



GO HIGHER
West Yorkshire

Care to Go Higher 2023-24





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Introduction

Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) are a partnership of 13 Higher Education (HE) partners working collaboratively to reduce inequity in the West Yorkshire region. Their Care to Go Higher (CtGH) programme is a CPD programme designed for key influencers of care-experienced young people such as foster carers, personal advisors, children's home workers and local authority staff. In 2023-24, the programme had multiple cohorts for the first time. This was so that the course could be offered to more participants while keeping the small group nature.

The programme consisted of six two-hour sessions each with a focus on different topics. These included barriers to entering HE, support options for care-experienced students, application and finance and much more.

The sessions were delivered online via Microsoft Teams and each session included a guest speaker related to that session's topic. The guest speakers were very well received and, in some cases, had already worked collaboratively with some of the participants' organisations further demonstrating their relevance.

Participants were given all session slides as well as access or links to a number of additional resources and activities relevant to the session to use outside of the programme itself.

This year we also ran an in-person tailored delivery in conjunction with the Wakefield Virtual School and a specific version of the programme for National Youth Agency (NYA) members.

Feedback from the participants was gathered in a variety of formats including surveys, anonymous feedback and in-session feedback. This was gathered in the form of both qualitative and quantitative data to evaluate the programme effectively.

Feedback from the programme has been extremely positive and has provided more insight into what is most valuable about the programme and where to focus our efforts.

Delivery format

The CtGH programme was delivered in multiple formats this year depending on the target audience. The main programme was still offered over six two-hour sessions over six weeks. However, this was offered twice throughout the year for the first time in 2024, once in February and March and once in June and July. Each time the programme ran with two cohorts. For February these were Mondays and Fridays and for June this was Tuesdays and Thursdays. The intention was to offer as many different days as possible to make the programme accessible for participants with fixed schedules.

The two deliveries per year have allowed the sessions to remain close-knit and keep their personal, community-based feel while being able to reach a larger audience. The sessions had around the expected level of attendance and between the two deliveries a total of 26 participants completed the programme, more than double that of last year.

The national reach of the programme has once again been a success with participants from many different parts of the country from Devon up to Newcastle and of course a good number from West Yorkshire. Thus, GHWY have been able to share our knowledge in a way that may benefit care-experienced students much further afield than just West Yorkshire while still promoting West Yorkshire as a destination for care-experienced students.

While most participants had no comments on the format, two participants mentioned the time commitment was quite high for those in professional capacities as 12 hours over 6 weeks is significant. We will keep this in mind and consider opportunities to adapt to professional audiences as appropriate.

Guest speakers

One of the key elements of the programme is the inclusion of guest speakers. Each speaker is chosen to complement the session content and to provide their own expertise and perspective. Each session was concluded with the guest speakers who were once again, well received, and provided valuable insight to the participants.

Session topics included things such as the application process or employability options for care-experienced graduates.

HE Outreach professionals
from Leeds Beckett
University

A care-experienced
student from University
of Huddersfield

HE in Further Education
representatives from
University Centre Leeds

University representatives
from University of Bradford

Charitable organisation staff
from the Unite Foundation

Employability scheme
staff from the John
Lewis Partnership

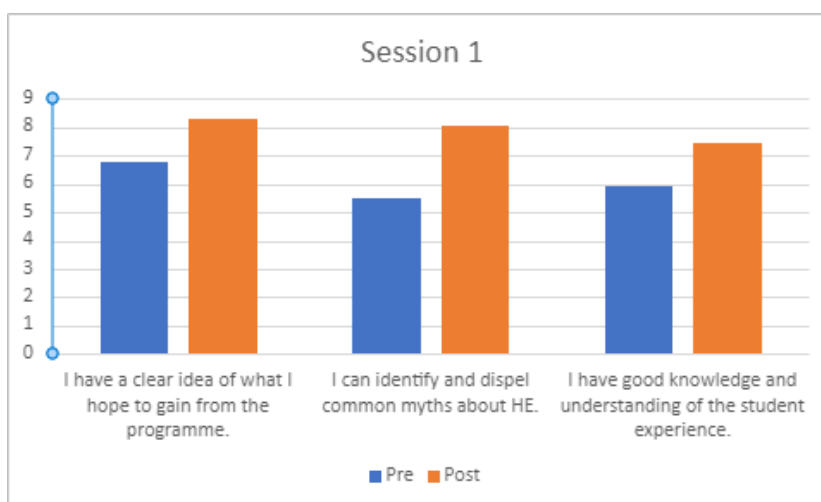
Survey Data Analysis

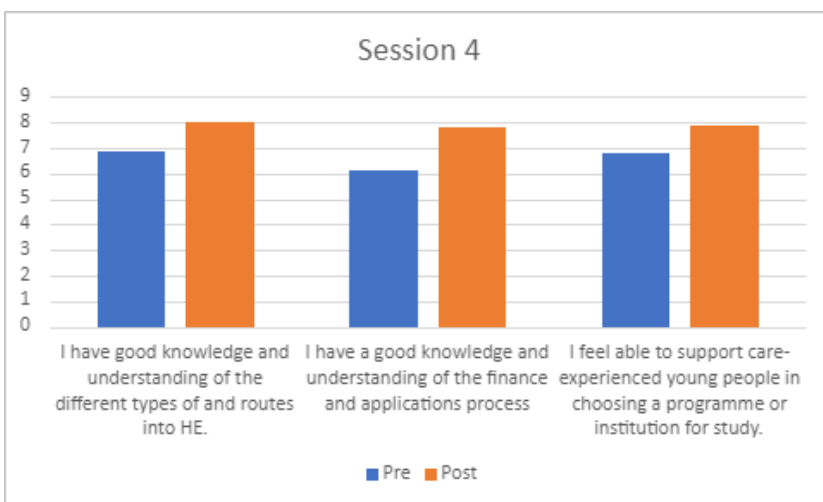
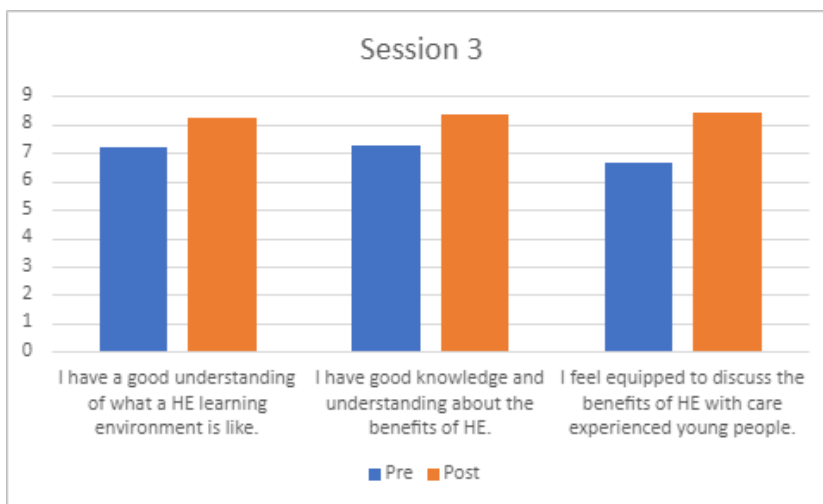
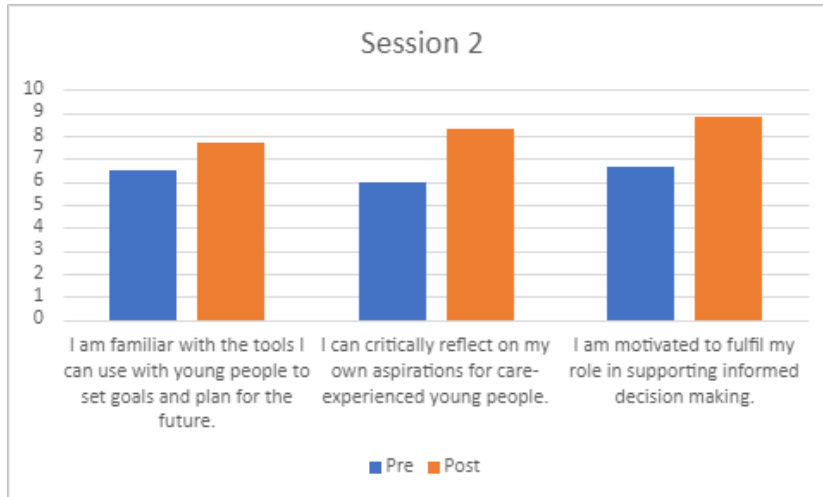
Each participant was asked to complete surveys to help evaluate the Care to Go Higher programme and to assess the change in understanding across the six-week programme. This consisted of a pre-programme and post-programme survey as well as surveys before and after each session. Each survey asked participants to assess their understanding of the session topics using a scale of 1-10 where 1 was little to no understanding and 10 was a strong understanding.

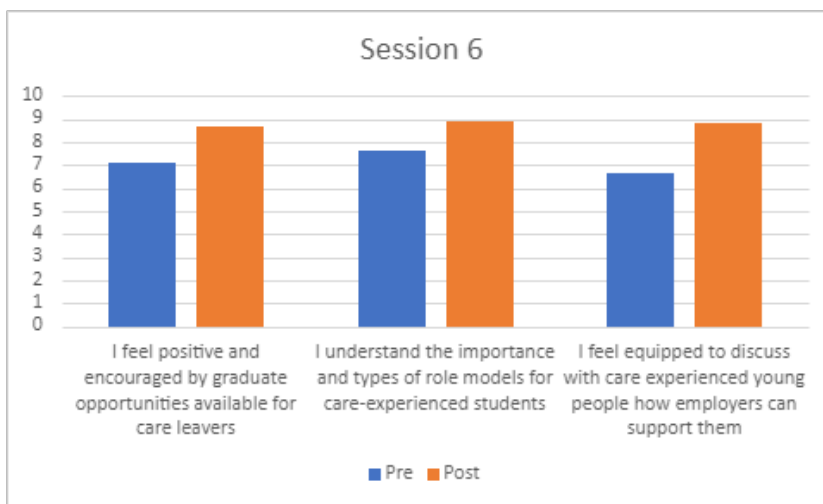
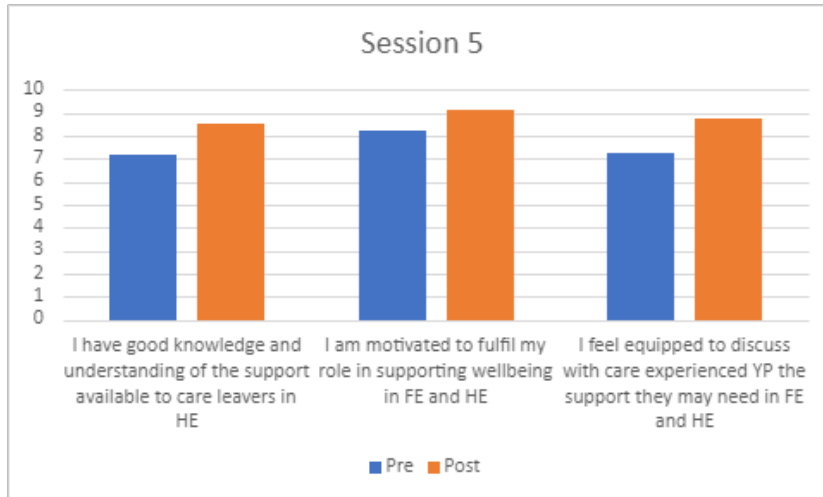
The surveys covered a variety of topics, each discussing HE in general or how care-experience and HE interact. The latter came about through having recently learned via UCAS that many care-experienced students do not receive any information on how the two interact. Again, this highlights the value in making sure we collect data to show how the participants understanding increased.

This cohort had a fairly strong knowledge of some areas prior to undertaking the programme. However, it has been clear that there is still significant benefit to be gained for participants with a variety of levels of understanding as demonstrated by the survey results below.

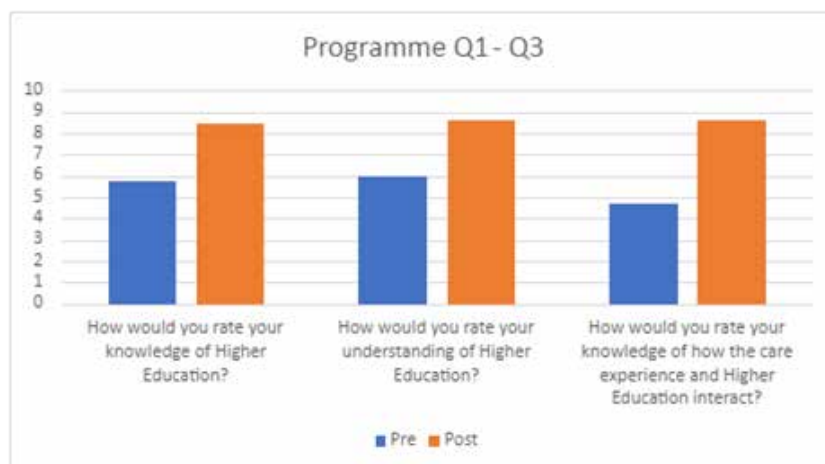
Each of the graphs below shows the change determined by the average of the pre- and post-session surveys. Each area showed clear improvement, even with the strong baselines scores, once again demonstrating the value even to those with more experience of HE. The aim of each session is to increase confidence in specific subject areas which are measured using the session-specific survey questions below.

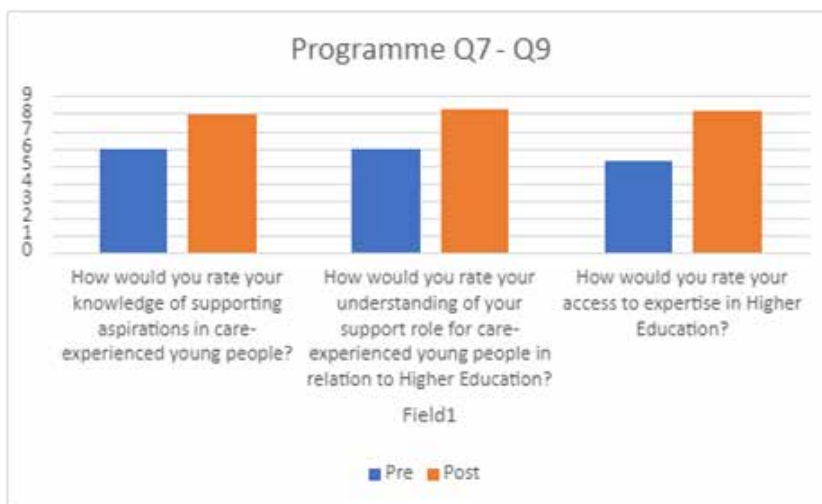
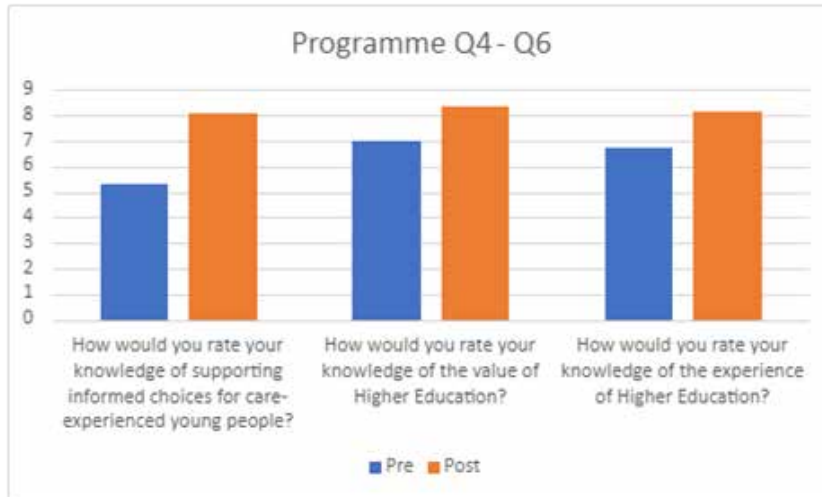






The pre- and post-programme surveys showed an even more marked improvement than the session surveys. This demonstrates the value of the programme as a whole, not just for specific sessions.





Across the pre- and post-programme surveys, the average increase was 50% and the largest increase was 'How would you rate your knowledge of how the care experience and Higher Education interact' with an average increase of 82.7%. With this being the key aim of the programme, it's encouraging to see how impactful the programme was on this topic.

Programme Feedback and Comments

After the programme participants were given the opportunity to leave anonymous feedback to help further evaluate and improve the programme. The anonymous nature helped to ensure impartial responses which in general were very positive as demonstrated below.

“Great programme, I liked that each week had a focus making it more manageable to take all the information in and sharing of resources to reflect back on was very useful. I liked that each week there was a key speaker.”

“Great Program, & great trainer! Helped me provide support to a young person who was very anxious about achieving conditional offer at Uni and will reflect and review all resources provided to support me in my role moving forward.”

“Very well presented and very informative. Enjoyed each of the 6 sessions.”

“I thought I was quite knowledgeable already, but this helped me learn more and feel more confident when supporting young people. Highly recommend.”

“Great course, so helpful and informative. Dominic was a super presenter and so knowledgeable. Good opportunities to interact and ask questions. Lots of useful links provided and slides were well presented. Great to learn there is so much support out there for care experienced young people. Thank you so much.”

“What a fantastic presenter, the course was very informing, answered many questions about supporting care experienced who are considering or studying at HE. This has been very helpful to me in my role.”

While most of the feedback was positive there were a few suggestions as to how to adapt the programme moving forwards. One of the suggestions was adapting the programme depending on whether the audience has experience of HE or not. This suggestion is something we are already considering as a part of our tailored deliveries which you can read about in the next section.

Tailored Deliveries

This year we have run the Care to Go Higher programme in two different tailored formats. One was the standard programme delivered to NYA staff and the other was a condensed version of the programme delivered to designated teachers in association with the Wakefield Virtual School.

The tailored delivery in conjunction with Wakefield Virtual School was delivered in person at the Chesney Centre to an audience of 13 designated teachers and some virtual school staff. The session was a mix of activities, information and resources; with an introductory presentation by the Post-16 Lead at Wakefield Virtual School followed by the main programme delivery by the GHWY Care to Go Higher Delivery Officer. The participants were engaged, and speakers were able to spark a good number of discussions within the group. The event was concluded by a GHWY Area Manager delivering a presentation on support and activities to aid Males on Free School Meals. The feedback from both participants and the Wakefield Virtual School was excellent and plans are in place to not only deliver another tailored programme before the calendar year is out but to expand the reach even further!

The NYA having the same delivery style as the standard Care to Go Higher programme meant that the sessions went as planned and the core content was delivered to the tailored audience. The participants who completed the programme benefitted from the content and left positive feedback at the end of the sessions.

Tailored deliveries are a great way to share our knowledge with specialist audiences and, given how well received they have been so far, are solidly on the agenda for the future.

Conclusion

With consistent positive feedback both in terms of qualitative and quantitative feedback, the value of the Care to Go Higher programme has continued to be demonstrated. With this year having the most deliveries, most formats and most participants to date, the development has been substantial. Two deliveries, each with two cohorts, a tailored full programme and a tailored specialist delivery has been a significant change from previous years but one that paves the way for future development. One of the biggest changes coming up in the next academic year is the Care to Go Higher programme achieving certified status with CPD UK meaning that it is now considered a certified CPD programme.

The future of Care to Go Higher looks bright with another planned delivery this year already. You can find out more here: <https://gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk/resources/teachers-carers-advisors/care-leavers/care-to-go-higher/>



GO HIGHER

WEST YORKSHIRE

Bradford College

 UNIVERSITY of
BRADFORD

 UNIVERSITY
CENTRE
Calderdale College

University of
Huddersfield
Inspiring global professionals

 **KIRKLEES**
COLLEGE

 **LEEDS**
CONSERVATOIRE

 UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

 **LEEDS**
ARTS
UNIVERSITY
1846

 **LEEDS**
BECKETT
UNIVERSITY

 **Leeds**
College of
Building

 **University**
Centre Leeds

 **Leeds Trinity**
University

 **University Centre**
at the Heart of Yorkshire Education Group
