

Supporting Access to Higher Education Pathways

2022-23

Universities

Durham University
Newcastle University
Northumbria University
Teesside University
University of Sunderland

Colleges

Bishop Auckland College
Darlington College
Derwentside College
East Durham College
Education Partnership North East
Education Training Collective
Gateshead College
Hartlepool College of Further Education
Middlesbrough College
Newcastle College
New College Durham
Prior Pursglove and Stockton Sixth Form College
Queen Elizabeth Sixth Form College
The Northern School of Art
Tyne Coast College

Introduction

During the 2022-23 academic year, the North East Uni Connect Programme has continued to support young people and their key influencers in the North East. We have achieved this through our programme of targeted outreach interventions in schools, our structured support for students in the region's further education (FE) colleges, our regional signposting and support for teachers and advisers and our strategic outreach collaborations.

FutureMe, our targeted programme of activity, has engaged with 10,944 target learners across 123 schools and colleges, providing information, advice and guidance on the range of higher education (HE) routes and pathways in the region. This activity ensures that young people in the North East have the skills and knowledge they need to overcome barriers to progression.

Through measuring the impact of our FutureMe activity, we can demonstrate that not only has overall progression in the region gone up, but that higher levels of participation in our programme significantly increases the likelihood that a student will progress to higher education.

In addition, this year through our strategic engagement with the North East Raising Aspiration Partnership (NERAP), Outreach North East were able to expand their support for teachers and advisers across the North East to include the Higher Education Advisers and Teachers (HEAT) Conference, which brought together professionals from across the region.

We look forward to continuing to work with and support our regions schools, colleges, universities, partners and most importantly students, in 2023-24.

Kate Murray
Head of Collaborative Partnerships (Widening Participation)



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Uni Connect in the North East

In 2021-22 the higher education progression rate increased in the North East region by **2.1%** on the previous year.

For our students supported by the North East Uni Connect Programme:

28.6%

of the cohort progressed to Higher Education, an increase of **1.5%** on the previous year

83%

of this cohort were studying at a further education college

72.5%

of the cohort progressed to HE at one of our five partner universities in the North East (Durham University, Newcastle University, Northumbria University, University of Sunderland and Teesside University)

Our evaluation demonstrates that:

Those who engaged in five or more activities were more than

x2 times

as likely to progress to HE than those who engaged in one or two activities
(38.7% vs 18.6%)

Those who had six or more contact hours were more than

x3 times

as likely to progress to Higher Education

Creating an intensive, progressive programme of interventions aligned to a clear and focused Regional Progression Framework supports HE progression.

Activity Impact Engagement

Students who participated in activity on an HE Campus were nearly twice as likely to progress to HE than those who did not

44.2%

VS

26.4%



"I felt this year's Programme was the best yet. The sessions were really good, and the celebration was excellent. The workshops were really interactive and informative. The tour was also excellent giving us snippets of information we didn't know about the University and student life. Thank you for accepting us onto the programme and I look forward to next year."

~ Teacher

FutureMe in Figures

35,858

target student engagements



10,944

target students supported



50,711

contact hours of activity



“Taking part in FutureMe activities gave me the chance to interact with a number of different universities and explore the options open to me. It also gave me lots of support when applying to university making sure I was making the right choices for me.”

- Olivia - FutureMe student from Stockton Sixth form, now studying for a BA in Fine Art at the Northern School of Art

92%

target student from POLAR
Q1&2



1,510

activities delivered



123

schools and colleges engaged



Our FE Programme

Our Students Say...

"The FutureMe activities got me thinking about higher education and gave me the information to help me make my decisions."

~Adam

FutureMe participant Adam engaged in a series of sessions, receiving one-to-one support and participating in group workshops. Adam successfully gained a place to study a Foundation Degree in Sports and Coaching Development and is working towards his career goals.

Read more of [Adam's story here](#).



"It was great to explore different courses in higher education and start thinking about what higher education and career I would like to do."

~Lillie-Mae

Lillie-Mae was studying an extended Level 3 diploma in Sport when she began her journey with FutureMe. She completed a range of activities to help her think about her future education and career and is now working towards a BSc (Hons) in Podiatry at New College Durham.

Read more of [Lillie-Mae's story here](#).



The NEUCP works with students in all 15 colleges across the North East of England. In this region, Further Education plays a really important role in young people's progression routes to Higher Education, and this is particularly true for young people from underrepresented groups.

Throughout the 2022-23 academic year, all 15 colleges delivered FutureMe activity across a range of areas, underpinned by our Regional Progression Framework, including UCAS support, Subject Insights and Careers, as well as giving students the chance to interact with key local employers.

Our Schools Programme

During the 2022-23 academic year, students in Years 10-13 in schools across the region continued to benefit from a range of FutureMe events and activities designed to support them in thinking about the range of routes and pathways available to them in education, and develop the skills needed to make successful applications. Activities included:

- **Undergraduate Mentoring**
- **Higher Education Outreach Workshops**
- **Campus Visits**

Whilst in person events continue to be the most popular option with schools and students, FutureMe sessions continue to be available in alternative formats which allowed flexibility for schools and students preferring to engage with virtual delivery formats such as webinars and pre-recorded material/resources.

New for this academic year were the 'Developing FutureMe@' events. These skills-based experience days were hosted at partner universities across the region and provided students in Years 10-13 the opportunity to learn more study skills and techniques, all while exploring a higher education campus and considering what their future in higher education could look like. One event, held at Durham University, saw students attend with their parents so that both audiences benefitted from the information delivered on the day.

Students in Year 10 continued to receive support through our mentoring programme, which linked them with undergraduate students from each of the five universities in the region and explored a range of topics related to higher education and future careers. The programme concluded with a visit to one of our partner institutions to celebrate the achievements of the students and allow them to experience some of the topics covered through the programme.

"Thank you for such a great day full of helpful tips, advice and resources. You have a wonderful and engaging team! We have definitely got a lot from the day!"

~ Parent

"The Mentoring process was educational and interesting and will be useful in later life. It has taught me things that would have previously put me off going into Higher Education. I realise that it isn't as stressful as I thought it might be. I really enjoyed spending time with our mentor as she was kind and helpful and taught us many things."

~ Mentoring Recipient

Outreach North East

Outreach North East provides teachers and advisers across the region with the information, resources and CPD they need to best support their students with making decisions about higher education and progression.

In the 2022-23 academic year, Outreach North East delivered CPD sessions on a range of subjects including Degree Apprenticeships, Student Finance, and supporting Care Experienced students. These sessions were delivered in collaboration with: ASK Apprenticeships; Health Education England; UCAS; Money & Pensions Service; Student Finance England; National Network for the Education of Care Leavers and the North East Raising Aspiration Partnership .

Outreach North East have been successfully working with UCAS since 2020-21 to provide key updates and support at relevant points in the year. 2022-23 delivery of UCAS CPD included sessions on: personal statements, preparing for the January deadline, and confirmation and clearing, among others.

The logo for UCAS, consisting of the letters 'UCAS' in a bold, black, sans-serif font. The letter 'A' is stylized with a red triangle pointing upwards, forming the top of the letter.

“Partnering with the North East Local Enterprise Partnership (NELEP) to create our ‘NE One for HE’ resources has allowed us to tailor the lesson plans to the needs of our region. We understand that engaging learners at Key Stage 3 gives them the opportunity to consider HE pathways before choosing their GCSE options, and supports them in making more informed choices about their future education.”

Lucy McMahon, Project Manager, Outreach North East



Supporting Teachers and Advisers

The Higher Education Advisers and Teachers (HEAT) Conference took place on the 1st December 2022. Delivered by Outreach North East and the North East Raising Aspiration Partnership (NERAP), the conference was attended by 100 teachers, advisers and HE professionals from across the North East who came together to discuss key issues related to HE progression and fair access regional challenges.

The conference included:

- A series of keynotes which provided both national and regional data
- Policy insights around regional context
- Information on technical qualifications and how to encourage students to access these pathways
- Practical examples to support teachers and advisers in strategically planning HE Outreach
- Tools for teacher and advisers to build an HE Outreach framework within their school or college.

The conference also featured a series of practical workshops to give the delegates the chance to focus in on key areas and to give them tools that they could implement in their own classroom. The workshops covered topics such as HE applications; technical qualifications; student finance; supported entry routes.

97%

of attendees found the keynote sessions either useful or very useful

100%

of attendees found the workshop sessions either useful or very useful

100%

of attendees found the HEAT conference overall either Very good (70%) or Good (30%)

Strategic Outreach

Outreach North East has worked collaboratively with NERAP over the past three years to expand and develop the Choices Together programme. Choices Together is a regional programme that supports care experienced students and young carers to think about their futures and how higher education can help them achieve their goals.



Click the image to learn more about Choices Together.

As part of our Strategic Outreach, Outreach North East has match funded Choices Together with NERAP to enable them to expand the programme to support students from year 7-13. NERAP can now run Choices Together as a progressive programme, allowing students to sign up at any point in their educational journey. During the 2022/23 academic year, Choices Together supported 111 students to explore higher education.

Contact Us:

If you have any questions about the contents of this report, or would like to stay informed about our activity please contact us using the details below.

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