



SOCIAL MOBILITY IN GRADUATE RECRUITMENT

BIG DATA AND THE CRS
THREE YEARS ON

rare

DIVERSITY
RECRUITMENT
EXCELLENCE

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Contents

Executive summary	(2)
Introduction	(4)
Contextual recruitment and big data	
a. A London-centric picture	(8)
b. What postcodes tell us about people	(10)
c. A contextual benchmark	(12)
d. Disadvantage from many angles	(14)
e. People we’re missing	(16)
f. The story so far	(18)
Who gets hired	
a. Hires before the CRS	(20)
b. Hires after the CRS	(22)
CRS 3.0	
a. Mapping individual disadvantage	(24)
b. Calibrating disadvantage more precisely	(26)
Acknowledgements and contributors	(28)

Executive summary

There are three sections: the first explores 54,000 lines of CRS data; the second retrospectively analyses the demography of previous years' hires at a number of CRS firms; and the third sets out Rare's standardised contextual recruitment measures for 2016 onwards.

[Our findings >](#)

Top students
from
disadvantaged
backgrounds are **19%**
less likely to apply
to top firms

And...
50% more likely to get
hired with the CRS

Introduction: three years on

In December 2013 we published our first report into Social Mobility in Graduate Recruitment. In it, we suggested that top employers should adopt contextual data in recruitment. Little did we understand just what that would mean for them – or for us.

Getting our data into firms’ systems has, in essence, meant becoming a software company. Analysing it has made us data science experts. We now have a data and research team of five people, a tech team of eight people, and integrations with eight different tech platforms. Given that I founded the company, and that I can’t write a line of code and was in the bottom maths set at school*, this is, objectively, hilarious. But what is more important is this: the data shows that, together with our clients, we are making a difference to brilliant people from disadvantaged backgrounds.

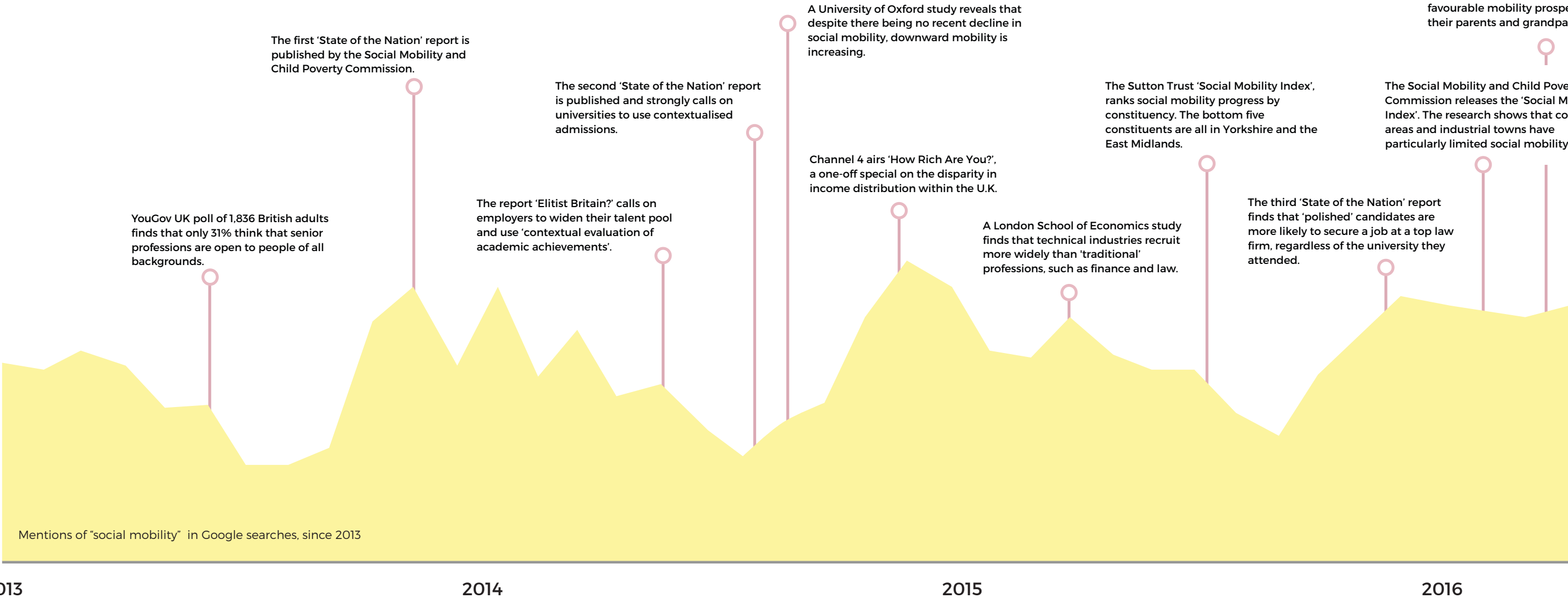
* To be fair, I did pull my finger out and get an A* in the end.

This study is based on an exhaustive analysis of 54,000 applications and 671 hires. It shows that people from disadvantaged backgrounds are 50% more likely to be hired when contextual data is in place. We are proud that so many top employers are engaging with contextual data. No system is perfect, of course, and indeed at the end of this book we outline the improvements we will make to the CRS to make it even better in years to come.

I would like to end by thanking our research sponsors Clifford Chance. We are hugely grateful to the firm, which sponsored our original research and committed to the use of contextual data at its launch in December 2013, for again sponsoring this report.

Raphael Mokades
Raphael Mokades
Managing Director

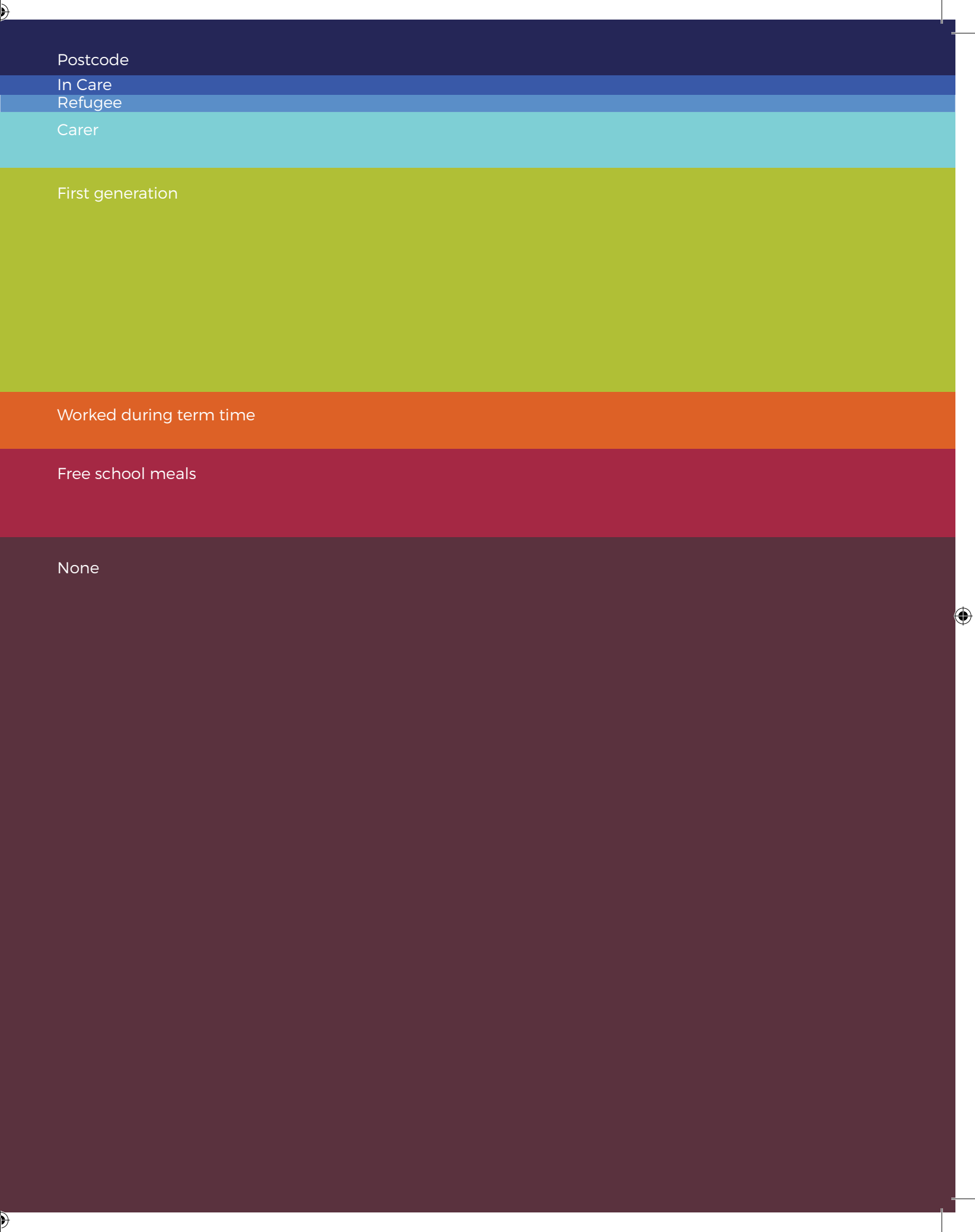
University of Oxford research indicates that younger generations face less favourable mobility prospects than their parents and grandparents.



Contextual recruitment and big data

On 1st October 2015, Rare’s CRS went live on a number of leading employers’ applicant tracking systems. By March 2016, 54,000 individual applications had been processed by the system. This chapter presents what we have learned so far.

RIGHT: breakdown of applications by background >



A London-centric picture



2016 applications by location

Cartogram of the UK showing where this year's applications have come from, with darker areas indicating higher numbers of applicants.

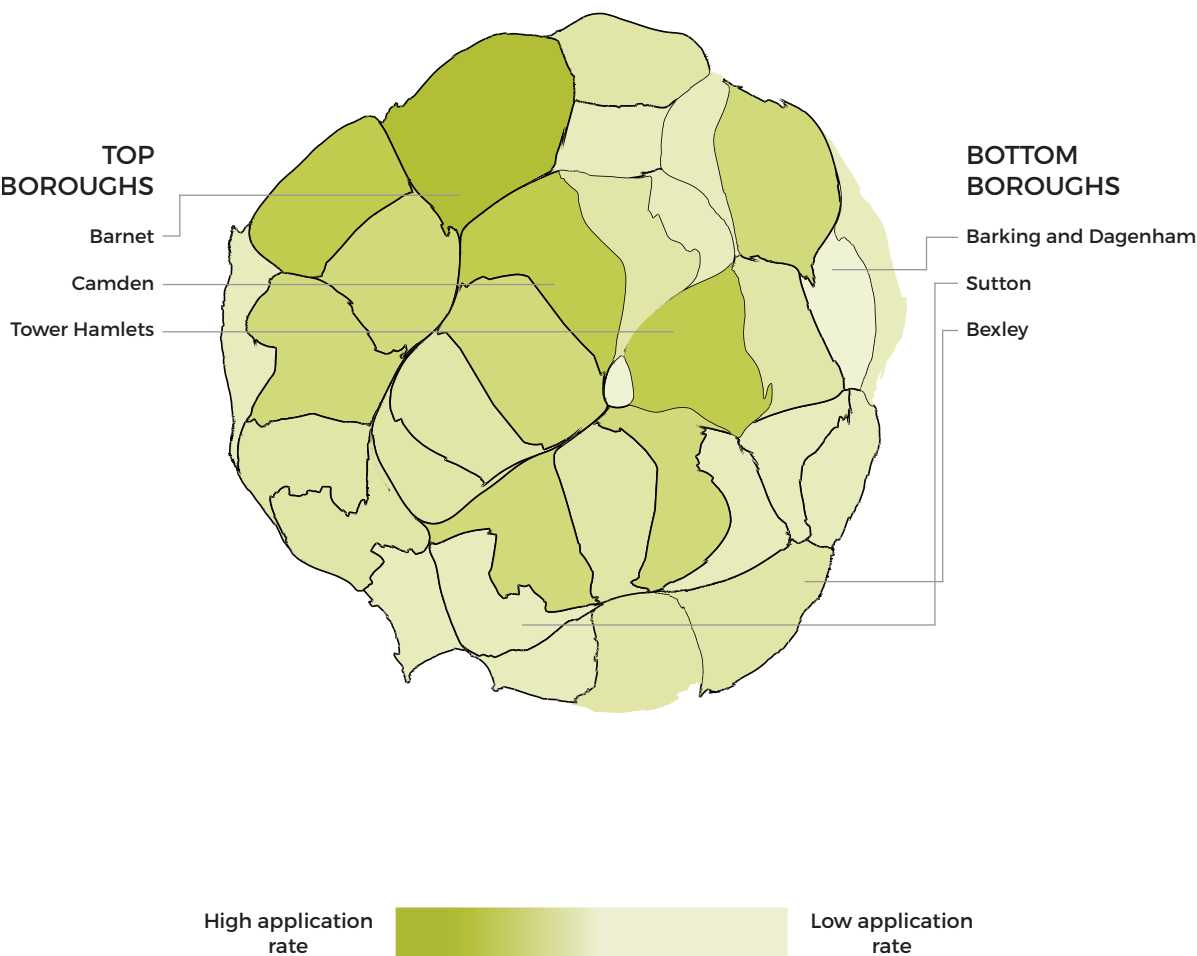
A note on cartograms: these maps distort the shape of places in the UK based on the number of people applying from them. High numbers of applications will produce bigger areas on the map, while the regions with the lowest number will produce the smallest areas.

POLAR

Cartogram of the UK showing where this year's applications have come from, with darker areas indicating higher participation rates in higher education.

2016 applications, London

Cartogram of London showing where this year's applications have come from, with darker areas indicating higher numbers of applicants.



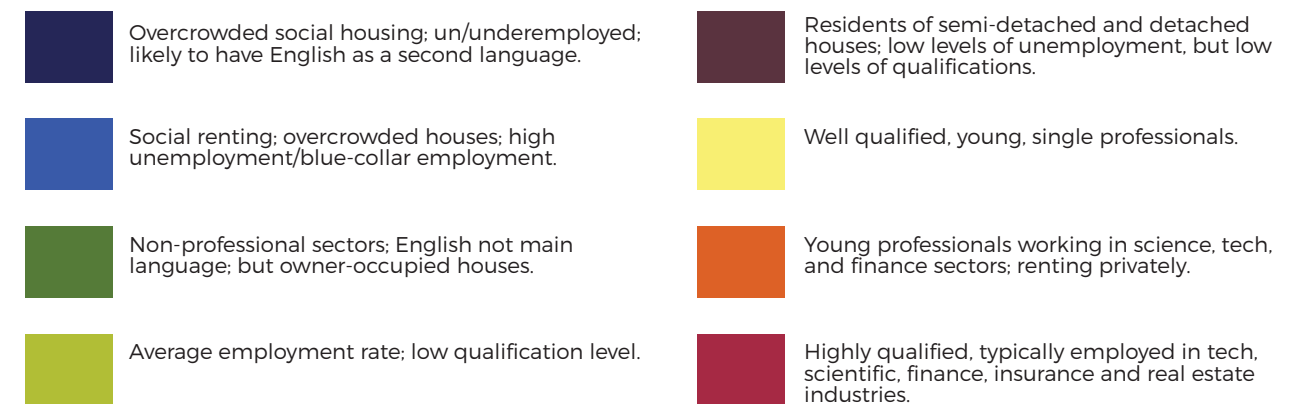
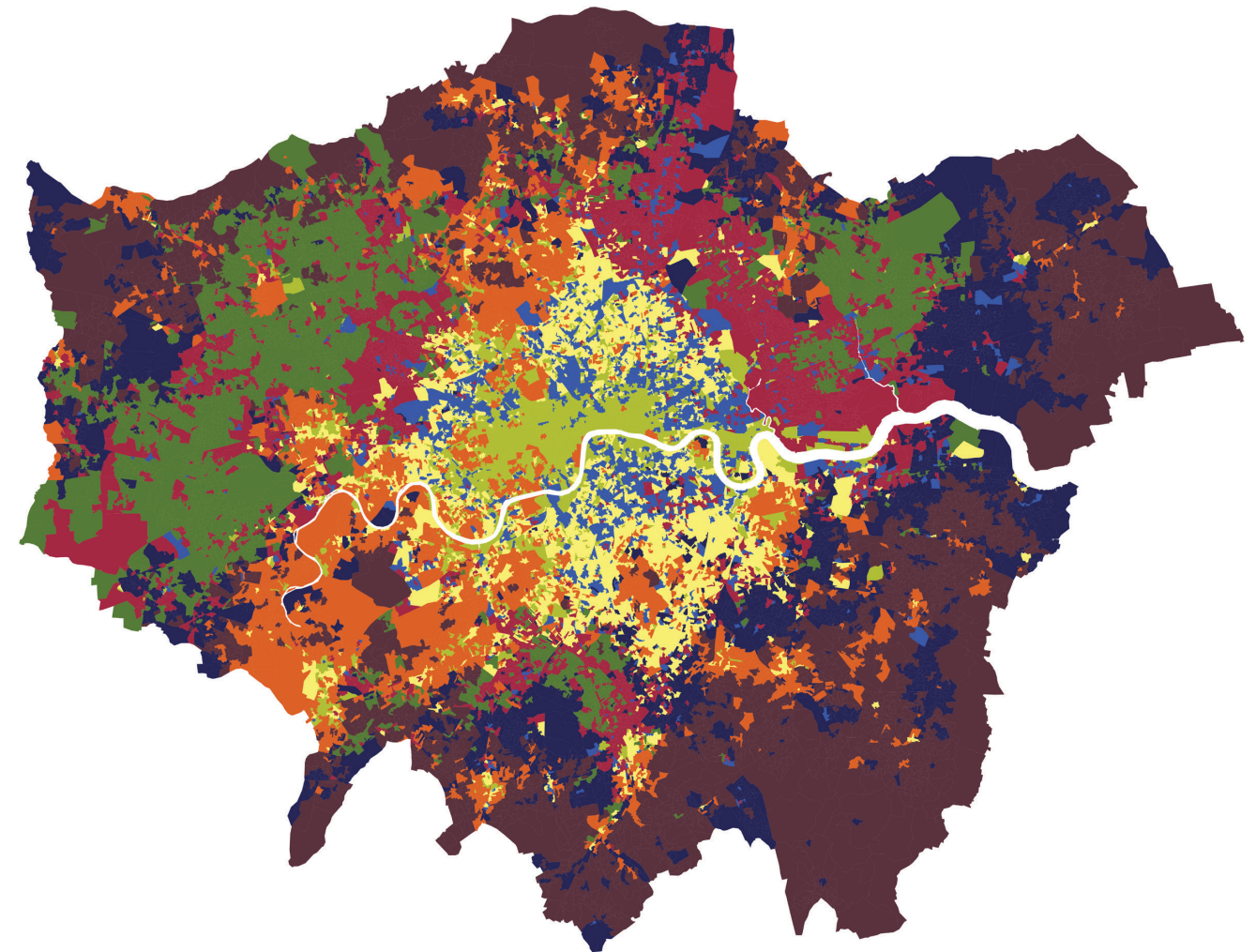
What postcodes tell us about people



2016 applications by deprivation

A cartogram showing this year's applications, where darker colours show least deprived areas.

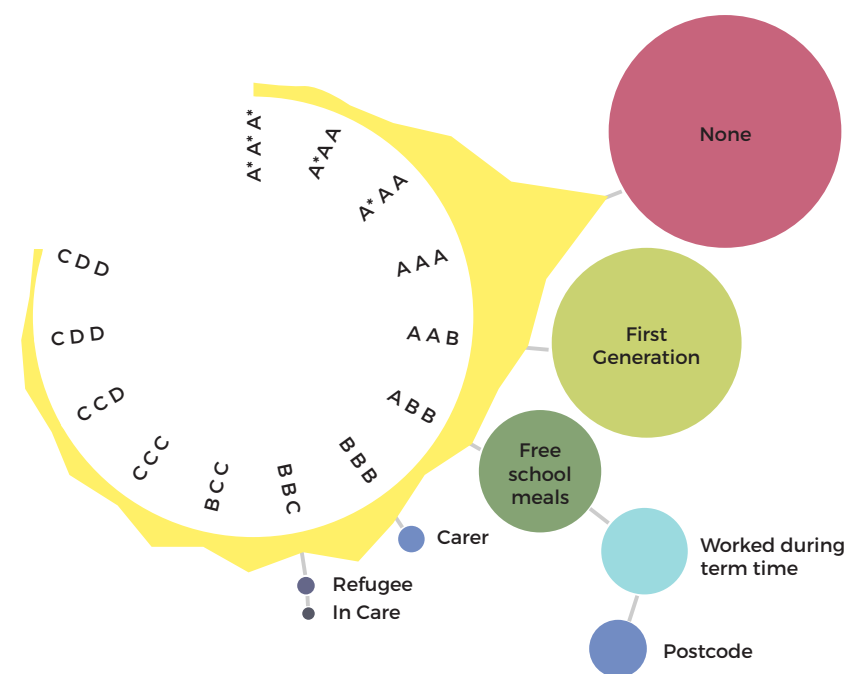
A map of small areas in London, classified based on distinguishing demographic features. The most acute disadvantage is concentrated in small pockets distributed throughout London.



Source: CRS, IMD and Census data 2014

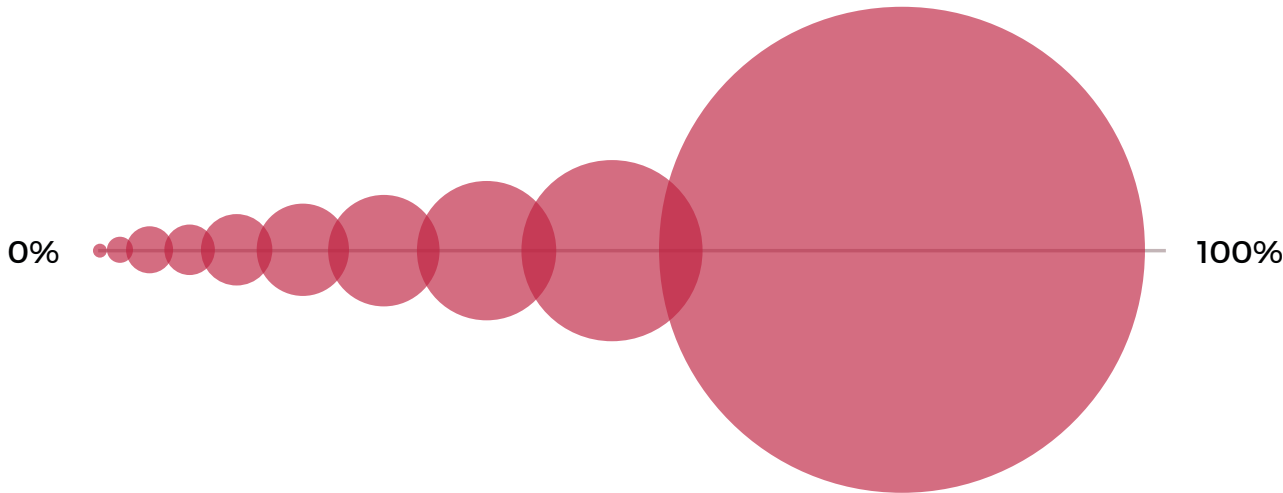
A contextual benchmark

What our 54,000 applications tell us

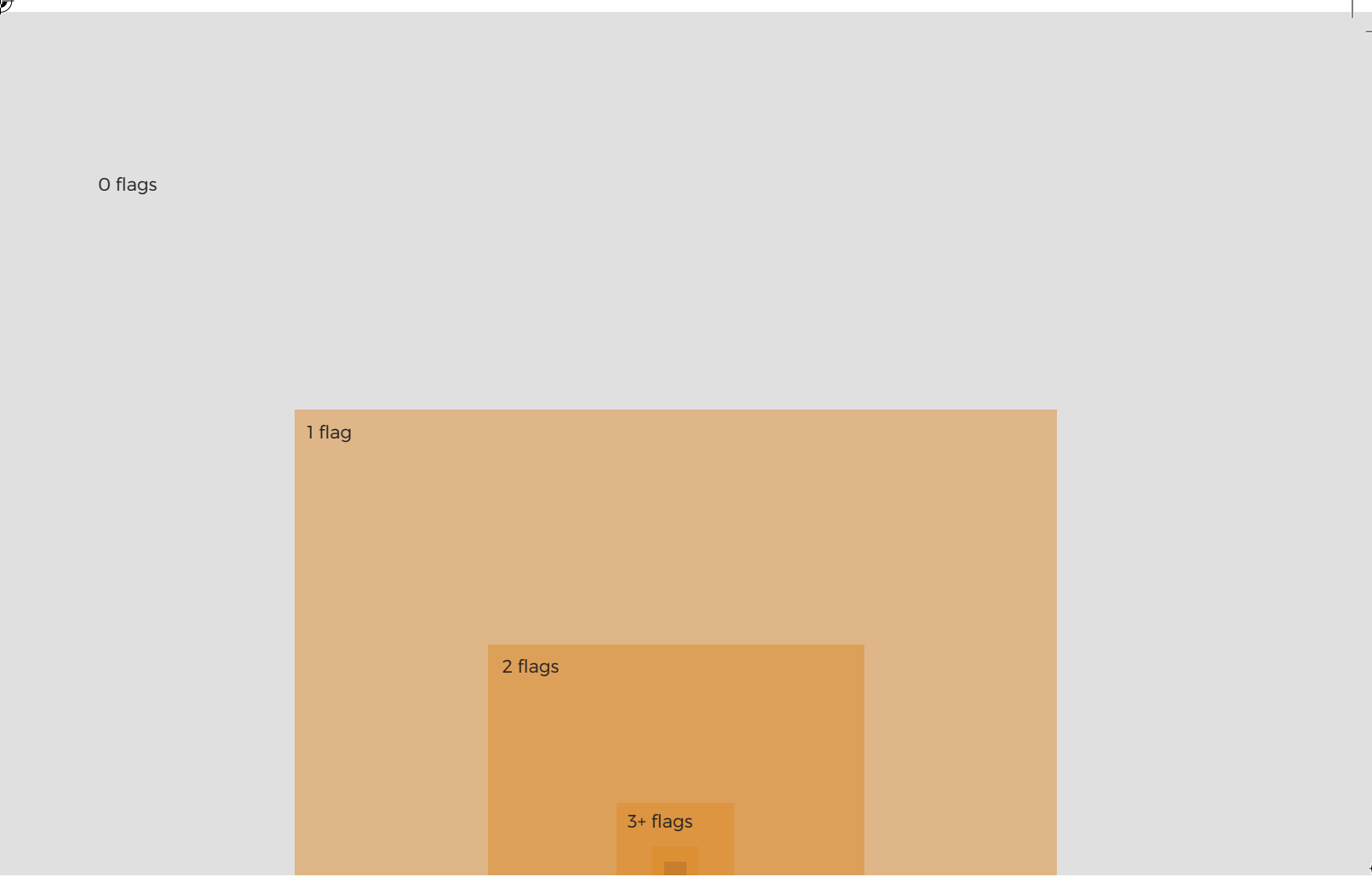


ABOVE: The thickness of the yellow outline correlates with the number of applicants achieving these grades. The circles reflect the backgrounds of these applicants.

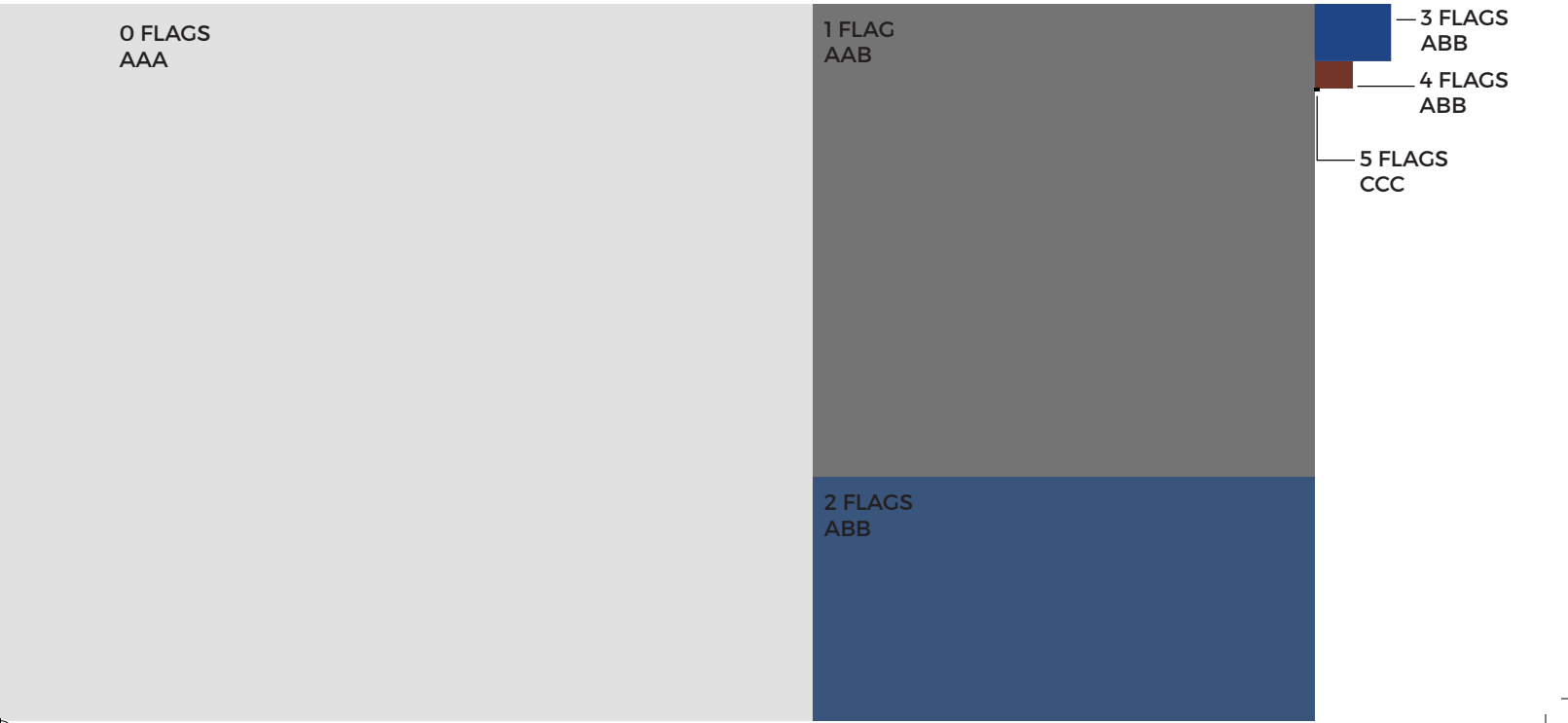
BELOW: The distribution of applicants by school percentile.



Source: CRS



ABOVE and BELOW: These two diagrams show the proportion of candidates with 1, 2, and 3+ flags, and what their average grades are.



Disadvantage from many angles

The relationship between variables

school flags

work during university
or first generation

first generation
and free school meals

free school meals

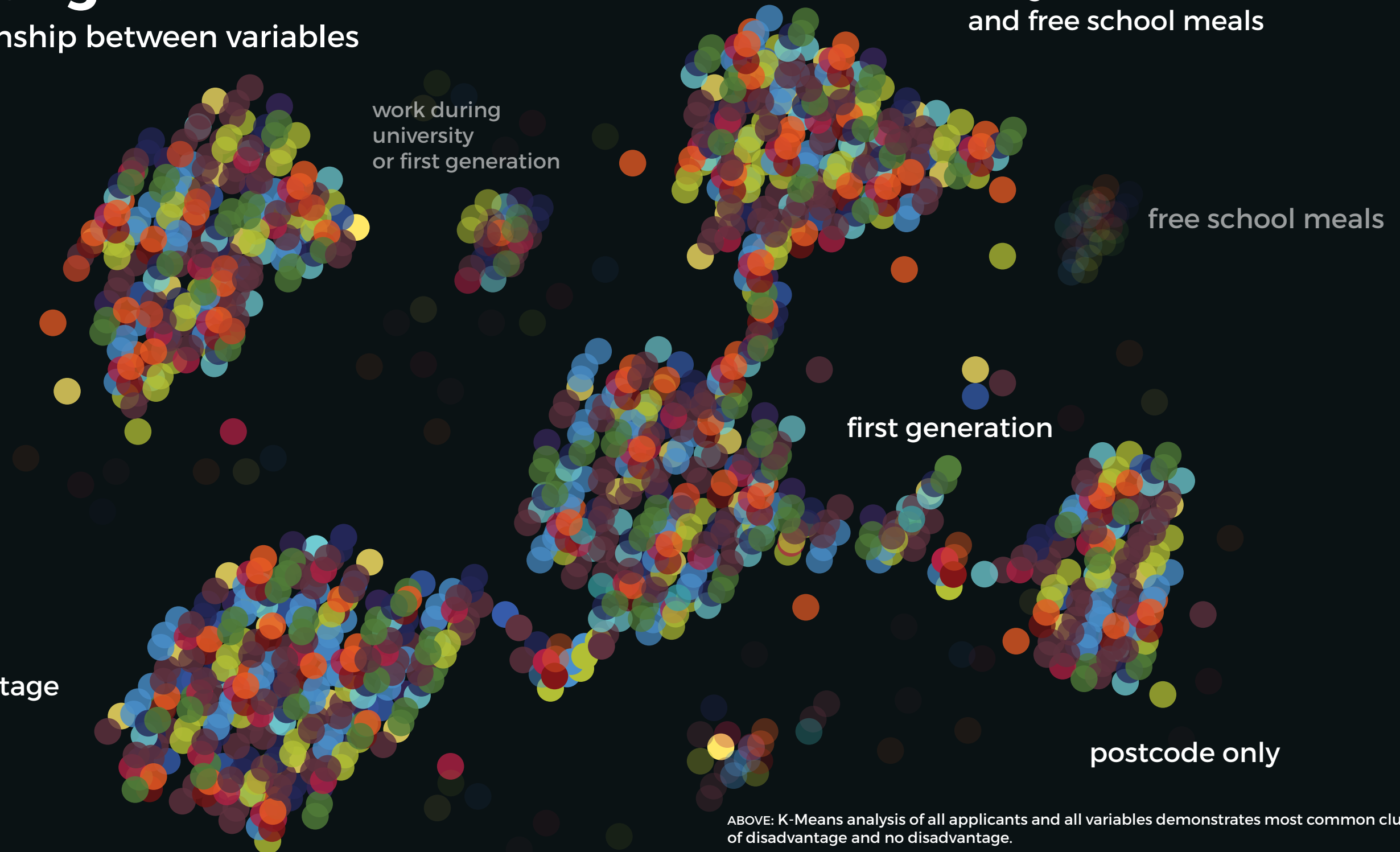
first generation

no disadvantage

postcode only

Source: CRS

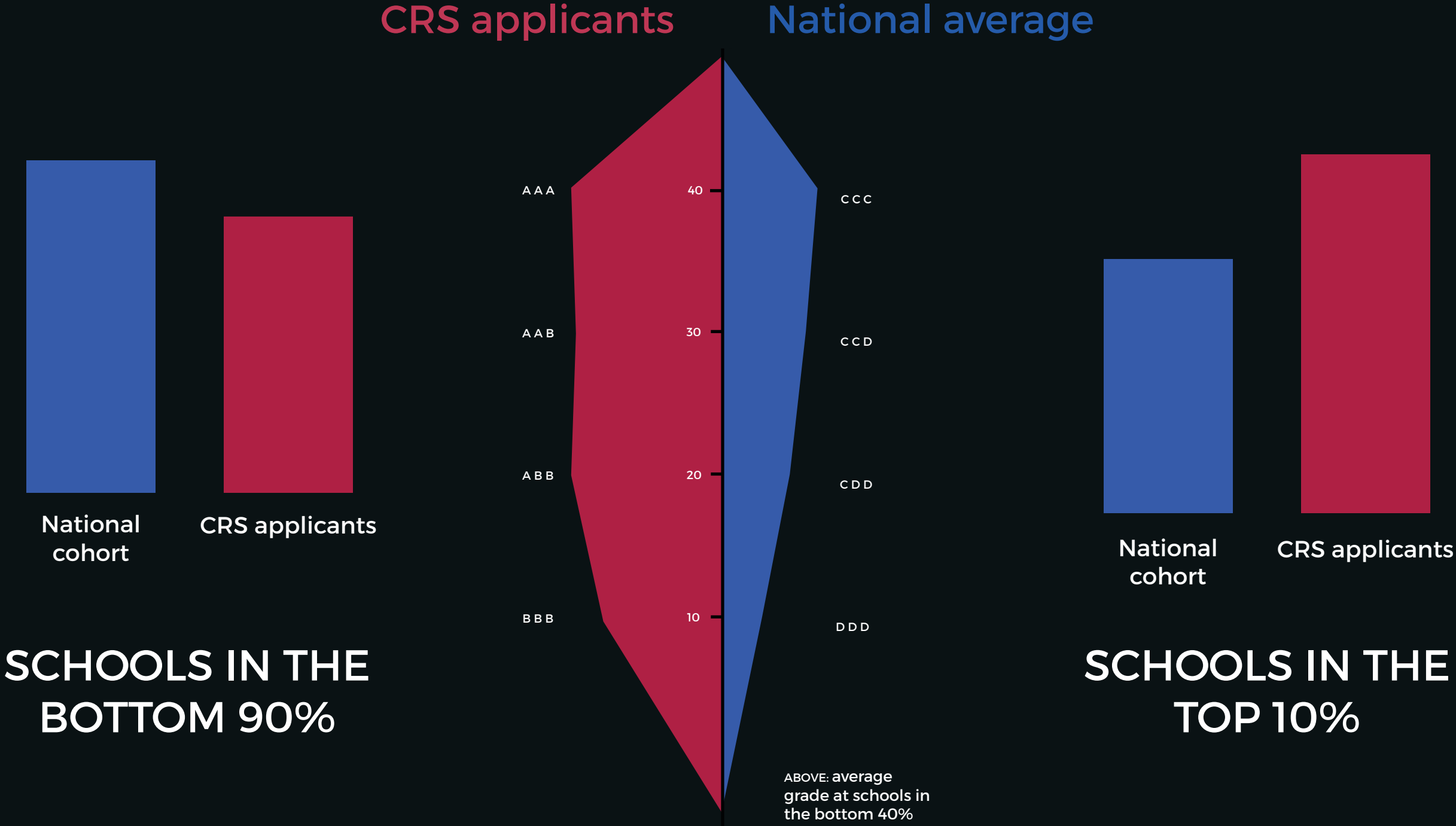
ABOVE: K-Means analysis of all applicants and all variables demonstrates most common clusters of disadvantage and no disadvantage.



People we're missing

Talented people from lower performing schools are less likely to apply to top firms.

We looked at all the A and A* grades achieved in A Level English Literature nationally and compared the distribution of these grades with the schools CRS applicants were from. We found that people from schools in the bottom 90% under-indexed, and people from schools in the top 10% over-indexed, among A and A* grade applicants to top firms.



The story so far

So, 54,000 applications down, and the number grows.

But what have we learnt?

- (1) A/A* students from schools in the bottom 40% of schools are less likely to apply to top firms than their peers in high performing schools. In fact, our data – based on high achievers in English Literature A Level – suggests that they are 19% less likely. This shows what the CRS cannot do – it cannot encourage people who aren’t making applications to make them. The vital importance of outreach work is evident.
- (2) Applications to top firms come disproportionately from the south and the advantaged – no surprises here. What is more interesting, however, is the concentration of outreach work in poor areas in the inner city of London - Tower Hamlets, for example, is the third most likely borough in the whole of London to produce applications to CRS firms, despite being one of the poorest. This shows that change, with hard effort, is possible.
- (3) Our data suggests that the least common forms of disadvantage are also the most acute – specifically: arriving in the UK as a refugee or spending time in the care of the local authority correlate with the lowest A Level grades.
- (4) By contrast, being the first in your immediate household to attend university only has a small impact (average grades: AAB), and is a box ticked by almost a quarter of all applicants. We have come to the conclusion that this is not a measure that should be considered in isolation. We will explore this later in the publication.

Who gets hired

A great deal is now known about who is applying to top firms, but who is getting hired?



Based on an analysis of 671 hires over the last three years, we are now able to compare whom firms hired before and after the adoption of contextual data.

Hires before the CRS

Postcode
In Care
Refugee
Carer

First generation

Worked during term time

Free school meals

None

North

ABOVE: cartogram shows hires by location. The crease of the page represents the North-South divide. The darkest colours, and the most hires, are with one exception all in the south.

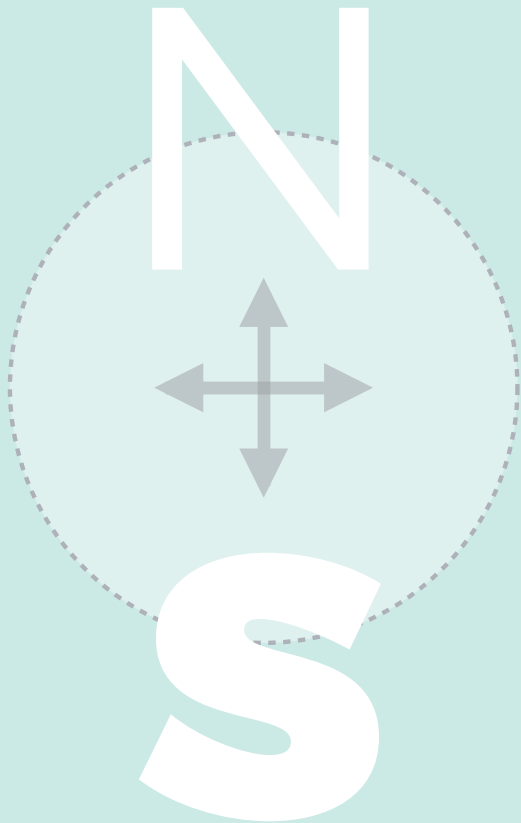
BACKGROUND COLOURS: breakdown of applications by background.

South

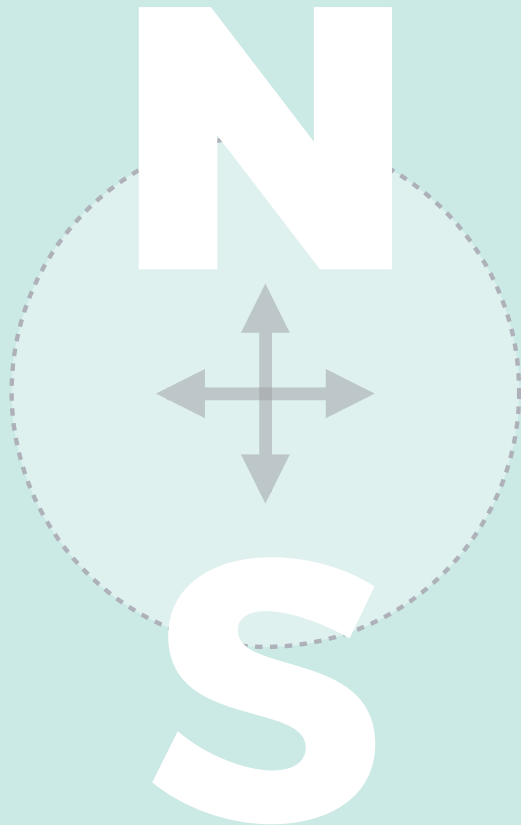
Source: CRS

Hires after the CRS

More Northerners, more disadvantaged people getting hired;
average A Level grade down by one point to AAA

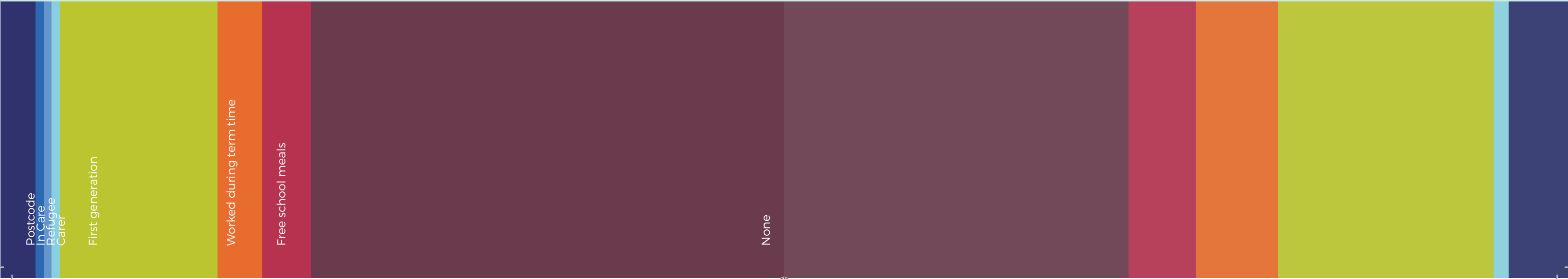


2015



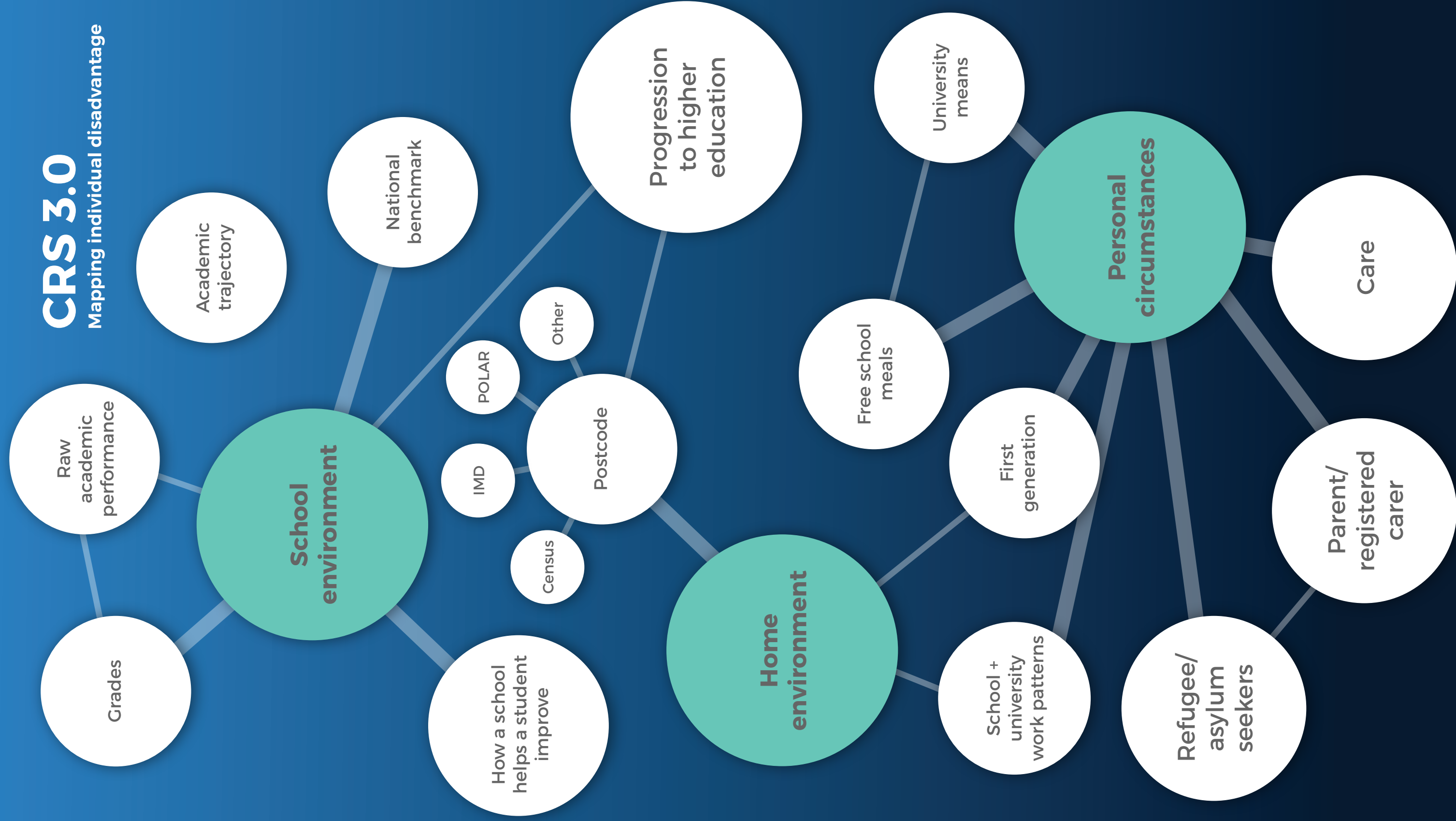
2016

BELOW: breakdown of hires by background.



CRS 3.0

Mapping individual disadvantage



CRS 3.0

CRS 2.0 clearly divided candidates' experiences into three categories: educational, personal, and economic.

A close examination of the data has shown us that the "personal" category currently gives the same weight to markedly different things. For example, arriving in the country as a refugee, or being a parent/registered carer carries the same weight as being the first in your immediate household to attend university ("first gen").

It is pretty clear that first gen is both a more common and a much less serious form of disadvantage than, for example, arriving in the country as a refugee.

Therefore we have redesigned the system to give more weight to more serious forms of disadvantage.

In order to assess more accurately what first gen means and what working in term time means, we now look at all socioeconomic measures together and in relation to each other in order to identify levels of disadvantage.

Acknowledgements and contributors

Thank you to Clifford Chance for the continued support, and to all members of the Contextual Recruitment Working Group (CRWG), who have supported us since 2014.

And thank you, also, to the Rare Contextual Recruitment Pioneers who led the way in September and October 2015.



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rare

Less than a year ago, Rare's CRS went live on a number of leading employers' applicant tracking systems. To date, over 54,000 individual applications have been processed by the system. For the first time, we are able to map applications to these firms, and truly understand where our candidates are coming from - not merely geographically, but also in terms of social, financial, and educational background. In light of the current political focus on social mobility, it has become more important than ever to ensure that the brilliant candidates who might not have attended the top schools, or who may not look quite as brilliant out of context, are identified and given the chance to flourish. The only way to identify such candidates is to draw on all the relevant information available before making a decision.

The data we have gathered shows that the adoption of contextual data has correlated with an increase in the proportion of disadvantaged candidates getting hired.

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Rare Recruitment Limited is registered in England and Wales at 8 Blackstock Mews,
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