

Barriers to accessing Open Days for young people in disadvantaged areas (2016)

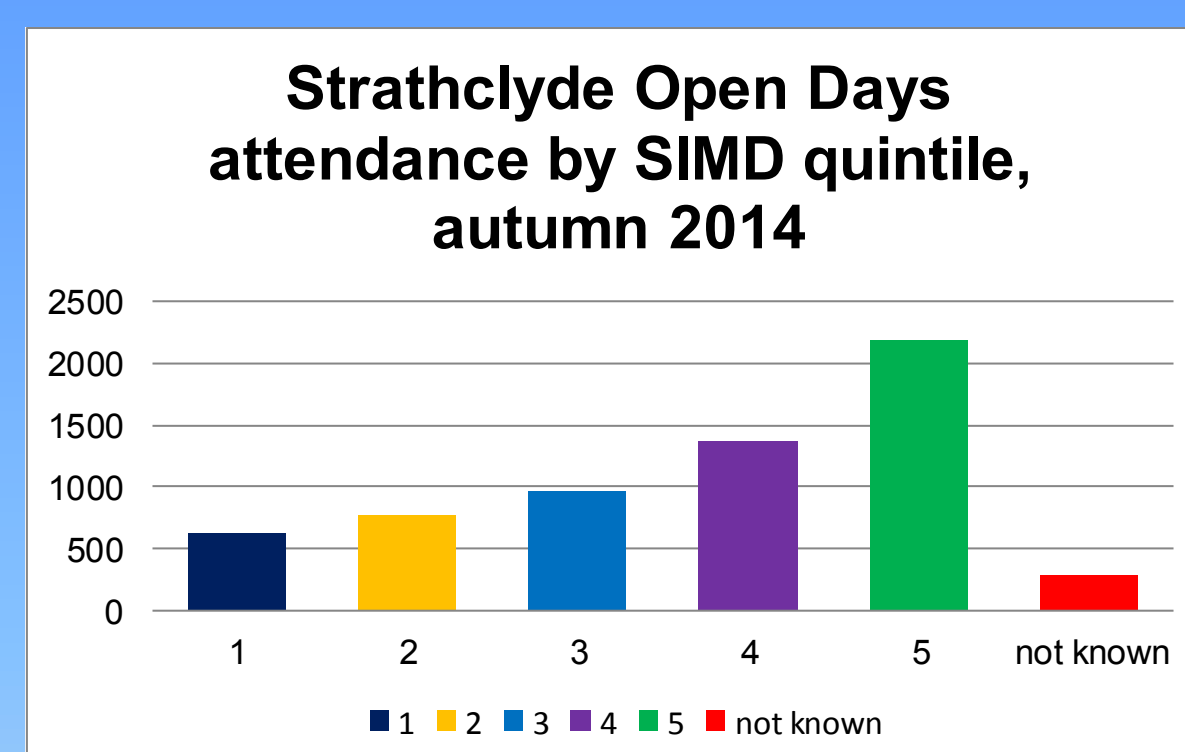
Project researcher: Deborah McDonald, University of Strathclyde student

Project supervisor: Al Blackshaw, Acting Widening Access Manager (Admissions & Support)

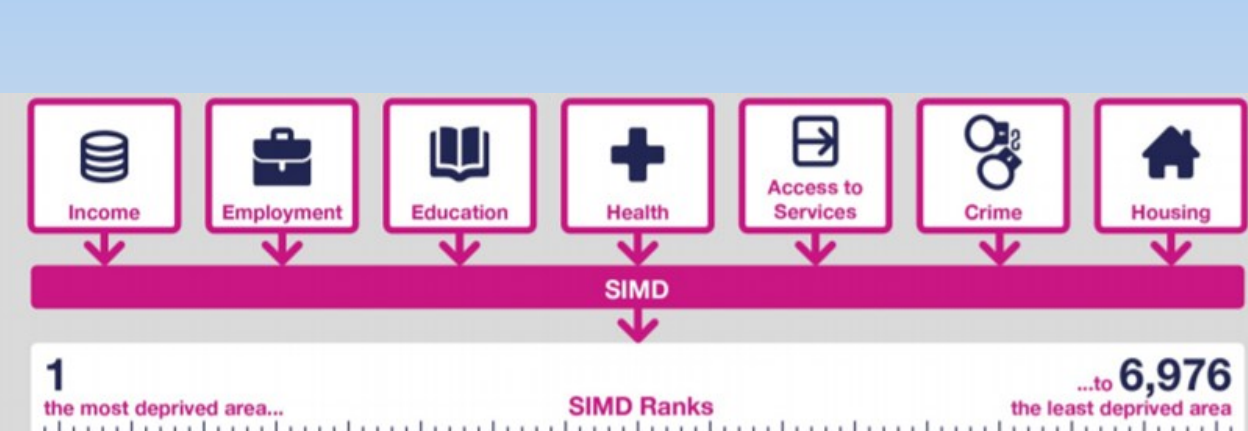
Contact: wideningaccess@strath.ac.uk

Background

Recent research by Gibbs and Dean (2015) reports that Open Days are the prime information source not only for trustworthiness but also for usefulness in student decision making. The University of Strathclyde Open Days are always well attended events, attracting over 6000 visitors in 2014. However, initial research revealed disparity in attendance by SIMD quintile, with fewer attendees from more disadvantaged areas.

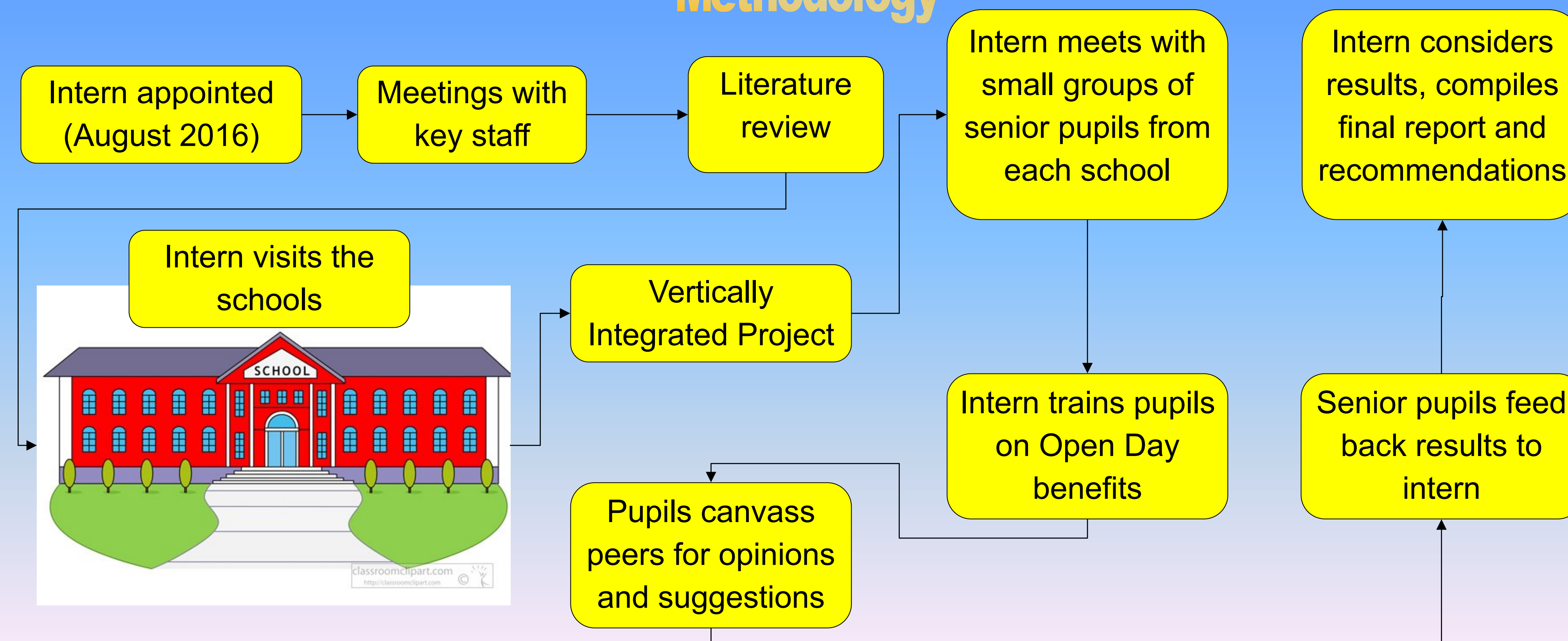


What is SIMD?



The Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation is a tool for measuring various levels of deprivation within Scotland. It considers data from across seven domains and ranks areas of Scotland into 6976 datazones, with roughly 760 people resident per datazone. These can then be ranked into quintiles, with quintile 1 being the most disadvantaged and quintile 5 the least disadvantaged. Universities calculate SIMD quintiles based upon the home postcode of each individual.

Methodology



Identifying schools to participate

Two schools were identified locally which had high concentrations of SIMD quintile 1 zones in the surrounding areas. The maps below show both participating schools: the yellow balloon indicators highlight the schools; whereas the areas in red indicate SIMD quintile 1 zones.



In addition to being situated within these areas of multiple deprivation, data from the Scottish Government also showed that few numbers of pupils from these schools tend to progress to Higher Education, providing an additional impetus to work with these students.

Key barriers

Lack of awareness * Time constraints * Socio-economic issues * Information sources



References

Gibbs, P., & Dean, A. (2015). Do higher education institutes communicate trust well? *Journal of Marketing for Higher Education*, pp.155-170

1. Image sourced from: Scottish Government (2016). Introducing the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation, page 2. <http://www.gov.scot/Resource/0050/00504809.pdf> (accessed 14 November 2017).

Recommendations

Schools: coordinate trips to Open Days, addressing concerns of time constraints and socio-economic issues.

Councils: investigate funding options to support schools to attend Open Days, addressing socio-economic issues.

Universities: more targeted promotion and demystification, addressing lack of awareness and information sources concerns.