

The Brilliant Club

The Brilliant Club is a UK non-profit organisation that aims to widen access to top universities for students from under-represented groups. They do this by encouraging the PhD community to share its academic expertise with state schools. The Brilliant Club runs two core programmes: The Scholars Programme and Researchers in School. As a participant in The Scholars Programme, I recently attended the 'Launch Trip' for the programme in which we attended Trinity Hall College at Cambridge University. The Brilliant Club is described as 'inspirational' and 'transformative' by past participants of the programme and it aims to widen the horizons of pupils.

The Brilliant Club recruits, trains and places PhD researchers in state schools to work with and enrich a small group of pupils. Pupils learn about the subject the researcher is studying through a combination of university trips, in-school tutorials and online resources. During the programme's launch trip, selected pupils from year nine and ten visited Cambridge University and were given a tour of Trinity College. We were given a lecture introducing us to the programme and then we had our first tutorial.



During the tutorial we met with our mentor and familiarized ourselves with the topic we will be investigating: The Relative Age Effect in boys' academy football. The tutorials demonstrate basic concepts relating to physiology within elite youth male football, including biological growth and maturation processes, anthropometry, physiological performance and how these associate with selection and talent identification. At the end of the programme, students will be asked to write an essay-based assignment based on what they have learnt throughout the course.

The Brilliant Club works with more than 500 schools and colleges across Britain and in 2016/17 had employed over 581 PhD researchers to reach over 11,000 pupils. According to the UCAS Multiple Equality Measure, 1 in 4 of the most advantaged quintile of 18-year-olds progress to a highly selective university, whereas only 1 in 50 of the most disadvantaged quintile of 18-year-olds progress to a highly selective university. By cause of this unjust issue, The Brilliant Club is an incredibly beneficial organisation to ensure everyone has the opportunity to get into a top university.