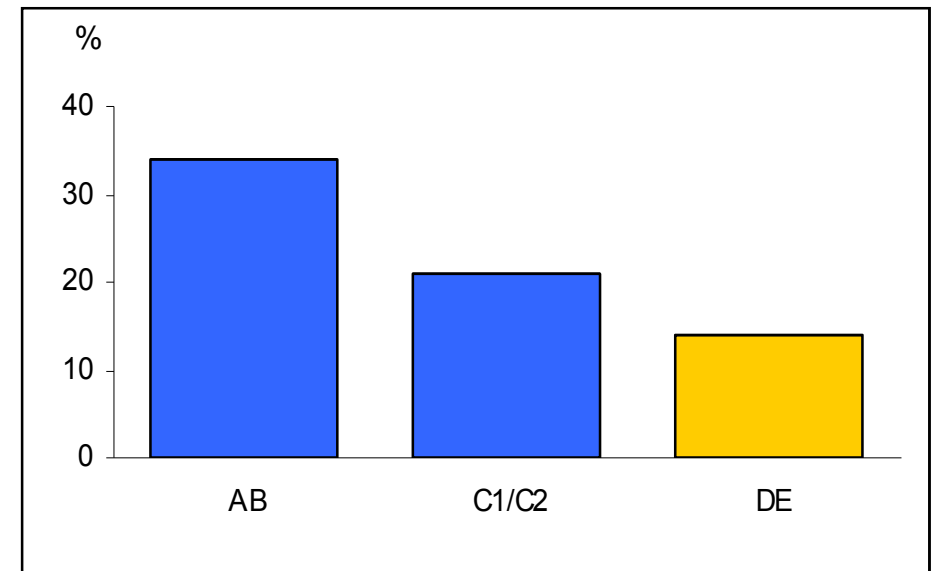
**Only 16% of young people from average family backgrounds, and 13% from lower socio-economic, backgrounds, aspire to be a professional**

% aspiring to do something professional<sup>1</sup>



**The aspirations of parents are key to educational and occupational outcomes for their children**

% parents who think children will go to university<sup>2</sup>



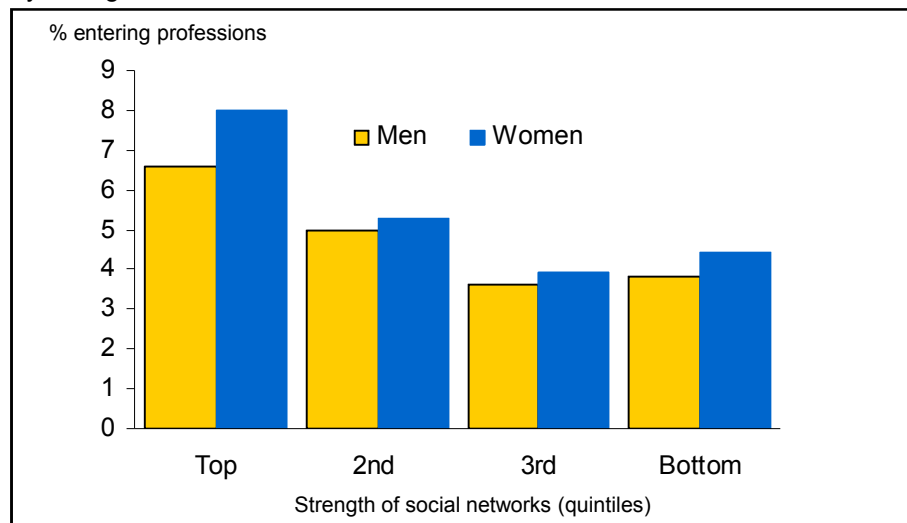
- Young people with higher aspirations have greater motivation and higher educational and occupational attainment than their peers, as do those whose parents hold higher aspirations for them<sup>2</sup>
- 56% of children whose parents have a professional career wish to have a professional career, compared to 13% of those whose parents are partly skilled
- Parents' aspirations for their children's careers seem to have more impact upon them than teachers.<sup>3</sup> However, the effect is much higher for the higher socio-economic groups

■ (1), (2) Mori/ Sutton Trust (2006) *Creating a High Aspiration Culture in the UK*, (2) Gutman and Akerman (2008) *Determinants of Aspirations*, Centre for Research on the Wider Benefits of Learning, (3) Aimhigher (2008)

## A young person's social capital and social networks have a significant impact upon their levels of aspiration and educational attainment

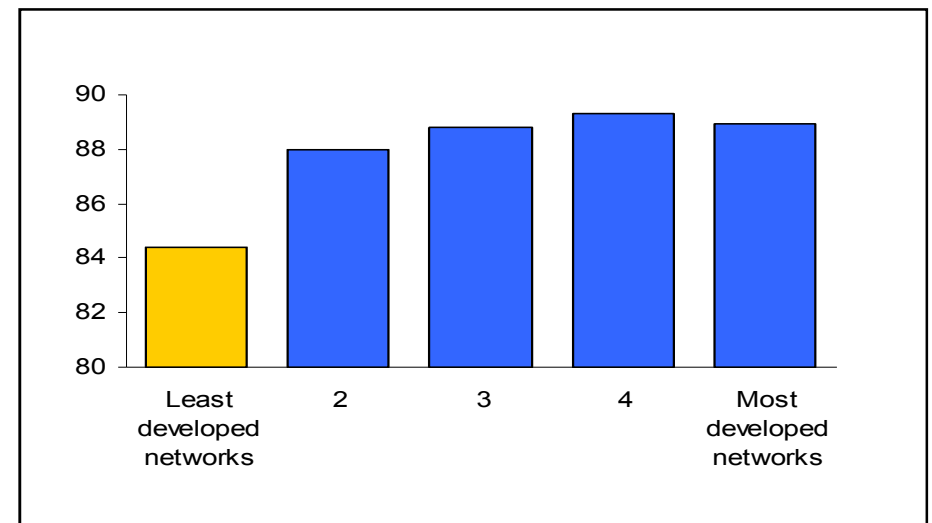
### People with stronger social networks are more likely to enter the Professions

% of young people entering professional occupations in subsequent periods by strength of social ties<sup>1</sup>



### Those with weaker social networks are more likely to have lower aspirations

% children expecting to stay in full-time education post 16 by scales of mothers' networks<sup>2</sup>



- Young people from lower socio-economic backgrounds are less likely to establish social networks beyond their immediate circle, restricting the wider support and opportunities available to them<sup>3</sup>
- Those with wide social networks are more likely to draw on these to help them enter professions
- Contact with people who have experienced higher education is a powerful factor affecting career related decision-making<sup>4</sup>

(1) Professor Yaojun Li, University of Manchester (2009, unpublished), (2) Cabinet Office (2008) Aspirations and Attainment in Deprived Communities, (3) Webster et al (2004) Poor Transitions: Young Adults and Social Exclusion (4) Murphy (2006) cited in Factors Influencing Social Mobility, Departement of Work and Pensions (2007)

## The aspiration to pursue a career can be difficult to foster and requires the right kind of support

**I decided I wanted to be a doctor in the middle of year 11, but my teacher wasn't aware of how to get started because no other people in my school had ever applied for medicine before, let alone Cambridge**

**I would like to be a journalist because my Mum says I'm good at writing stories**

**I used to want to be a police officer – they (my parents) thought it would be dangerous**

**My parents don't know anything about the application process and it is difficult to understand alone**

**Accountancy is boring. Isn't it just about adding up numbers all day?**

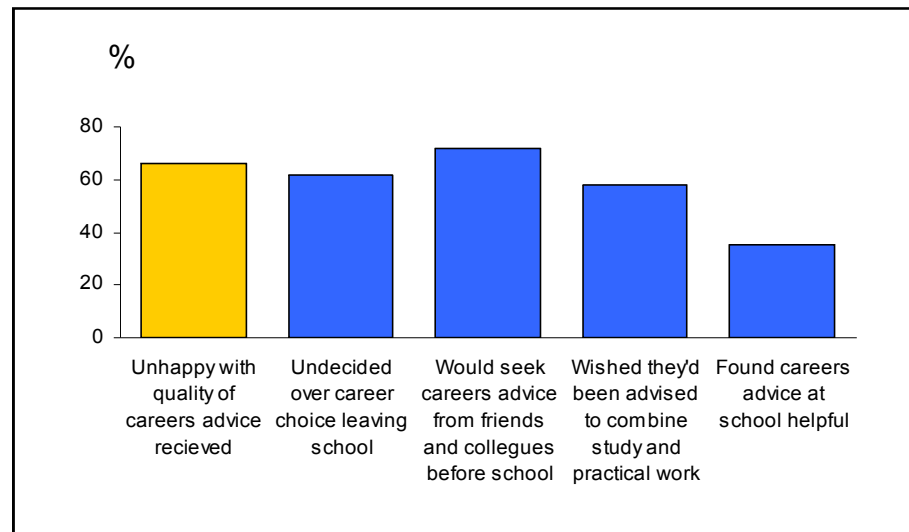
**I went to Connexions for advice but all they gave me was a general questionnaire, it wasn't specific to me**

- Many people have strong attitudes towards the Professions, these are often not favourable (EHRC) and can be difficult to change
- Young people's aspirations can be encouraged or easily discouraged from those around them, particularly family and teachers
- Even when young people develop the aspiration to enter the Professions they often have little idea of how to go about pursuing entry

## Some professions require specific educational pathways to be followed which in turn require good advice and support from early on – but provision is variable

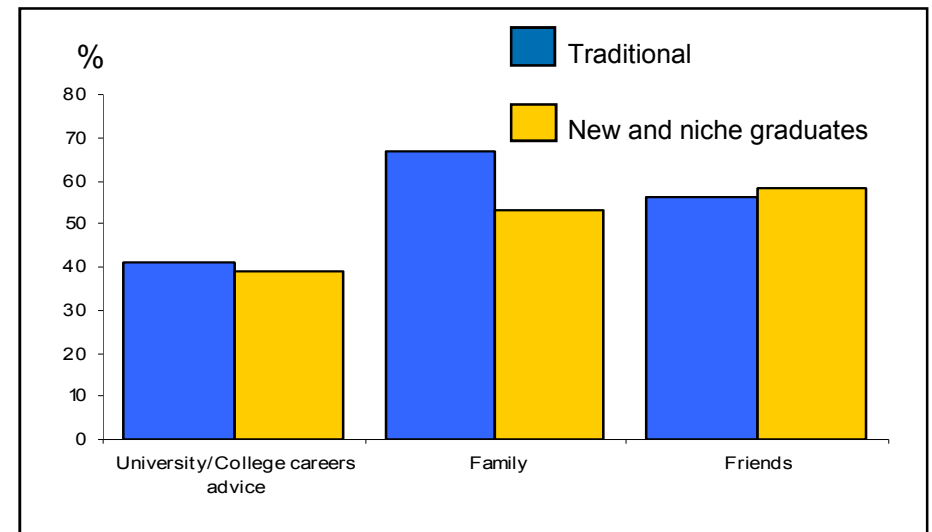
### The information, advice and guidance provided to all young people can be of variable quality

% responding via student survey<sup>1</sup>



### This means that many go to other places to gain careers advice such as family or friends

% respondents seeking advice by source<sup>2</sup>



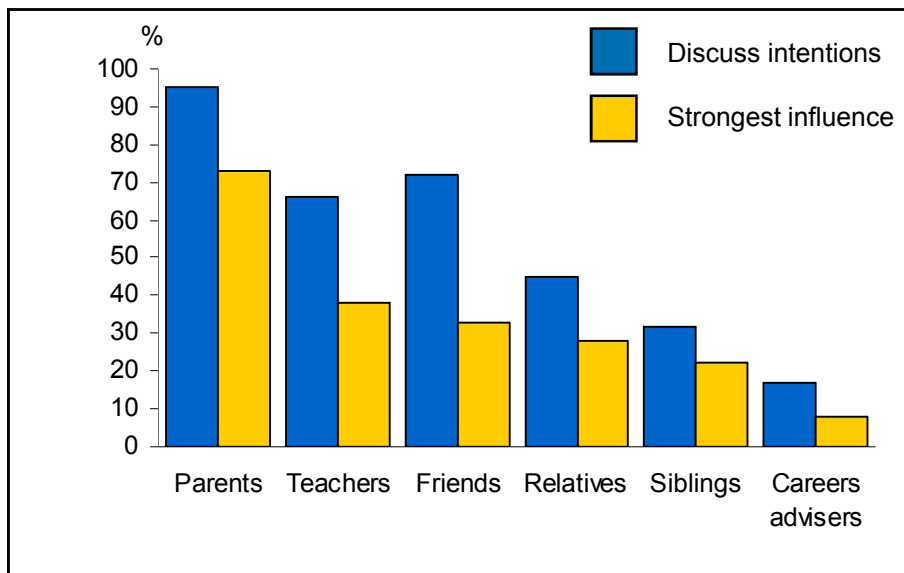
- Many professions require specific educational pathways to access, for example, entrance onto a veterinary degree requires AAB at A-Level including two science based subjects, evidence of soft skills and motivation to be a Vet. Applicants must also have previous relevant work experience<sup>3</sup>
- However, careers advisors in schools are often full-time teachers, not professional career advisors, and may not always be able to provide full information on the pathways into different professions
- In one survey, graduates in both traditional and non-traditional graduate jobs felt that friends and family had been a better source of careers advice than their University careers service.<sup>4</sup> However, family and friends often don't have up-to-date information

(1) Assoc. Colleges survey conducted by YouGov (2005), (2) Davies et al. (2008) Knowing where to study, (3) RCVS (2009) Response to the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions' Call for Evidence (4) Farlong and Cartmel (2005) Graduates from disadvantaged families

## Parents have the strongest impact upon career choices, however, their knowledge of career paths is often out-of-date or limited to certain professions

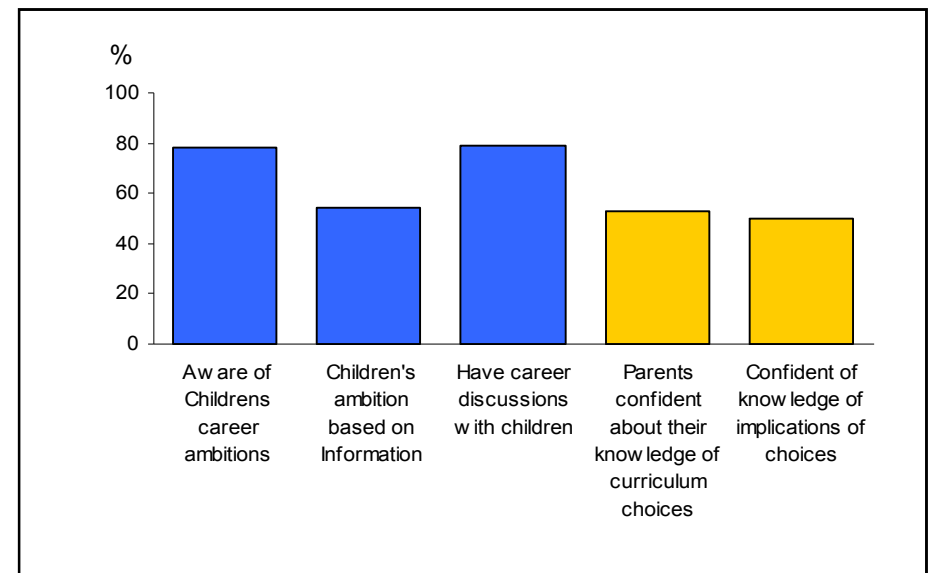
### Parents, teachers and friends are the strongest influence on pupils' career planning

% stating influence on career planning at school<sup>1</sup>



### However, parents often don't feel confident about their careers knowledge

% stating influence on career planning at school<sup>2</sup>



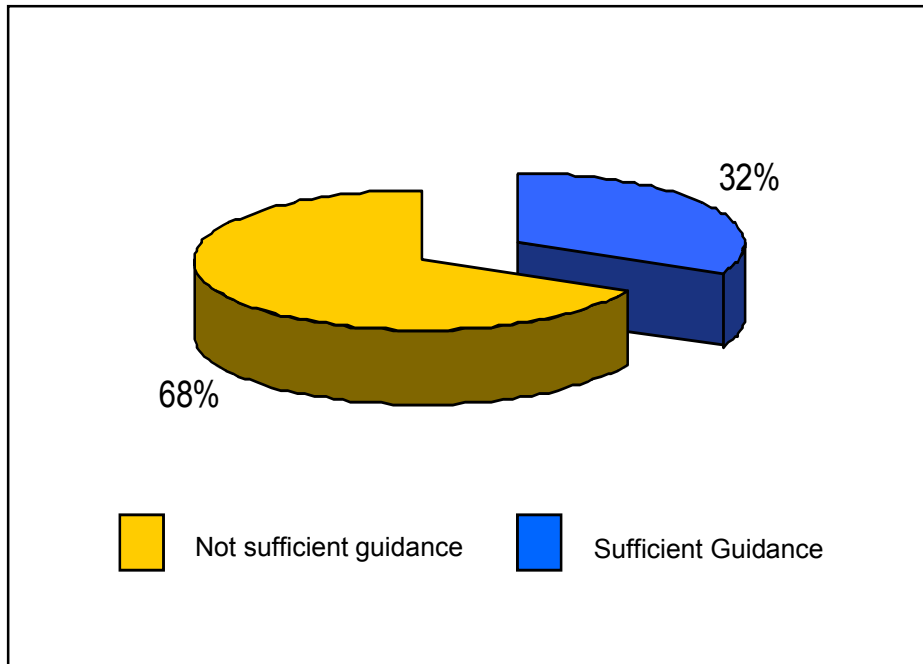
- Research by WEIR shows that parents have the strongest influence on pupils' career planning
- However, parents often don't feel comfortable that they have up to date information and so they seek informal advice from friends and family in order to help their children with career planning<sup>2</sup>
- This advice can be variable and is often dependent upon the number and type of social contacts the parent can access. This can disadvantage young people from lower socio-economic groups because their parents are less likely to have many social contacts working in the Professions

(1) Warwick Institute of Education, (2) Morgan et al (2007) Effective transitions for year 8 students

## The formal careers information and advice provided to young people is often insufficient for high ability students

### The typical student states they receive insufficient advice from Connexions and other career planning services

% of general students satisfied with careers advice<sup>1</sup>



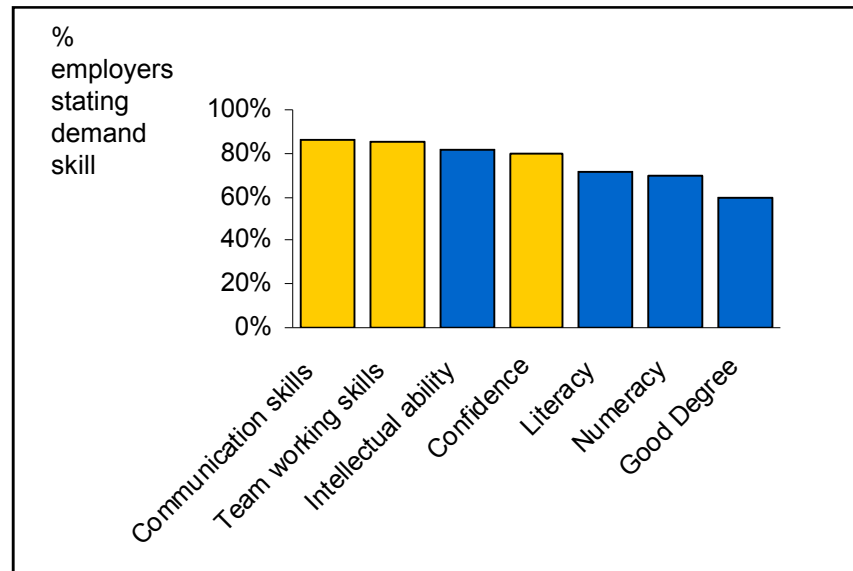
- 68% of respondents say that general students do not receive sufficient advice and guidance from Connexions<sup>1</sup>
- In most schools Connexions resources are focused on those most at risk but offers little targeted advice for those considering pursuing entry to the Professions<sup>2</sup>
- Research shows that parents from professional backgrounds are often more adept at accessing opportunities for them<sup>3</sup> and can fill the gap in the formal careers guidance supplied to their children
- This means that young people who don't have quality careers guidance at school and are reliant upon Connexions are at a significant disadvantage when it comes to accessing the Professions

(1) Association of Colleges (2004), (2) Youth forum attendees, Panel on fair access to the profession (2009), (3) Devine (2004) Class practices: how parents help their children get good jobs

## Employers are increasingly looking for developed soft skills, however many young people have too few opportunities to develop these

### Soft skills and communication are often more highly valued by employers than hard skills

Skills most in demand from employers<sup>1</sup>

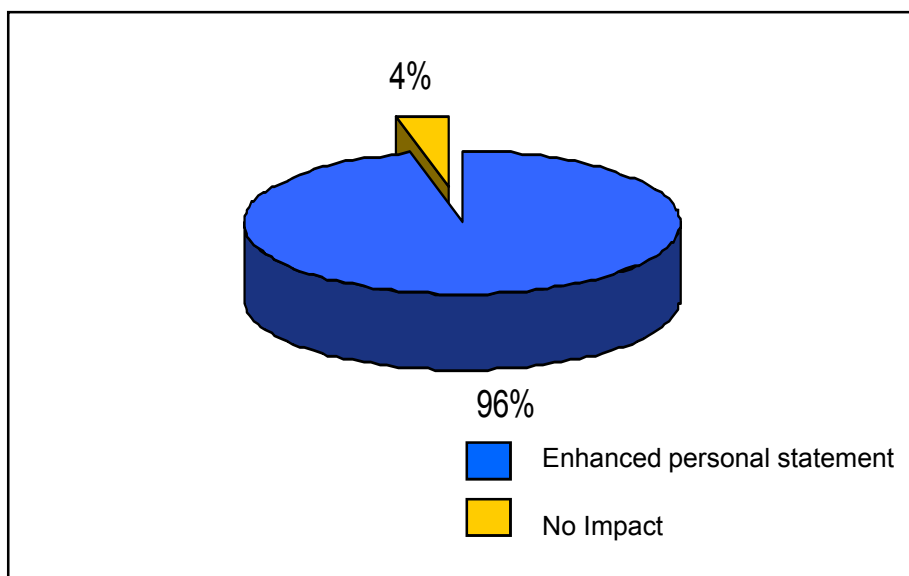


- Employers are increasingly looking for wider skills from extracurricular activity<sup>2</sup>
- One survey showed that soft skills such as adaptability were more valuable to employers than education or qualifications<sup>3</sup>
- According to another survey employers find it increasingly hard to fill graduate vacancies because students fail to match academic achievement with leadership, teamwork and communication skills<sup>4</sup>
- However, not all young people have equal opportunity to participate in extracurricular activities. For example, only 60 of the 260 UK cadet schools are in the maintained sector which limits the opportunities for young people in maintained schools to gain experience of the military
- In addition, students from non-professional backgrounds spend significantly less time in clubs and societies, councils and committees, and as course representatives than their peers from higher socio-economic groups. They also spend significantly more time in paid employment than their peers from higher socio-economic groups<sup>5</sup>

## Internships have become a key route into some professions and can help raise aspirations as well as provide practical entry routes

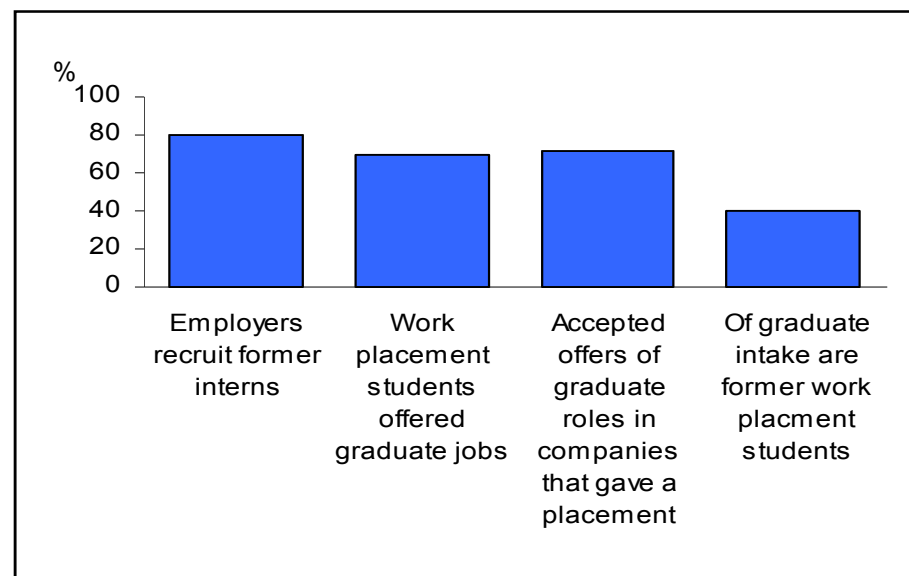
### Internships help raise aspirations and provide access to the top educational establishments

% student say internship enhanced personal statement<sup>1</sup>



### Having relevant work experience is increasingly important to securing a graduate level job

% opportunities opened up through internships<sup>2</sup>



- Relevant work experience increases the chances of getting a job in the Professions. An intern will pick up important soft skills and may be more confident during later interviews and recruitment processes
- Internships help to raise students' aspirations, they also help students get into competitive University courses by enhancing their UCAS personal statement

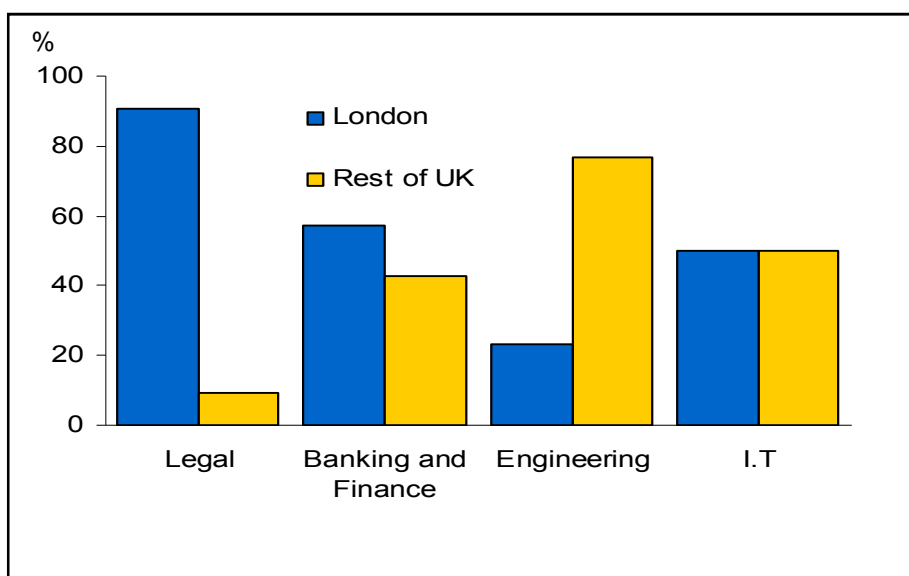
(1) Social Mobility Foundation (2007) Internship Impact Survey, (2) Univ Manchester & UMIST careers service (2004) work experience survey



## Internship opportunities can be hard to obtain for those from middle income and less well off backgrounds – given many are unpaid, based in London, and often sourced through connections

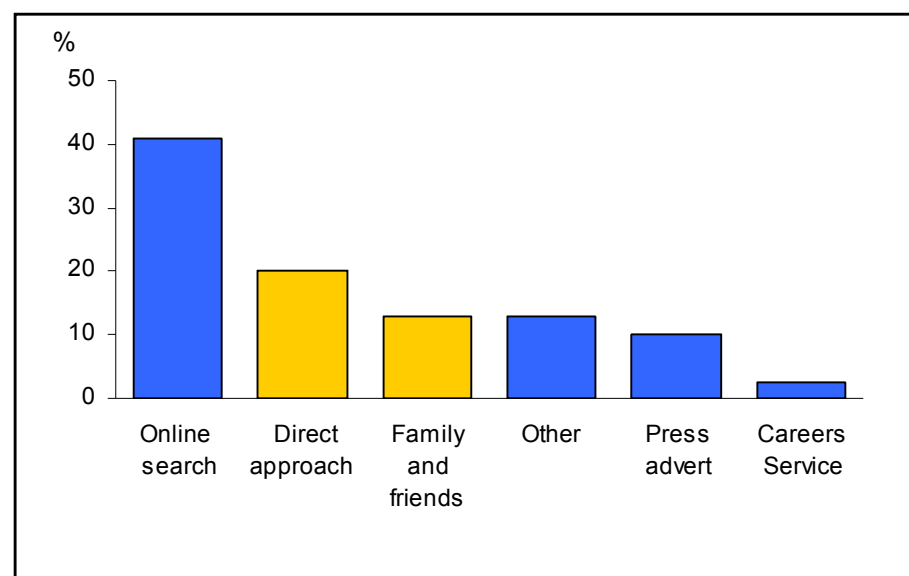
### A disproportionate number of internships and work experience placements are in London

Location of internships by industry sector<sup>1</sup>



### A significant proportion of internships are secured through informal routes

Method of securing internship, survey response<sup>2</sup>



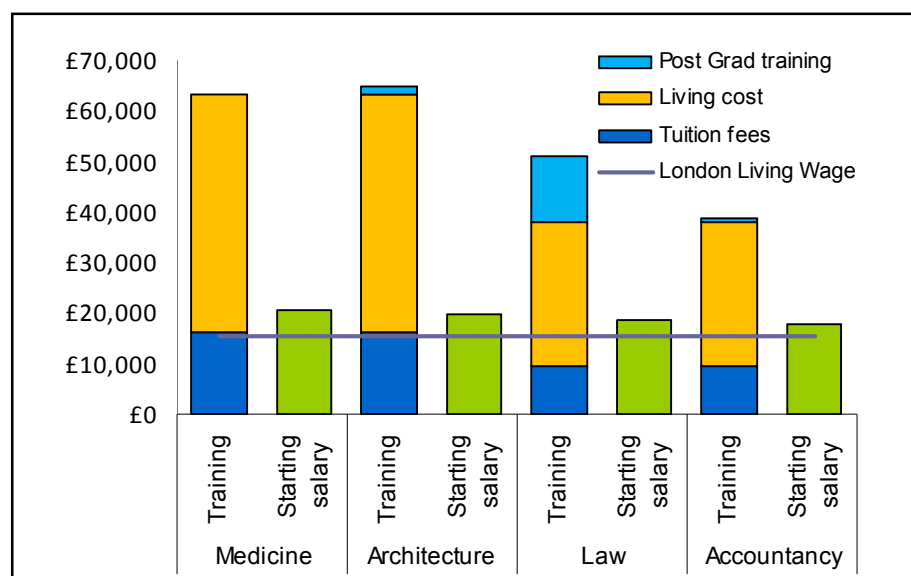
- A disproportionate number of internships are based in London and the South East. A two-week internship can cost as much as £500 in accommodation, food and travel expenses. This can make internships prohibitive for those living in other regions without substantial family backing
- Many internships are secured through informal routes, for example through family and friends or direct approaches, rather than formal schemes and programmes. This creates an uneven playing field for those with fewer personal contacts

(1) Prospects.ac.uk, (2) The Internship Network, internal research

## Entering certain professions involves financial risks, which may deter some young people; informing young people about these risks and helping to mitigate them is important

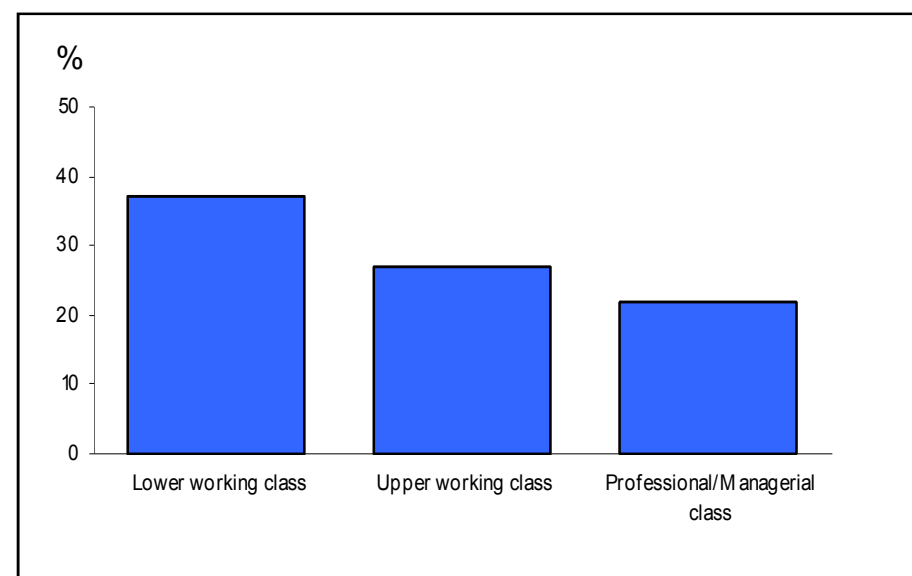
### Some professions demand a high initial financial commitment to enter

Cost of qualifications vs. first year salary, against London living wage<sup>1</sup>



### Young people from non professional backgrounds are more influenced by financial risks

% respondents stating finances impacted educational decisions<sup>2</sup>



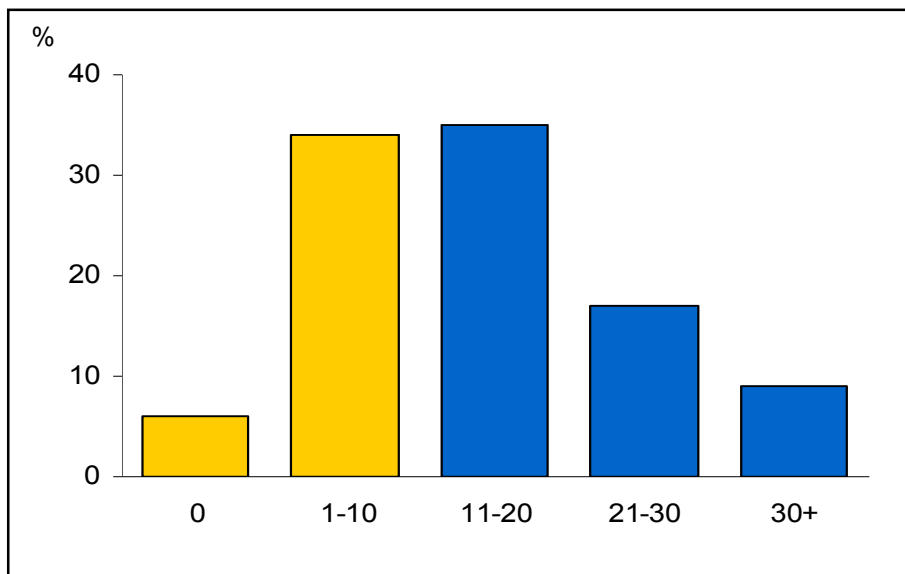
- High cost of qualifications combined with low starting salaries may deter those from non professional backgrounds from attempting to enter certain professions
- Those from lower socio-economic backgrounds are more likely to pursue careers with fewer financial risks.<sup>2</sup>
- Financial support such as Career Development Loans are available, and there is clear information about the significant long-term financial benefits of entering the Professions although these may need to be promoted more

(1) Drawn from: Prospects.ac.uk/DirectGovSource, (2) Davies et al (2008) Knowing where to study

## The top graduate recruiters sometimes use recruitment processes that make access more difficult for some groups

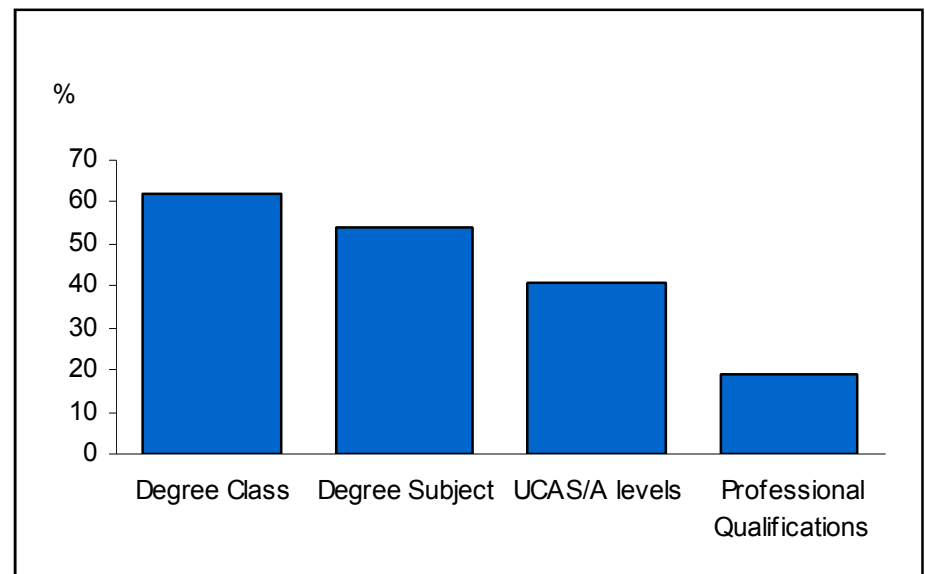
### Graduate recruiters tend to focus their recruiting efforts on a small number of Universities

% of graduate recruiters that recruit on campus, by no of Universities targeted<sup>1</sup>



### Top employers sift applications based on qualification as far back as school

% of graduate recruiters using sifting process<sup>2</sup>



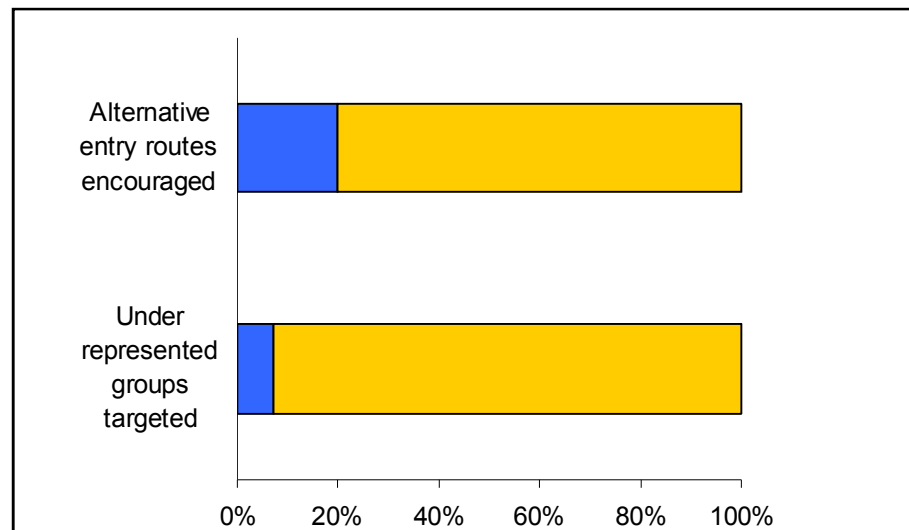
- With around 70% of graduate recruiters targeting less than 20 University campuses, a person's choice of University has a large impact on the opportunities that may be presented for the future
- Most professions undertake initial screening based on prior educational attainment. This can be a barrier for applicants who have come through non-traditional educational routes<sup>3</sup>
- The most common route into the Professions, evident in all but one profession in a recent study, is a degree, plus postgraduate qualification or professional qualification<sup>4</sup>

(1) AGR Winter Survey (2008), (2) ES web audit of Times Top 100 Graduate Employers (2004), (3) Barber et al. (2005), (4) PARN (2008) Routes and Requirement for Becoming Professionally Qualified

## Standard interview and assessment procedures can make professional entry hard for non-traditional applications and those with less developed soft skills

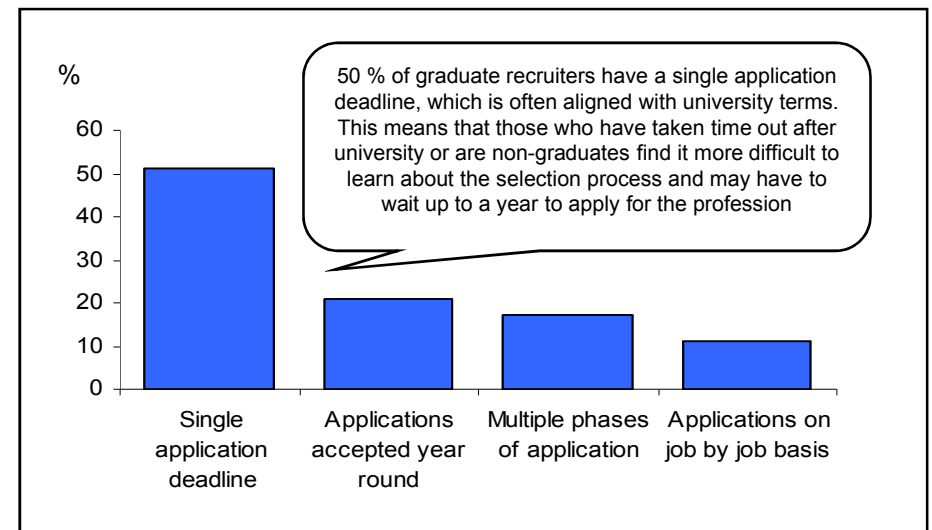
### Top employers rarely target under represented groups in their recruitment practices

% using inclusive processes<sup>1</sup>



### Many top employers use single application deadlines which can be restrictive for non-traditional applicants

% employers using application type<sup>1</sup>



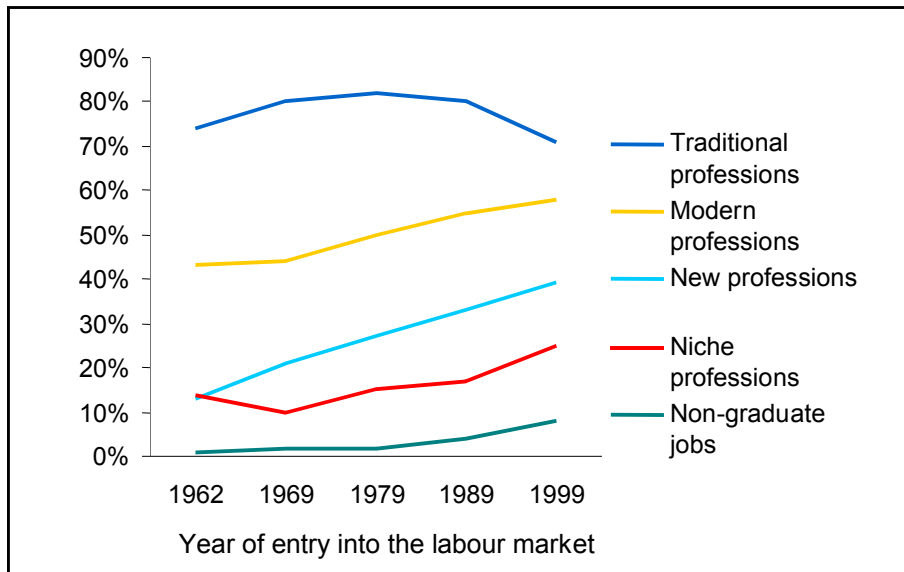
- Fewer than a quarter of employers, in a survey of top graduate employers, actively use inclusive recruitment practices
- Interviews continue to be a widely used selection tool and yet a recent survey showed that interviewers often make relative quick judgements about candidates, 47% making decisions within 30 minutes<sup>2</sup>
- The same survey found that interviewers often based their decisions upon intuition<sup>2</sup>. This means that candidates who take longer to demonstrate their skills or who have very different cultural behaviours to the interviewer are less likely to be selected

(1) ES web audit Times top 100 employers (2004), (2) DDI (2009) Are you failing the interview

## Opportunities to become a professional via a non-graduate route are becoming rarer

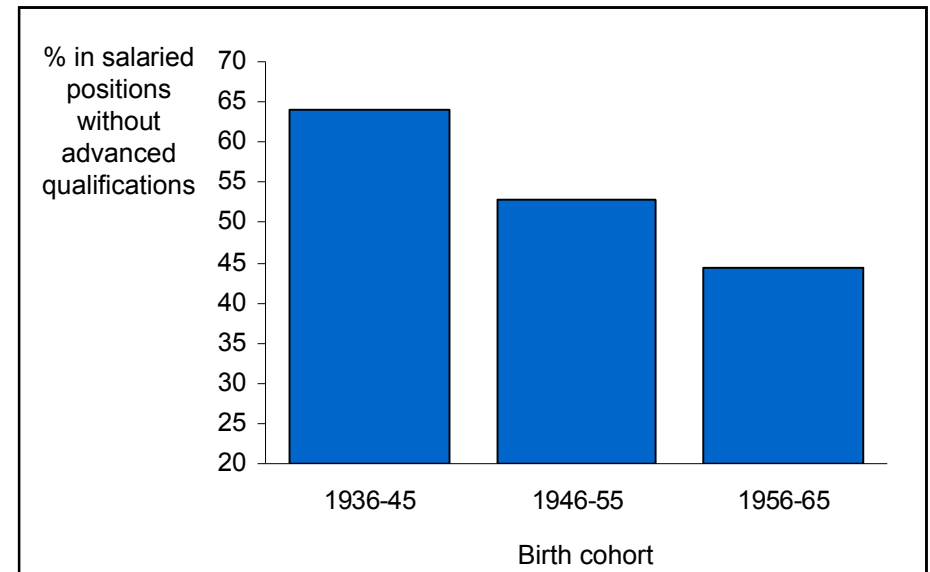
### Degree entry has become the norm for many professions...

% of jobs requiring a degree, by professional type, by year of entry<sup>1</sup>



### ... which has resulted in a decline in the numbers accessing professions from non-graduate routes

% in salaried positions without advanced qualifications<sup>2</sup>



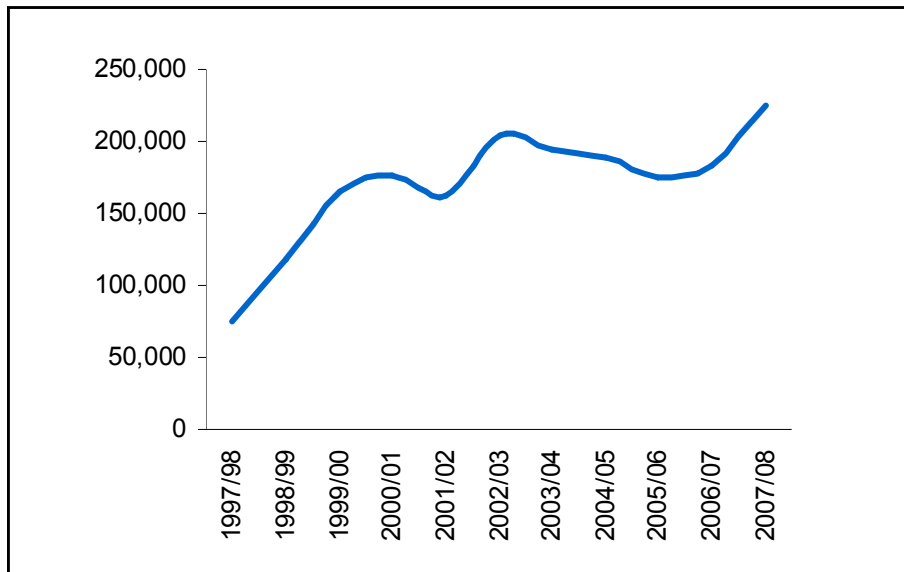
- Only 27 of the Times Top 100 Employers accept alternative entry routes (e.g. non-graduate) – reflecting a long-term decline in the number of people entering professions from such routes
- Inflexible routes to enter professions can disadvantage those applying at different stages of life, with different qualifications and career backgrounds, and those wishing to switch between professional careers

(1) Purcell and Elias (2003) Measuring change in the graduate labour market, (2) Adonis and Pollard (1997) A Class Act

## Although work based learning has increased, progression into further or higher education and into the Professions is rare

### Work based learning has substantially increased over the last decade...

Total number of apprenticeship learner starts<sup>1</sup>



### ... however progression onto further and higher education courses is rare

% progressing from complete apprenticeships to FE or HE <sup>2</sup>

	2005-06	2006-07	2007-08
Progressed to Further Education	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
Progressed to Higher Education	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%
Progressed to Further and Higher Education	0.4%	0.4%	0.2%

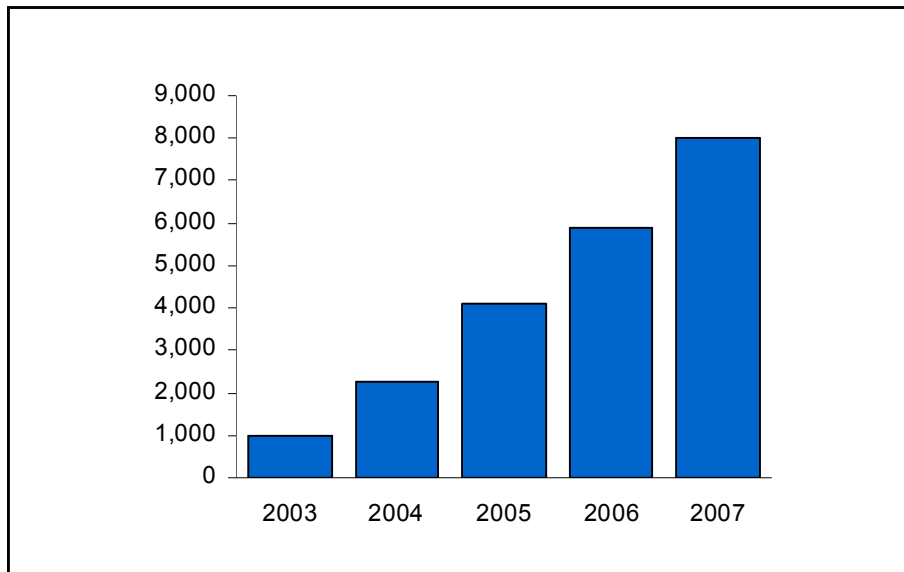
- There is evidence to suggest that although the quality of vocational qualifications has improved over time, at the higher levels the qualifications have not proved attractive in comparison with professional and university awards<sup>3</sup>
- Despite 184,000 learners entering an apprenticeship in 2008 it is still rare to continue on into the Professions through a vocational route and even those who work their way up usually have to undertake academic qualifications at a later date

(1) Learning and Skills Council (2008), (2) Skills Commission (2009), (3) PARN (2008) Routes and Requirements for becoming Professionally Qualified

## Foundation degrees together with an expansion in types of professional roles are providing more entry routes to some of the Professions

### Foundation degrees can provide a route into many professional roles, and have a growing take-up

Total number of Foundation degrees awarded<sup>1</sup>



### More flexible entry and progression routes have been established in many public services, which could have relevance for other professions

- In the **teaching profession** a new fast track scheme is being established for aspirant teacher to train to enter the profession in six rather than the usual twelve months
- **In-service progression schemes** in public service areas like the Civil Service and Police have been developed to identify those with management potential, and provide them with training and development to reach the most senior levels
- **Para-professional** roles such as Community Support Officers have opened up areas of the public service to a wider pool of candidates

- A Foundation degree is a vocational HE qualification, roughly equivalent to the first two years of an honours degree. They help develop work-specific skills such as problem solving and generic skills like professionalism
- More flexible entry and progression routes have been created in many areas of the public service – there may be lessons in how these could open up a wider range of the Professions to more flexible entry routes

# Contents

---

Executive summary

Introduction

Why is fair access to the Professions important?

What are the barriers to access to the Professions?

**Conclusions and next steps**



## This report identified a number of key issues and trends

### Key issues and trends in access to the Professions

- The analysis in this report draws on an extensive exercise that included formal evidence hearings, youth forums, and a national Call for Evidence. The Panel received more than 120 formal submissions comprising over 13,000 pages. A Phase 2 report to be published in May will provide a summary of all the consultation evidence including a review of best practice and the implications for public policy.
- The evidence confirms that the Professions are important to the UK's economy and society, and there is a strong case for government and the Professions to do more to ensure fair access for all.
- The Professions are made up of a diverse range of occupations. The number of professional jobs grew considerably over the course of the last century. Professions need the very best entrants to continue to thrive.
- While the Professions have made some progress on diversity issues such as the gender pay gap, the data shows that: (i) professionals typically grew up in families with incomes well above the average family's income; and (ii) relatively fewer people who grew up in families with around average incomes got into the Professions from the generation born in 1970 (i.e. educated in the 1980s, entered the labour market in the early-to-mid 1990s) compared to one born in 1958 (i.e. educated in the 1970s, entered the labour market in the 1980s).
- For the most recent generation born in 1990 trends in access to the Professions will not be known until the early 2010s, but improved education results provide new opportunities for improved rates of access to the Professions in the future.

## The evidence suggests that for access to the Professions to become fairer, action must be taken across the five entry steps

### Five entry steps into the Professions ...

1. Help for young people to better understand the Professions and raise their aspiration to join one. For example, only 1 in 5 young people from average backgrounds, and 1 in 8 young people from poorer backgrounds, currently aspires to be a professional – three times fewer than young people from professional backgrounds.
2. Support for young people through the education and talent development pathways to entering the Professions. For example, 7 in 10 young people are unhappy with the careers support they receive. In addition, while soft skills are increasingly valued by employers, not all young people have the opportunities to acquire these.
3. Opportunities to gain practical experience of the Professions. Internships are becoming a more important entry route to the Professions, although many are unpaid, and more sourced through connections than advertisements. Currently, 4 in 5 employers recruit former interns, and over 9 in 10 young people say that an internship helped to raise their aspirations and improve their CV.
4. Recruitment and selection processes that give everyone an equal chance of becoming a professional. For example, 7 in 10 of the top graduate recruiters target only 20 of the 167 UK universities.
5. Flexible routes for aspiring professionals to enter and progress in the Professions – at different life stages, or with different qualifications and career experiences. For example, while vocational qualification routes have been expanded, only 0.2% of apprentices progress to further or higher education and few direct to the Professions.

## The evidence is clear that support across the five entry steps into the Professions is important for all young people, not just those from less well off backgrounds

### Many of the issues require support for young people from all backgrounds ...

- High quality information, advice and guidance about what the Professions do and how to get into them
- Opportunities to gain practical experience of the Professions
- Opportunities to develop crucial soft skills and wider capabilities
- Fair selection processes and open and accessible marketing of positions
- Flexible entry and progression routes in

### ... while some specific issues are more important for young people from less well off backgrounds

- Support to develop professional aspirations, and to navigate the routes into the Professions, particularly for young people without parents, or wider family and friends in professional occupations
- Certain financial barriers such as the impact of unpaid internships
- Support for those entering the Professions from non-traditional routes such as those wishing to learn while working for financial reasons

This suggests that ensuring fair access into the Professions will mean combining measures that are **universal for all**, with other support that is **targeted to some**

## Next steps for the work of the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions

---

### Phase 1: Analytical review (April)

- This Phase 1 Report has been prepared by the Secretariat supporting the Panel on Fair Access to the Professions
- Any factual errors or omissions are the sole responsibility of the Secretariat supporting the Panel
- This Report is intended to provide evidence to contribute to the work of the Panel and, as an independent review, is not a statement of HM Government policy
- We welcome feedback on this report to: [access.professions@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:access.professions@cabinet-office.x.gsi.gov.uk)

### Phase 2: summary of consultation (May)

- A Phase 2 Report will be published in May to summarise all the evidence received through the national consultation including reviewing current best practice initiatives and their implications for public policy
- To date over 120 submissions stretching to 13,000 pages of evidence have been received along with evidence through a series of youth forums and evidence hearings

### Final Report (Summer)

- The Panel is expected to make its final report in the summer
- This will make recommendations to HM Government and the Professions on actions to improve access for all groups