



# CLASS of 2024 SUMMER SCHOOL

An evaluation of the 2018  
Go Higher West Yorkshire Summer School Programme



National Collaborative  
Outreach Programme



Dr David Wilkinson  
December 2018



*I learnt a lot today, especially in relation to how to encourage children to participate in teaching sessions – very useful for me because I want to be a teacher.*

Summer School participant.

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*It makes me feel more positive and confident about finding out more about Higher Education courses and Open Days.*

Summer School participant.

# Executive summary



## Introduction

The class of 2024 collaborative summer school was hosted by Go Higher West Yorkshire's (GHWY) Higher Education partners from Tuesday 17th to Thursday 19th July 2018. 77 students attended the residential from 12 NCOP and GHWY target schools and colleges.



## Programme content

The content of the Summer School was developed in response to participant and practitioner feedback from previous years (the collaborative Year 10 residential has run since 2015). The programme was structured around the 'student journey', with Day 1 focusing on pre-entry options and 'freshers' activities, Day 2 on study and the student experience, and Day 3 on preparation for the world of work and graduation. A central driver in the development and design of the programme was that it should provide students with an immersive experience of Higher Education. Alongside core staff, participants were supported throughout by dedicated Student Ambassadors from across the GHWY partnership.



## An introduction to Higher Education, and the programmes and provision on offer

The UCAS fair on day 1 enabled Summer School students to explore opportunities for progression beyond school or college. Almost all (87%) of students developed clearer ideas of future study as a result. These interactions supported the development of a positive view on the possibility of progression for many students, with nearly three-quarters (71%) believing that university and Higher Education was possible.



## Immersive Higher Education experiences (taster sessions)

Students found the 3-day programme to be immersive and illuminative in terms of the information presented about options available for Higher Education in the West Yorkshire sub-region. Most of the students who responded to our evaluation questions (86%) left the Summer School with a clear understanding of what is it like to study in Higher Education.

Students who left the Summer School with a clear understanding of Higher Education study.

86%



## Enterprise challenge and graduation ceremony

The enterprise challenge on the final day of the Summer School was enjoyable and engaging. Students were clearly proud to receive their certificates from the Go Higher West Yorkshire Partnership Manager. Almost all students (91%) stated that the time on the Summer School made them feel more positive about the future.

Students who said that the Summer School made them feel more positive about the future.

91%



## Social activities

Staying in Halls of Residence and participating in less formal activities (such as bowling, film night, group meals) allowed students to continue to reflect and share experiences with their peers (and Student Ambassadors). These reflections and conversations were also important in shaping and informing participants' understanding of Higher Education and the opportunities it could provide.

87%

Students who had developed clearer ideas about future study as a result of the Summer School programme.

71%

Students who believe that university and Higher Education was possible.



### Class of 2024 reflective workbook

The reflective workbook used in the programme was a revised version of a similar document developed for the 2017 residential (designed by a Leeds Arts University student). Content was structured around the learning journey undertaken throughout the Summer School. Interview evidence provided by Student Ambassadors indicated that 'Down' time and less formal parts of the programme were utilised to reinforce the importance of reflective thought. Many of the Student Ambassadors who participated in evaluation discussions or interviews felt that these regular reminders to reflect had a positive impact on the level and quality of commentary produced in the reflective workbooks.



### Learning and development gain

By the end of the Summer School, students reported that their understanding of student life in Higher Education had increased dramatically, as had their knowledge of courses available in local Higher Education institutions. Substantial increases were also recorded in relation to understanding the different routes into Higher Education and being able to assess and evaluate the most suitable progression options.



### Teaching staff reflections

Teaching staff provided a range of positive comments and reflections on the Summer School programme. Introductory sessions on day 1 where students were able to ask questions of programme staff and Student Ambassadors worked particularly well for many as these helped to support the development of rapport and relationships.

Teachers also reported that informal and social elements of the programme, such as the bowling experience and group meal, provided students with valuable opportunities to develop social skills crucial for effective progression to Higher Education.



### Student Ambassador view

Several Student Ambassadors commented that, as a result of the programme, students had much clearer ideas and plans for progression when they leave school. This included identifying entry requirements for specific Higher Education provision offered by partner institutions.



### Concluding remarks

Impact of programme on students in terms of 'distance travelled' is considerable. Anecdotal evidence provided by teaching staff indicates that participants were carefully selected to ensure maximum effect or impact of the programme. Part of this selection involved NCOP staff in partner schools working closely with the GHWY central team agree on the most suitable students to recruit.

The intensive and energetic nature of the residential encouraged participants to be ambitious about future plans. By the end of the 3-day programme, students had a good indication of the careers they would like to consider and the paths they could follow to achieve their ambitions.



## INTRODUCTION

The class of 2024 collaborative summer school was hosted by Go Higher West Yorkshire's (GHWY) Higher Education partners from Tuesday 17th to Thursday 19th July 2018. 77 students attended the residential from 12 NCOP and GHWY target schools and colleges, comprising:

- Appleton Academy (Bradford)
- Bishop Young Academy (Leeds)
- Bradford Academy (Bradford)
- Carlton Bolling College (Bradford)
- Cathedral Academy (Wakefield)
- Cockburn School (Leeds)
- Dixons Trinity Academy (Bradford)
- Immanuel College (Bradford)
- Leeds City College 14+ Academy (Leeds)
- Leeds West Academy (Leeds)
- Minsthorpe Community Academy (Wakefield)
- Ruth Gorse Academy (Leeds)

Programme promotion and was concentrated on NCOP target ward areas to ensure it recruited those students who would benefit most.

### Aims of the Summer School

The Class of 2024 Summer School sought to:

- ▶ Raise aspirations and confidence.
- ▶ Enhance awareness of choice for Higher Education institutions and courses in the region.
- ▶ Familiarise students with the Higher Education environment, and make them feel welcome in our institutions.



## PROGRAMME CONTENT

The content of the Summer School was developed in response to participant and practitioner feedback from previous years (the collaborative Year 10 residential has run since 2015). The programme was structured around the 'student journey', with Day 1 focusing on pre-entry options and 'freshers' activities, Day 2 on study and the student experience, and Day 3 on preparation for the world of work and graduation. A central driver in the development and design of the programme was that it should provide students with an immersive experience of Higher Education. Alongside core staff, participants were supported throughout by dedicated Student Ambassadors from across the GHWY partnership. The programme had five substantive elements:

### 1. An introduction to Higher Education, and the programmes and provision on offer

This part of the programme took the form of a UCAS fair, which allowed students to access information and guidance on Higher Education provision available in the region from College and University providers. In order to establish links between Higher Education study and potential careers, the fair, held at Leeds City College Printworks Campus, also included several employers. The employer offer also included representation from apprenticeship options.

### 2. Academic taster sessions

A range of subject taster sessions were facilitated by experts from Go Higher West Yorkshire Higher Education providers. These were grouped around a variety of content areas or themes. Participants registered in advance for a particular theme in which they were interested, providing them with the opportunity to explore the range of provision in that subject area.

### 3. Enterprise challenge and 'graduation ceremony'

On the final day of the programme, summer school students worked on an enterprise challenge and presented their work to a panel of judges and other invited guests (including many of their parents). The challenge was to design their own university/college, based on what they had learnt in the course of the residential. The residential concluded with a graduation ceremony in celebration of participants' achievements.

### 4. Social activities

Social experiences and events (such as sporting activities and games, a group meal, bowling, and film night) were embedded throughout the programme in order to develop confidence, networking, and other interpersonal skills.

### 5. Class of 2024 reflective workbook

Reinforcing the themes and content of the programme, each participant was provided with a reflective workbook. Each participant was encouraged to record their thoughts in the workbook to help them reflect upon the programme. Some time was given over in the programme to facilitate this, although students were also asked to make additional reflections outside of the structured sessions.



## DATA COLLECTION AND EVIDENCE

Data were collected in a number of ways to inform this evaluation report. All students were asked to complete a learning gain tool survey at the beginning and end of the Summer School programme. They were also asked to complete a post-it note exercise on the final day in response to a number of statements about progression and Higher Education. Some students were informally interviewed during their preparations for the enterprise challenge on the final day of the programme. Participant reflective diary materials were analysed (from students who had provided permission to do this). Teacher reflections were collected through consulting reflective accounts recorded in their own reflective diaries, and Student Ambassador views were collected through informal interviews carried out during the last day of the Summer School.

## Academic taster session themes

### CSI day

- ▶ Archaeology session provided by the University of Bradford.
- ▶ Law session provided by the University of Bradford.
- ▶ Psychology session provided by the University of Leeds.

### Digital day

- ▶ Digital in the media session provided by the Go Higher West Yorkshire team.
- ▶ Game design session provided by Leeds City College.
- ▶ Computer Science session provided by the University of Bradford

### Movie day

- ▶ Scriptwriting for films session provided by Leeds Trinity University.
- ▶ Media make up session provided by Bradford College.
- ▶ Performing arts session provided by Bradford College.

### Inspiring change day

- ▶ Teaching session provided by Bradford College.
- ▶ Social work session provided by Bradford College.
- ▶ Business Management session provided by Wakefield College.

### Smart art day

- ▶ Creative visual research session provided by Leeds Arts University.
- ▶ Screen printing session provided by Leeds City College.
- ▶ Photography session provided by Leeds City College.

### Science and engineering day

- ▶ Pharmacy session provided by the University of Bradford.
- ▶ Chemistry session provided by the University of Bradford.
- ▶ Giant tetrahedron session activity provided by the Go Higher West Yorkshire team.

### Words and society day

- ▶ Oral history session provided by the University of Huddersfield.
- ▶ Journalism session provided by the University of Huddersfield.
- ▶ Politics session provided by the University of Leeds.

## FINDINGS



### An introduction to Higher Education, and the programmes and provision on offer

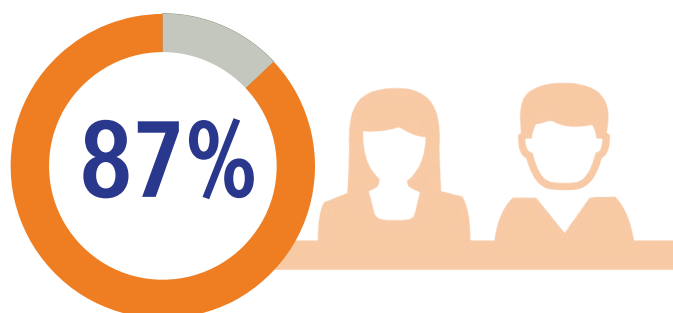
#### Exploring opportunities at the UCAS fair

The UCAS fair on Day 1 enabled Summer School students to explore opportunities for progression beyond school or college. Some commented that the wealth of information, advice and guidance materials available at the event positively informed their decisions about what to do when they left school or college.

#### Sharing career ideas with others

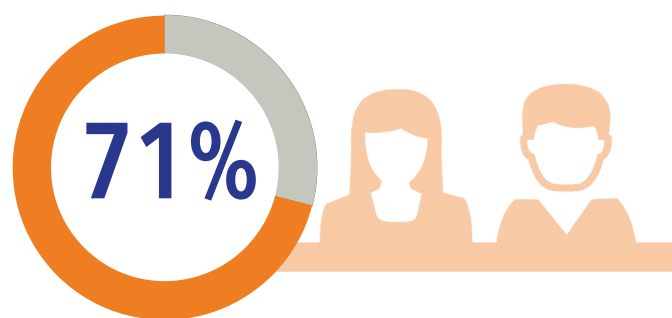
Sharing experiences and views on career ideas and ambitions with other students at the UCAS fair enabled many young people to formulate their own plans. Almost all students (87%) developed clearer ideas of future study as a result. Of value and influence here were the structured accounts of Higher Education experience provided by the Student Ambassadors:

“It makes me feel more positive and confident about finding out more about Higher Education courses and Open Days. Summer School participant.

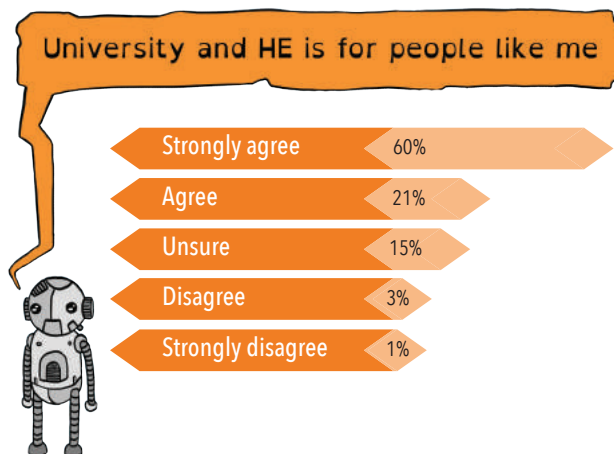


Proportion of students who had developed clearer ideas about future study as a result of the Summer School programme.

Participants' own views of Higher Education, combined with those of other students and Student Ambassadors allowed them to construct their own 'truth' about the value of possible progression trajectories. These interactions supported the development of a positive outlook on progression for many students, with nearly three-quarters (71%) believing that, by the end of the programme, university and Higher Education was possible.



Proportion of students, at the end of the programme, believing that university and Higher Education was possible.

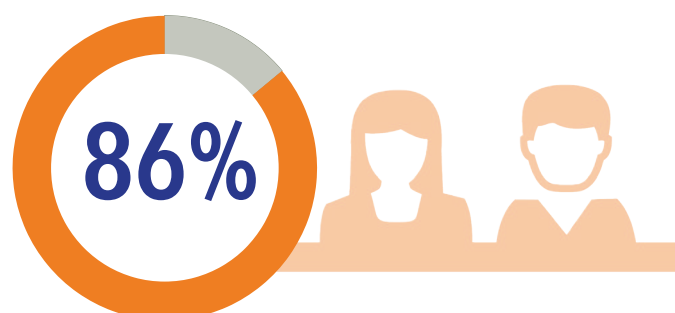




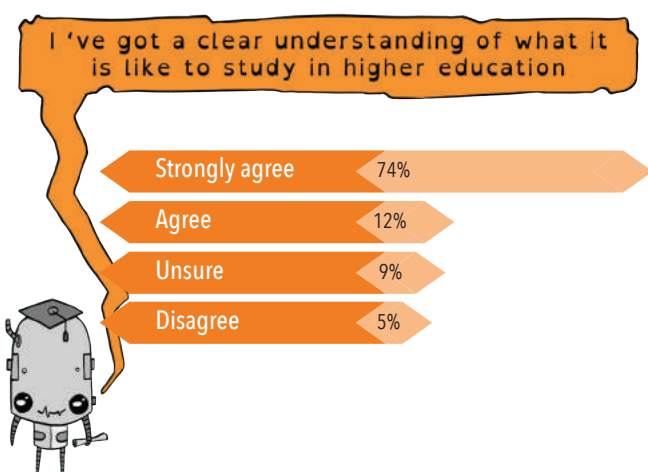
## Immersive Higher Education experiences (taster sessions)

Subject taster seminars and workshops provided participants with an immersive experience of Higher Education study, and developed insight regarding the diverse range of subjects and modes of study on offer in the West Yorkshire sub-region. Most of the students who responded to our evaluation questions (86%) left the Summer School with a clear understanding of what it is like to study in Higher Education. This made progression to Higher Education more of a possibility for participants:

“I think after this residential experience, I will definitely look into the possibilities of university and Higher Education.”  
Summer School participant.



Proportion of students who left the Summer School with a clear understanding of Higher Education study.



## Developing a greater understanding of Higher Education

Taster sessions were an important component, for many students, in helping them to develop their understanding of Higher Education level study. Information collated from reflective workbooks indicated that the content of sessions was stretching and challenging in terms of material covered and concepts and theories considered. This was particularly the case in the more traditional academic subject areas such as Psychology, Chemistry and Politics. The range of sessions available enabled students to experience different styles of teaching and delivery of Higher Education-type content:

“It depends on the type of person you had teaching you. Our first one wasn't as engaging but the second one got us more involved. So, it depends on the person and the kind of subject they are covering. Not all subjects can be enjoyable all of the time.”  
Summer School participant.

## Employment options

When asked to provide additional comment on the content of the programme the students agreed it was useful and interesting, that they had learnt a lot of techniques, and more about the jobs available within the various academic areas covered. One student was already thinking about how they could apply what they had learnt to the children they may be teaching in the future:

“I learnt a lot today, especially in relation to how to encourage children to participate in teaching sessions - very useful for me because I want to be a teacher.”  
Summer School participant.

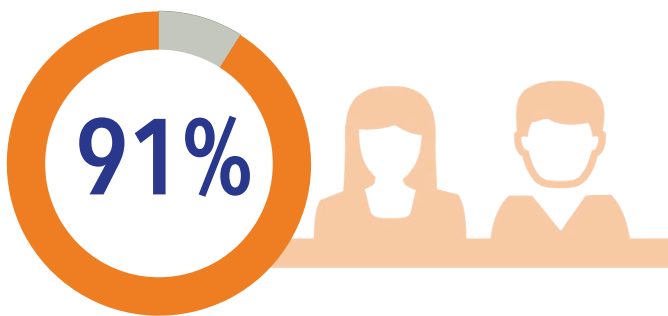




## Enterprise challenge and graduation ceremony

The enterprise challenge on the final day of the Summer School was enjoyable and engaging. Over the course of the residential, confidence within groups had grown and students had got to know each other well enough to be able to draw upon the mix of skills and abilities in their groups to good effect for the group task and presentations. Some parents were able to join the graduation ceremony at the end of the Summer School and this added an extra dimension to this more formal finale of the programme. Students were clearly proud to receive their certificates from the Go Higher West Yorkshire Partnership Manager. Almost all students (91%) stated that the time on the Summer School made them feel more positive about the future:

“Before I was kinda quite insecure about going to university - but now I just can't wait!  
Summer School participant.

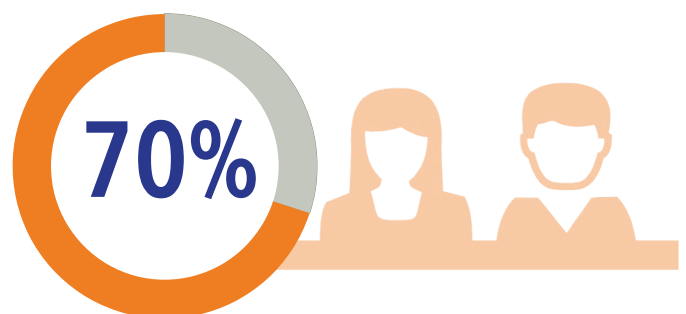


Proportion of students who indicated that the Summer School made them feel more positive about the future.



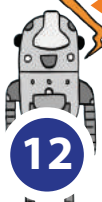
## Social activities

Whilst the structured and academic elements of the programme were valued by students, many also made positive comments on the social and other elements of the residential. Staying in Halls of Residence and participating in less formal activities (such as bowling, film night, and group meals) allowed students to continue to reflect and share experiences with their peers (and Student Ambassadors). These reflections and conversations were also important in shaping and informing participants' understanding of Higher Education and the opportunities it could provide. The inclusive nature of the programme (students were offered choices about the activities and taster sessions in which they engaged, and Student Ambassadors and school staff remained for the duration of the programme alongside participants) facilitated the development of a positive attitude towards progression and future opportunities amongst students. At the end of the residential, many students (70%) were beginning to plan for their progression following school or college.

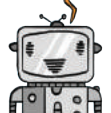
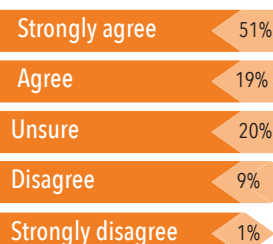


Proportion of students who were beginning to plan for their progression following school or college.

My time on the residential has made me feel more positive about the future



The class of 2024 residential has helped me to plan my future





“

*I think after this residential experience, I will definitely look into the possibilities of university and Higher Education.*

Summer School participant.



## Class of 2024 reflective workbook

The reflective workbook used in the programme was a revised version of a similar document developed for the 2017 residential (designed a Leeds Arts University student). Content was structured around the learning journey undertaken throughout the Summer School.

### Personalised context of Higher Education

Particular emphasis in the workbook was given to exploring Higher Education and establishing a personalised and applied context for progression. As an example of this valuable approach, the students were asked to interview some current university students (Ambassadors), to ask about their experiences and gain an understanding of what it is like to start university. Part of this activity involved determining definitions of specific terms or words used regularly in and around Higher Education. Working in a reflective and sense-making way (interacting and 'checking' understanding with their peers, Ambassadors and other facilitating staff) students developed their own interpretations and contextual anchors. From this, they were able to make meaningful definition notes in their workbooks. A good example of this is demonstrated in one student's interpretation of 'peer review':

**“**... this can mean that another student checks your work and gives you notes on how to make it better. In university it is also the way that academics give each other feedback on their writing - its about what people in your team think about you.  
Summer School participant.

### Making notes and developing reflections

This year's workbook provided additional space for reflective comment or notes; and participants were strongly encouraged by Ambassadors and school teaching staff to make regular reflections. Interview evidence provided by Ambassadors indicated that 'Down' time and less formal parts of the programme were utilised to reinforce the importance of reflective thought. Many of the Ambassadors who participated in evaluation discussions or interviews felt that these regular reminders to reflect had a positive impact on the level and quality of commentary produced in the reflective workbooks. This is evidenced by the following considered reflection of one participant:

**“**You have to be confident on Summer School programmes. Even if you don't want to, you have to go up to people and talk to them because you won't make friends if you don't talk to people. It's not guaranteed that your friends will come with you to university, so you just have to make your own friends.  
Summer School participant.

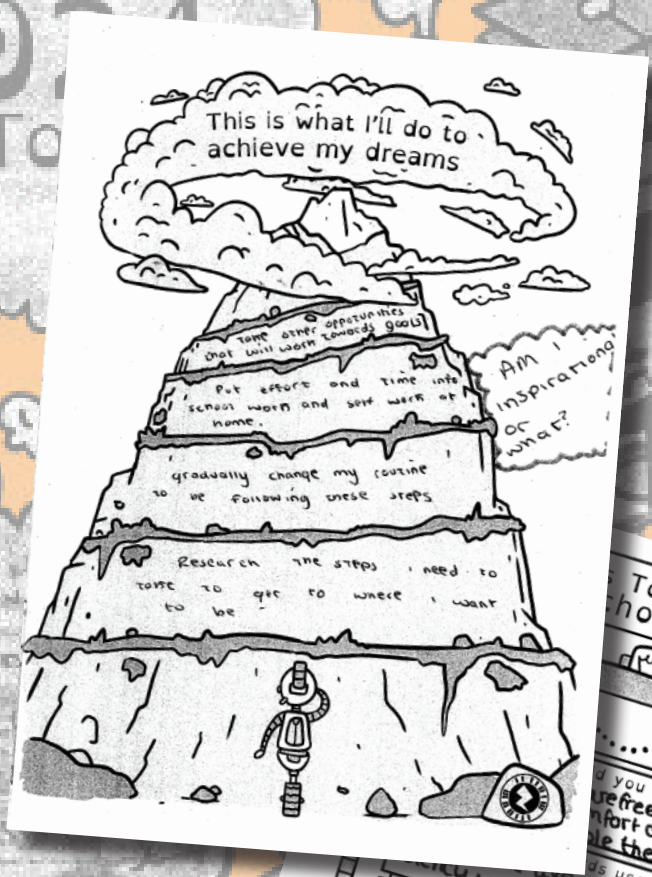
In 2024  
I Want To

Education

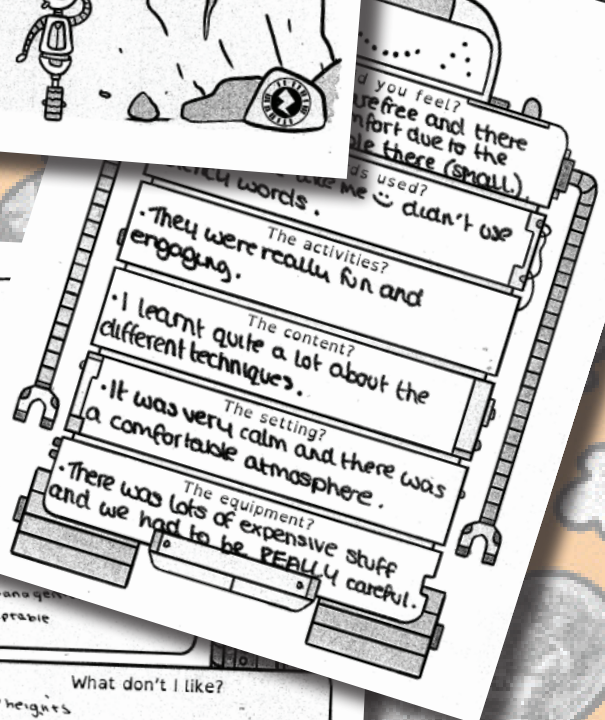
College or University  
Computer Science  
Sports Science  
Diet & Nutrition  
Health Sciences  
Care

Lifestyle

I want to have  
a really cool dog.  
And I want to  
travel to lots of  
different countries  
and experience  
different cultures.  
I want to  
play a team sport  
as an open age



Today Different  
School Lessons?



What I like?

- athletic
- I give
- hard work
- team player
- good time manager
- learning & adaptable



What don't I like?

- heights
- uniforms
- impatience
- excuses

What could I study?

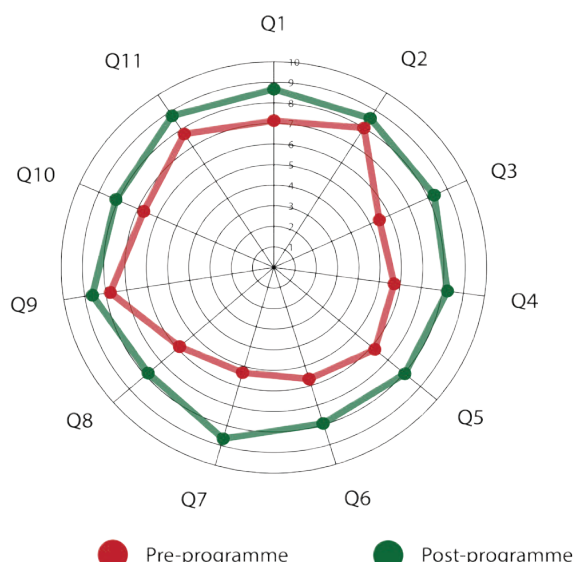
- physical education
- photography
- diet & nutrition
- health
- sport psychology
- sport science





## Learning and development gain

Our analysis is based on 75 paired responses received from the Summer School participants. Each student completed an 11-statement, paper-based, learning gain questionnaire at the beginning and end of the Summer School.



Statement area	Pre-Prog.	Post-Prog.	Change	% Change
(1) I am confident I know what Higher Education is.	7.14	8.67	1.53	21% ▲
(2) I am motivated to do well in my studies.	8.00	8.55	0.55	7% ▲
(3) I know about the courses that are available when applying to university and college.	5.47	8.32	2.84	52% ▲
(4) I understand the different routes into Higher Education.	5.71	8.24	2.53	44% ▲
(5) I feel I know enough about my future options to make a decision about what to do after I leave school.	6.20	8.04	1.84	30% ▲
(6) I feel I have enough information to decide which Higher Education option would suit me best (for example higher/degree apprenticeship or degree).	5.67	7.93	2.26	40% ▲
(7) I know what student life would be like in Higher Education.	5.32	8.66	3.34	63% ▲
(8) I would fit in well with others in Higher Education.	5.87	7.83	1.96	33% ▲
(9) Higher Education will give me valuable life skills.	7.79	8.64	0.85	11% ▲
(10) Higher Education is for people like me.	6.70	8.13	1.43	21% ▲
(11) I believe I could go to university when I leave school if I wanted to.	7.74	8.79	1.05	14% ▲

### Beginning of the Summer School – some temperature readings

At the beginning of the Summer School, based on the learning gain data, students were very motivated, ambitious to progress and felt strongly that Higher Education could provide valuable life skills. This positive attitude and belief may be influenced by other engagements with GHWY programmes and provision. Students were less confident that they had knowledge and understanding of student life, courses available, and routes into Higher Education. These initial 'temperature readings' provide validation for much of the content of the Summer School programme, with its focus on the Higher Education student experience, taster sessions and the application processes into Higher Education.

### End of the Summer School - distance travelled

By the end of the Summer School, students reported that their understanding of student life in Higher Education had increased dramatically, as had their knowledge of courses available in local Higher Education institutions. Substantial increases were also recorded in relation to understanding the different routes into Higher Education and being able to assess and evaluate the most suitable progression options.

#### Learning Gain Tool

The Research Toolkit Learning Gain Tool®, is an interactive resource capable of assessing and measuring impact of educational interventions. It uses pre- and post-activity data to explore impact from the perspective of the activity participant, school or stakeholder representative. This tool has been used across a number of GHWY programmes and is also used by other outreach providers regionally and nationally to identify effect, impact and distance travelled of educational interventions.



“

*I know what I want to do when I leave school. I also know how to get there and what support is available to help me get there.*

Summer School participant.





## Teaching staff reflections

### The role of Student Ambassadors

Teaching staff provided a range of positive comments and reflections on the Summer School programme. Introductory sessions on day 1, where students were able to ask questions of programme staff and Ambassadors worked particularly well for many, as these helped to support the development of rapport and relationships:

“*The student ambassadors were BRILLIANT! The trip wouldn't function without them but more importantly it would not have the same energy and warmth. Their enthusiasm during talks, at meals is incredible. They are one of the best parts of the whole residential.*

Summer School teacher participant.

### The impact of the UCAS Fair

The UCAS fair provided a focus for many teaching staff to provide detailed reflections. Almost all deemed this part of the programme to be 'excellent' in terms of the variety of progression options covered by participating institutions. Many wrote about the positive impact of this part of the programme on their students, who were able to ask questions of providers. In addition, teachers commented that the information students could take away with them were accessible and helped to generate a positive view of Higher Education

“*Excellent engagement of students with providers. The small-scale nature of some of the stalls gave students the confidence to ask questions.*

Summer School teacher participant.

In order to engage more students, suggestions for improvement included having more interactive stalls and encouraging structured conversations from students (perhaps via the introduction of guides for questions or Ambassador support in developing questions to ask UCAS fair providers).

### The importance of social elements of the programme

Informal and social elements of the programme, such as the bowling experience and group meal, provided students with valuable opportunities to develop social skills crucial for effective progression to Higher Education:

“*Students loved this part of the Summer School, it provided a nice treat and a chance to socialise and relax. Provided an excellent opportunity for students and Student Ambassadors to talk and have 'down time'.*

Summer School teacher participant.



“

*The student ambassadors were BRILLIANT! The trip wouldn't function without them but more importantly it would not have the same energy and warmth. Their enthusiasm during talks, at meals is incredible. They are one of the best parts of the whole residential.*

School Teacher.

programme



# GO HIGHER

WEST YORKSHIRE



 @GoHigherWY

[gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk](http://gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk)

#WeAreNCOP

*Working with the same Student Ambassador has really helped the student groups. We have built a relationship where they feel open to ask questions that they might not have asked on the first day. Even questions that they think are silly, they are asking now and opening up to us.*

Student Ambassador.

University of  
Bradford College

LEEDS  
ARTS  
UNIVERSITY  
High



UNIVERSITY  
CENTRE  
at Leeds City College

Leeds Trinity  
University

universitycentre  
at wakefield college



## Student Ambassador view

The Class of 2024 Summer School recruited several student Ambassadors to support the delivery of the programme. Each Ambassador was a current student at a GHWY partner organisation, and they were assigned to work with small groups (6-8 students) for the duration of the programme. This approach was positively viewed by Ambassadors as it enabled them to develop rapport and trust with the student group to which they were assigned:

**“** *Working with the same Student Ambassador has really helped the student groups. We have built a relationship where they feel open to ask questions that they might not have asked on the first day. Even questions that they think are silly, they are asking now and opening up to us ... My group is telling me what they want to do and asking if it's a good idea and what would I do in their situation. I think that's amazing as it's not what they'd ask teachers.*

Summer School student Ambassador.

## Helping students to develop confidence skills

Ambassadors felt that students had learnt a great deal from their Summer School experience. For some, this included developing confidence skills, networking and group work techniques:

**“** *I think their confidence has really improved. On the first day a lot of them were quite nervous and kept within their schools, but yesterday they all split up and it was amazing how they made new friends ... It's been great to see them all interact - and that's what you do at university as well. I've seen their confidence grow, and they've made friends with students from other schools; maybe they'll carry those friendships forward as well.*

Summer School student Ambassador.

## Clearer ideas for progression

Several Ambassadors commented that, as a result of the Summer School, students had much clearer ideas and plans for progression when they leave school. This included identifying entry requirements for specific Higher Education provision offered by partner institutions:

**“** *... when the students first arrived they didn't really have an idea of what university is about or what they want to do in the future. Then, over the three days a lot of them have developed plans in order to achieve their goals, such as knowing what they need to get in their GCSE's etc.*

Summer School student Ambassador.



## Concluding remarks

### Student Ambassadors building rapport

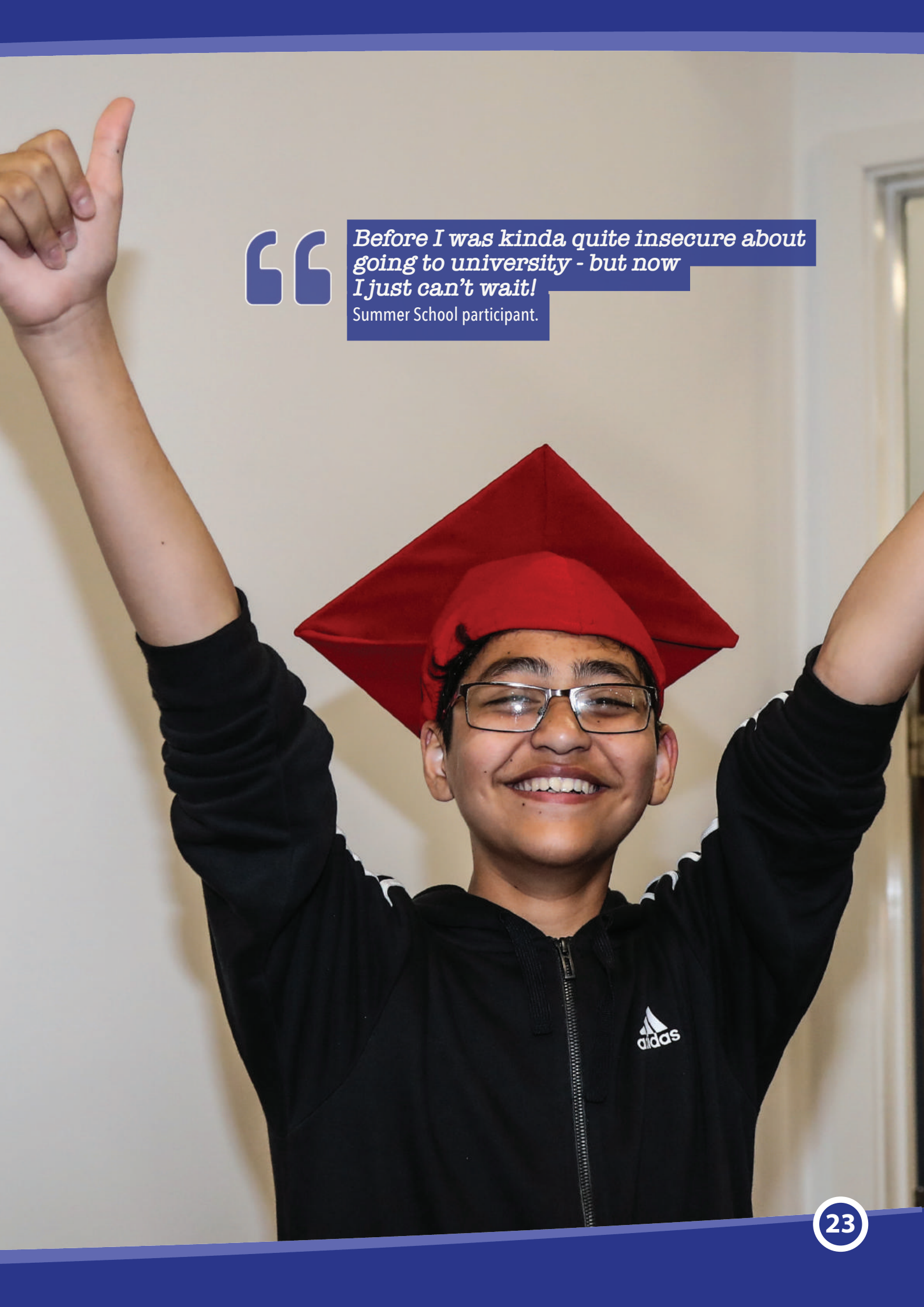
Working with an assigned student Ambassador builds rapport and trust. There is a sense that a deeper and more meaningful relationship developed as a result of this strategy. More honest questions and answers during discussions provide a contextualised reality of Higher Education options.

### Distance travelled for student participants

Impact of programme on students in terms of 'distance travelled' is considerable. Anecdotal evidence provided by teaching staff indicates that participants were carefully selected to ensure maximum effect or impact of the programme. Part of this selection involved NCOP staff in partner schools working closely with the GHWY central team agree on the most suitable students to recruit. Attention was given to selecting those who would benefit most from such an intervention (i.e. those who had limited engagement in career planning or limited exposure to the opportunities on offer by Higher Education).

### Future plans for students

The intensive and energetic nature of the residential encouraged participants to be ambitious about future plans. Comments observed from reflective workbooks, interviews with students, Ambassadors and teaching staff provide clear evidence that, by the end of the 3-day programme, students had a good indication of the careers they would like to consider and the paths they could follow to achieve their ambitions.



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*Before I was kinda quite insecure about going to university - but now I just can't wait!*

Summer School participant.



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