



Go Higher Industry Insight Programme: Impact Evaluation 2023/24

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A Go Higher West Yorkshire Evidence Report



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This report is number 2 in a series on Go Higher Industry Insight events. Previous reports in the series can be found on the GHWY website and are as follows:

- Smith SE, Aldridge N. Providing collaborative subject taster experiences [Internet]. Leeds: Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY); 2025 Feb [cited 2025 04 23]. 18 p. (Go Higher in... series; no.: 1). Available from: <https://gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk/impact/go-higher-in-days/collaborative-subject-taster-experiences-2022-23-impact-evaluation/>

Abstract

The Go Higher Industry Insight programme is a series of subject specific events, aiming to provide secondary school learners with high quality, meaningful experiences of industry, relevant employers, careers and higher education (HE) opportunities. Each event is hosted in either a HE or industry setting and offers interactive opportunities for learners to experience the industry under the spotlight. The evaluation presented in this report finds that this programme of events has a significant impact on its intended outcomes, namely learners' understanding of the industries in focus, their knowledge of associated higher education options and their sense of belonging in an HE environment.

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Executive Summary

The Go Higher Industry Insight programme is a series of sector specific events, aiming to provide secondary school learners with high quality, meaningful experiences of industry, relevant employers, careers and higher education (HE) opportunities. Each event is hosted in either a HE or industry setting and offers interactive opportunities for learners to experience the industry under the spotlight.

Impact findings

After attending a Go Higher Industry Insight event...

Learners had a significantly **better understanding of industries in focus**

Learners were significantly **better informed about their higher education options**

Learners experienced an **increased sense of belonging in an HE environment**

“Engineering isn't as difficult as I thought it would be”

Employer insights

“Interaction at this level helped us break down barriers”

The Go Higher Industry Insight programme is a **learning opportunity** for employers

The Go Higher Industry Insight programme **showcases the benefit of increasing industry diversity**

Employers have many **positive perceptions of employees from underrepresented backgrounds**

Operational finding

The **demographics** of learners attending Go Higher Industry Insight events are **not wholly reflective of industry diversity needs**

Recommendations

Ensure **clarity about the purpose** of the programme (in relation to learners' **pre-existing industry interests**) to **maximise potential impact** on learners.

Who is this recommendation for? **GHWY, WYCA, schools & colleges**

Provide ample **opportunity for employers and learners to interact**, supporting organisations to strategically refine and meet inclusivity objectives.

Who is this recommendation for? **GHWY, WYCA**

Prioritise the **selection of learners underrepresented in the industry** relevant to each Go Higher Industry Insight event.

Who is this recommendation for? **Schools & colleges, GHWY, WYCA**

Introduction to Go Higher West Yorkshire and Uni Connect

Go Higher West Yorkshire (GHWY) is a partnership of 13 higher education (HE) providers across West Yorkshire which seeks to reduce inequalities in HE access and success. This is facilitated by a dedicated central team of staff who enable collaboration in relation to county-wide widening participation initiatives and members' access and participation plan (APP) and statement (APS) activity. Each HE provider subscribes to Go Higher West Yorkshire as a member institution.

Our 13 HE members are:

- Bradford College
- University of Bradford
- University Centre Calderdale College
- University of Huddersfield
- Kirklees College
- Leeds Conservatoire
- University of Leeds
- Leeds Arts University
- Leeds Beckett University
- Leeds College of Building
- University Centre Leeds
- Leeds Trinity University
- University Centre Wakefield College (Heart of Yorkshire)

GHWY delivers the Uni Connect programme in West Yorkshire. Uni Connect is the national programme through which higher education providers work together, and with partners, to improve equality of opportunity in access to higher education. Funded by the Office for Students (OfS) since 2019, Uni Connect is the latest in a series of nationally funded 'collaborative outreach' programmes that have operated in England since the early 2000s (1).

As an organisation we work closely with schools, local authorities, employers and the West Yorkshire Combined Authority to enable true collaboration.

To find out more about our collaborative initiatives, current projects and strands of work, including the Uni Connect Programme, please visit our website: www.gohigherwestyorks.ac.uk.

You can also follow us on [LinkedIn](#) and on X @GoHigherWY.

Introduction to the Go Higher Industry Insight programme

Following on from the success of previous iterations of the Go Higher Industry Insight programme (previously known as collaborative taster days) (2) a total of six events were held in the 2023/24 academic year, aimed at a wide range of year groups. Most events are delivered in collaboration with West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA).

Each Go Higher (GH) Industry Insight Day is an industry specific sector insight event held in HE and industry settings. The events aim to provide students with high quality and meaningful experiences of industry, relevant employers, careers and HE opportunities. As in previous years, the events were designed collaboratively by GHWY higher education provider (HEP) members together with local businesses and industry partners. Events prioritise Leeds City Region skills growth areas (3) and the needs of our participating schools and FE colleges. As well as increasing knowledge of specific industry sectors and associated entry routes, it is also expected that (for those taking place on a HE campus) events will lead to an increased sense of belonging for learners in a HE environment.

Each event consists of a campus tour as well as talks and workshops from employers and higher education providers across West Yorkshire, including academics from Kirklees College, Leeds Beckett University, the University of Leeds, Leeds Trinity University, and the Heart of Yorkshire Education Group, and employers such as West Yorkshire Police, Network Rail, Labcorp, Lush, and Equans¹.

Many events in the GH Industry Insight programme are specifically featured in the 'qualitative spotlights' contained within the findings. More detailed insights from most events, with some preliminary analysis of survey results, are available in the blog posts linked below. These articles were developed by GHWY and are hosted by WYCA on their Future Goals website.

Go Higher in...	Venue	Date	Year	Link to blog post
Leadership & Management	University of Huddersfield	November 2023	KS5	N/A
Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths (STEM)	Leeds Beckett University	January 2024	10	Students Go Higher in STEM Careers
Health and Social Care	University of Huddersfield	June 2024	9	Students Go Higher in Health & Social Care
Digital Media	Prime Studios, Leeds	June 2024	12	Students Go Higher in Digital and Artificial Intelligence Careers
Policing	Leeds Trinity	June 2024	12	N/A

¹ For a full list of collaborating employers and academics, please see appendix 3

	University			
Green Skills	Bradley Wood Activity Centre	June 2024	7/8	<u>Students go higher in green skills</u>

Intended programme outcomes

Outcome themes and specific intended outcomes

Each Go Higher Industry Insight Day has three main intended outcomes:

Increased knowledge of industry

Each event is focused on a specific sector and the event aims to increase learners' knowledge of different career paths within this industry as well as what it is like to work in that industry.

Increased knowledge of HE

The events aim to increase learners' knowledge of higher education, particularly higher education routes into the industry in focus, through a range of traditional and non-traditional routes.

Increased sense of belonging in HE

This refers to a learners' perception that they 'fit in' in an HE environment – whether they feel that HE is a place for them.

Evaluation approach

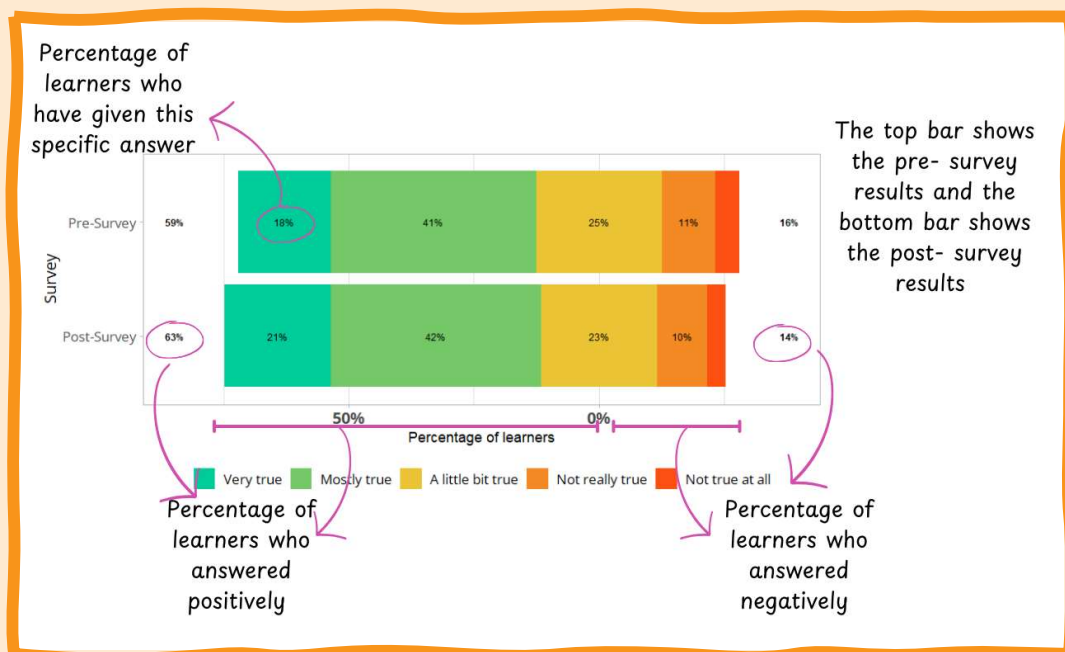
Progress towards intended outcomes were measured using pre and post surveys, with one taken immediately before taking part in the event and one taken immediately afterwards. The post-intervention survey included open questions to collect qualitative data around learners' experience of taking part in the event. In addition, employers and academics who took part in the event were asked to complete a survey with questions around their views of under-represented learners in their workplace and in HE. For more details on the evaluation methodology, please see Appendix 1.

Findings

Interpreting graphs & findings

In the graphs in this report, the x axis shows the percentage of learners who have answered positively (to the left of 0%) and the percentage of learners who have answered negatively (to the right of 0%). When the questions were phrased negatively (ie, to give a negative answer shows movement towards the answer) the results have been reverse coded so that all responses follow the same pattern.

In each graph, the top bar shows the pre survey results and the bottom bar shows the post survey results. A shift to the left, towards the green, therefore shows progress towards the outcome.



P values

Statistical testing generates a p-value that tells us the probability that we would get these results if there was no difference between the two groups – in other words, if the programme had had no impact. So, when a p value of 0.05 is given, it means there is a 5% probability of this happening if there was no impact, and when a value of 0.01, this means a 1% probability. Given that it is so unlikely to happen if there was no difference between the two groups, we can therefore assume, that there is a difference – in other words, that taking part in the programme has had impact.

The threshold for statistical significance is usually $p < 0.05$ – so when a result is called significant, it means that there is a less than 5% probability that it could've happened by chance.

Knowledge of Industry

Impact finding: learners had a significantly **better understanding of industries in focus** after attending a Go Higher Industry Insight event

Points to note

Perhaps the most pertinent intended outcome of the GH Industry Insight Programme is learners' knowledge of industry – that is, different career options within the sector each day was focussed on, including what qualifications are required to enter these careers and what life would be like with this career. Learners were asked to rank statements on a scale of 'Very true' to 'Not true at all' such as 'I understand what skills I need to do a job in [industry]', 'I have the skills for a career in [industry]' or 'I understand what it's like in [industry]'.

Across all of these questions, at all of the GH Industry Insight events, **there is a significant difference** ($p < 0.01$) between the way learners answered the survey before taking part and the way they answered after taking part, with **40%** of learners saying that these statements were 'Very true' or 'Mostly true' before taking part, and **60% after taking part** (see Figure 3). This is the **clearest change of all three sections**.

Qualitative spotlight on: Go Higher in STEM

Leeds Beckett University, Year 10 (ages 14-15)

"Engineering isn't as difficult as I thought it would be" (Learner)

Looking primarily at qualitative data (collected as part of each post-event survey), 'Go Higher in STEM' was particularly effective at tackling misconceptions about STEM subjects and careers, in particular broadening learners' horizons about the different types of engineering roles available. This is a theme across most events but comes across particularly strongly for this industry. It is possible that myth-busting messaging was particularly direct during 'Go Higher in STEM' compared to other related events, such as 'Go Higher in Green Skills', where learners' overriding recollections related more to aspects of the event that were less relevant to its objectives. However, this may also be related to age differences, with Y10 learners at 'Go Higher in STEM' potentially having more reflective comprehension than Y7/8 learners at 'Go Higher in Green Skills'.

"There are many jobs within STEM that people don't know about that are really interesting" (Learner)

What does this tell us?

A recent review of careers provision in schools has been critical, identifying failures within the careers advice system (4,5). Reacting to difficulties in finding work experience, the report particularly advocates for more flexible ways of encouraging employer engagement. Employer engagement is key to learner's prospects – **evidence shows that learners are more likely to take information and advice seriously when it comes from someone actually working in the sector** compared to if it comes from their parents, peers or teachers (6), and having opportunities to engage with employers has a positive impact on future outcomes (7,8). There is also an appetite amongst young people for these type of events (9,10).

The Go Higher Industry Insight programme is sector specific and the **sectors in question are chosen based on local labour market needs** (3). Learners of all ages and at all stages of their education have perceptions and stereotypes about what career paths would be open to them (11,12), and experiential events that require learners to actively participate are more effective than events such as talks or careers fairs (13). Taking part in events such as the Go Higher Industry Insight programme **allows learners to engage with**

employers whilst breaking down stereotypes and increasing their knowledge of opportunities in the sector.

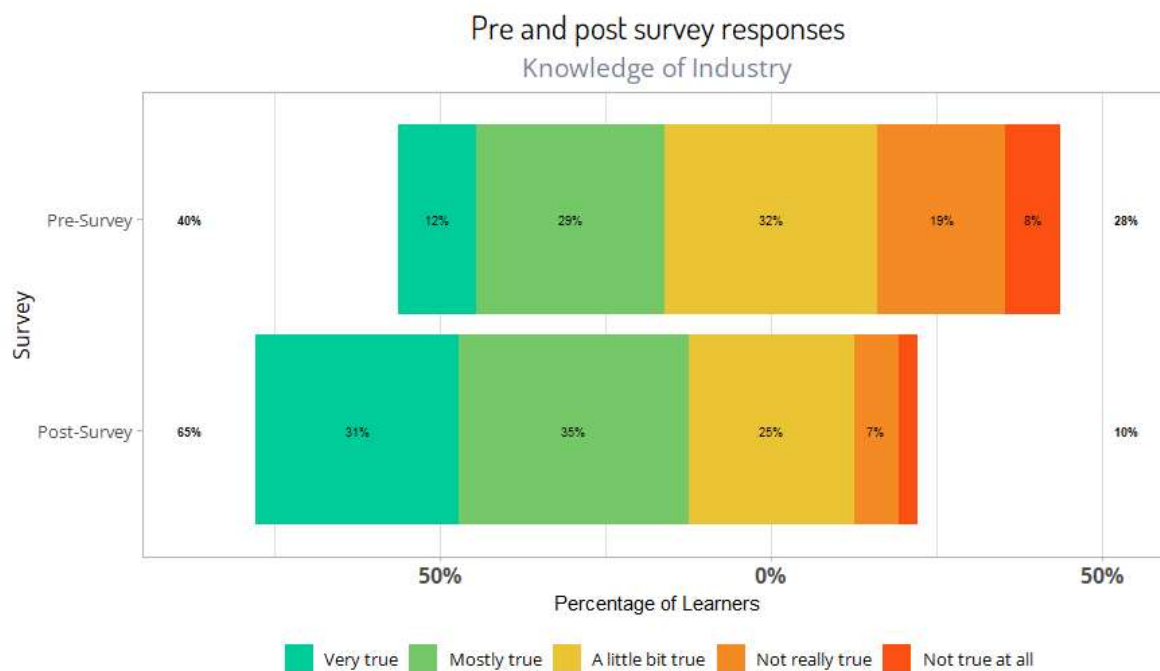


Figure 3 Responses to questions about knowledge of industry before and after taking part in one of the GH Industry Insight events. Responses to the questions were significantly more positive after taking part in a GH Industry Insight event. $p < 0.01$, $n = 1198$

Knowledge of HE

Impact finding: learners were significantly better informed about their higher education options after attending a Go Higher Industry Insight event

Points to note

Another intended outcome is learners 'knowledge of HE' – that is, the range of courses and providers available to them, different routes into HE and different providers of HE, the benefits of going to HE and what it is like to study there. Learners were asked to rank statements on a scale of 'Very true' to 'Not true at all' such as 'I know about different routes into HE', 'I know how studying in HE is different from school or college' and 'I know what qualifications I need for the specific careers I'm interested in'.

Across all of these questions, at all of the GH Industry Insight events, **there is a significant difference** ($p < 0.01$) between the way learners answered the survey before taking part and the way they answered after taking part, with **45%** of learners saying that these statements were 'Very true' or 'Mostly true' before taking part, and **63% after taking part** (see Figure 4).

Qualitative spotlight on: Go Higher in Policing

Leeds Trinity University, Year 12 (ages 16-17)

"It's more accessible than I thought" (Learner)

In qualitative data, 'Go Higher in Policing' particularly stands out for highlighting the different educational pathways available to enter the police. In many cases, this relates to learners discovering that they don't need a traditional degree qualification. Some learners also commented on finding out about the different roles available within the police, although it's worth noting that many learners attending appeared to have a pre-existing interest in policing.

"I know what I need to achieve and why to go down the police pathway – it has inspired me more" (Learner)

What does this tell us?

Improving learners' knowledge of their options is a particular strength of the Go Higher Industry Insight programme. The HE landscape, in West Yorkshire and nationally, is extremely diverse, including a wide range of HE providers (HEPs) such as universities, further education colleges that provide higher education courses (HE in FE), and small and specialist providers. As collaborative events planned and delivered by representatives from many HEPs of different types, the **Go Higher Industry Insight programme informs learners of the full spectrum of options that are available to them in an impartial manner.**

HE in FE is a non-traditional approach to higher education that is often particularly beneficial for learners from groups under-represented in HE (14) as it is generally more flexible, has closer links with local communities, and is more able to provide a vocational style of learning compared to universities (15,16).

Degree apprenticeships are another non-traditional way to complete an HE qualification. Learners may have misconceptions about who apprenticeships are suitable for, thinking that they are only for men (17) or only for manual workers (18). Learners may also be less likely to know about apprenticeships, with one study finding that learners are twice as likely to receive information about going to university compared to taking an apprenticeship (19).

Although a complex funding system and a market environment where HEPs may view each other as competitors could discourage collaboration, the need to close the progression gap between those most-represented and least-represented in HE presents opportunities for universities, HE in FE providers and specialist providers to work in tandem to meet the needs of both individual learners as well as the local labour market (16). Events such as those that make up the Go Higher Industry Insight Programme, which make such collaboration possible and allow learners to discover all options that are available to them in an interactive, real-world context, are key to creating a positive and functioning higher education landscape which allows for the best possible outcomes for learners.

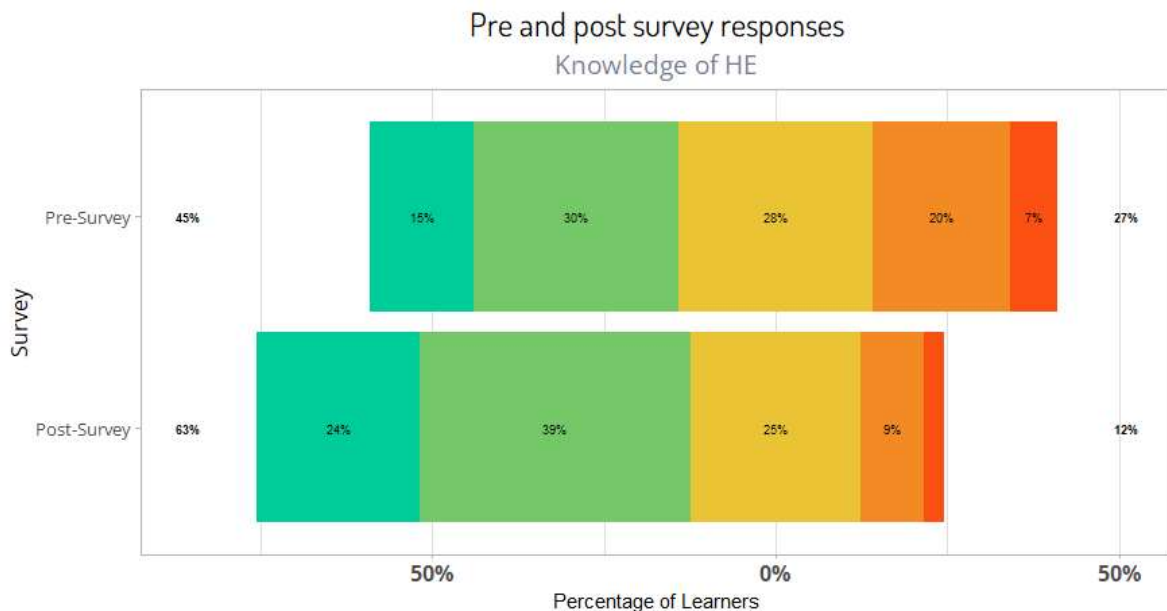


Figure 1 Responses to questions about knowledge of HE before and after taking part in one of the GH Industry Insight events. Responses to the questions were significantly more positive after taking part in a GH Industry Insight event $p < 0.01$, $n = 1307$

Sense of Belonging in HE

Impact finding: learners experienced an **increased sense of belonging in an HE environment** after attending a Go Higher Industry Insight event

Points to note

One outcome that the GH Industry Insight Programme aims to improve is learners' sense of belonging in an HE environment – that is, whether they feel they could fit in and thrive there. In a survey before and after each event, learners were asked to rank statements on a scale of 'Very true' to 'Not true at all' such as 'I would fit in well socially with others in HE', 'I would fit in well academically with others in HE' or 'Higher education is for people like me'.

Across all of these questions, at all of the GH Industry Insight events, **there is a significant difference** ($p < 0.01$) between the way learners answered the survey before taking part and the way they answered after taking part, with **53%** of learners saying that these statements were 'Very true' or 'Mostly true' before taking part, and **62% after taking part** (see Figure 5).

Qualitative spotlight on: Go Higher in Leadership and Management

University of Huddersfield, KS5 (ages 16-18)

"Anyone can be a leader" (Learner)

In qualitative data, 'Go Higher in Leadership & Management' particularly shines for its impact on sense of belonging. Qualitative data (collected as part of each post-event survey) reveals that this event helped learners to consider the skills/attributes they already have and think of them as leadership skills, building career efficacy in relation to leadership roles. It also effectively showed learners how heavily leadership features across all industries, spanning learners' broad interests.

In survey data, an increased sense of belonging is most visible in this event alongside 'Go Higher in Health & Social Care' and 'Go Higher in Policing'. Compared to other GH Industry Insight events, these all represent typically vocational career paths, which infers the challenges of establishing sense of belonging in typically academic subject areas and career paths. This presents an interesting nuance in relation to an event focused on professional and personal aspiration rather than a specific industry. Learners appeared to heavily connect with the conceptual vision of 'being a leader', which speaks to the power of imagined future identities.

"We use leadership skills in everyday life, makes me feel more comfortable about being a leader or manager"
(Learner)

What does this tell us?

Sense of belonging is the idea that learners feel they belong in an HE environment, both academically and socially, and is **known to be a key factor in progression to and success in HE**. Students with a strong sense of belonging are less likely to drop out of HE, and are more likely to report higher levels of wellbeing (20). Sense of belonging is particularly key in a post-pandemic world where teaching may take place online (21) and students from backgrounds under-represented in HE may be more likely to have a lower sense of belonging (22).

It is important to note that differences could be seen in the impact had on sense of belonging at different events (unpublished data). Events focused on less traditionally academic subjects, such as policing, health and social care, and leadership and management, showed a clearer impact on sense of belonging, perhaps reflecting **learners' growing awareness of HE based routes into their desired career**. It also infers the continued challenges of establishing underrepresented learners' sense of belonging in typically academic subject areas and career paths.

Most events take place on an HE campus and are assisted by Student Ambassadors – this is likely to be key to their impact on sense of belonging. Learners may find they can relate to Student Ambassadors as their peers, and campus visits are known to impact sense of belonging by allowing students to become more familiar with the campus environment (23). Students who have taken part in a campus visit activity are also more likely to progress to HE (24,25).

Pre and post survey responses Sense of Belonging



Figure 5 Responses to questions about sense of belonging before and after taking part in one of the GH Industry Insight events. Responses to the questions were significantly more positive after taking part in a GH Industry Insight event. $p < 0.01$, $n = 1323$

Demographics of participants

Operational finding: the demographics of learners attending Go Higher Industry Insight events are **not wholly reflective of industry diversity needs**

In line with the collaborative approach, learners attended the events from both GHWY partner schools and West Yorkshire Combined Authority (WYCA) priority schools.

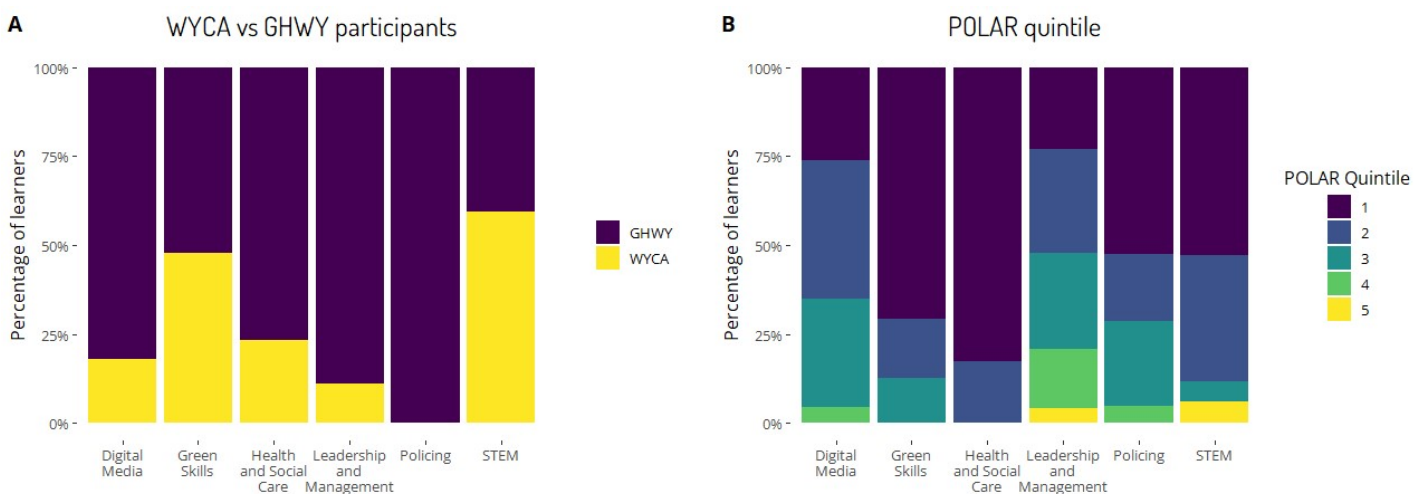


Figure 2 Where did GH Industry Insight participants come from? A) Learners who attended the event either did so from a GHWY target school or a WYCA target school. WYCA were not involved in the policing event and as such no WYCA learners attended this event. B) Distribution of learners by POLAR quintile – learners in lower POLAR quintiles represent those living in areas where progression to HE has been historically low.

Points to note

- Overall, approximately 70% of learners came from GHWY schools and 30% from WYCA schools. A particularly high number of WYCA participants attended the STEM event. Note that WYCA were not involved in the Policing event and as such 100% of participants on this day came from GHWY schools. Demographic data was not collected from WYCA participants, so whilst survey results include all learners, only GHWY learners are represented in demographic data in this section.
- A particularly high number of POLAR Q1 learners² attended the Health and Social Care event, with comparatively lower numbers attending the Digital Media and Leadership and Management events. Learners in other groups underrepresented in HE (under-represented groups, URGs) were also prioritised, including learners from a Black, Asian or minoritised ethnic background, learners who were free school meal eligible, and SEND learners.
 - A particularly large majority of boys attended the STEM day and the Green Skills day (88% in both cases), contrasting with other events where a smaller majority of participants were female.
 - The proportion of free school meal eligible learners varied across each event, with particularly low numbers attending the digital media and policing days, and particularly high numbers attending the green skills and STEM days.
 - Learners from a range of ethnic backgrounds attended the different events, with a particularly high proportion on Asian learners attending the Health and Social Care and Leadership & Management days, and a particularly high proportion of white learners attending the Policing day.
 - Reasonably low numbers of SEND learners attended the GH Industry Insight Programme, with the notable exception of the STEM day, where more than 1 in 4 of the participants had a disability.

What does this tell us?

The **demographics** of learners attending a Go Higher Industry Insight event **largely correlates with the demographics that are already prevalent in the industry** in question, for example, 96.5% of Police Officers in West Yorkshire are white (26), and a similar proportion, 90%, of learners attending 'Go Higher in Policing' were white. Similarly, 26% of the STEM workforce are women (27), with an even lower percentage in fields such as engineering and computer science. This gender imbalance is also reflected in the 'Go Higher in STEM' event, where only 12% of the participants were girls.

The need for more diversity in these industries is well recognised. The Strategic Policing Partnership Board published a report on their vision for policing by 2030 – one key way they want the police force to develop over the coming five years is ensuring that 'policing is representative and inclusive at all ranks' (28).

² POLAR quintile is a measure of historical progression to HE in an area based on an individual's home address. The Uni Connect project works with learners from postcodes deemed 'Uni Connect Eligible' – that is, those in POLAR quintile 1 & 2.

Whilst the GH Industry Insight programme is aimed at learners who are under-represented in HE, targeting of learners hasn't previously considered which demographic groups are under-represented in the specific sector in focus at each event. **Given that the events are so sector specific, learners underrepresented in these fields could be prioritised for attendance at future events.**

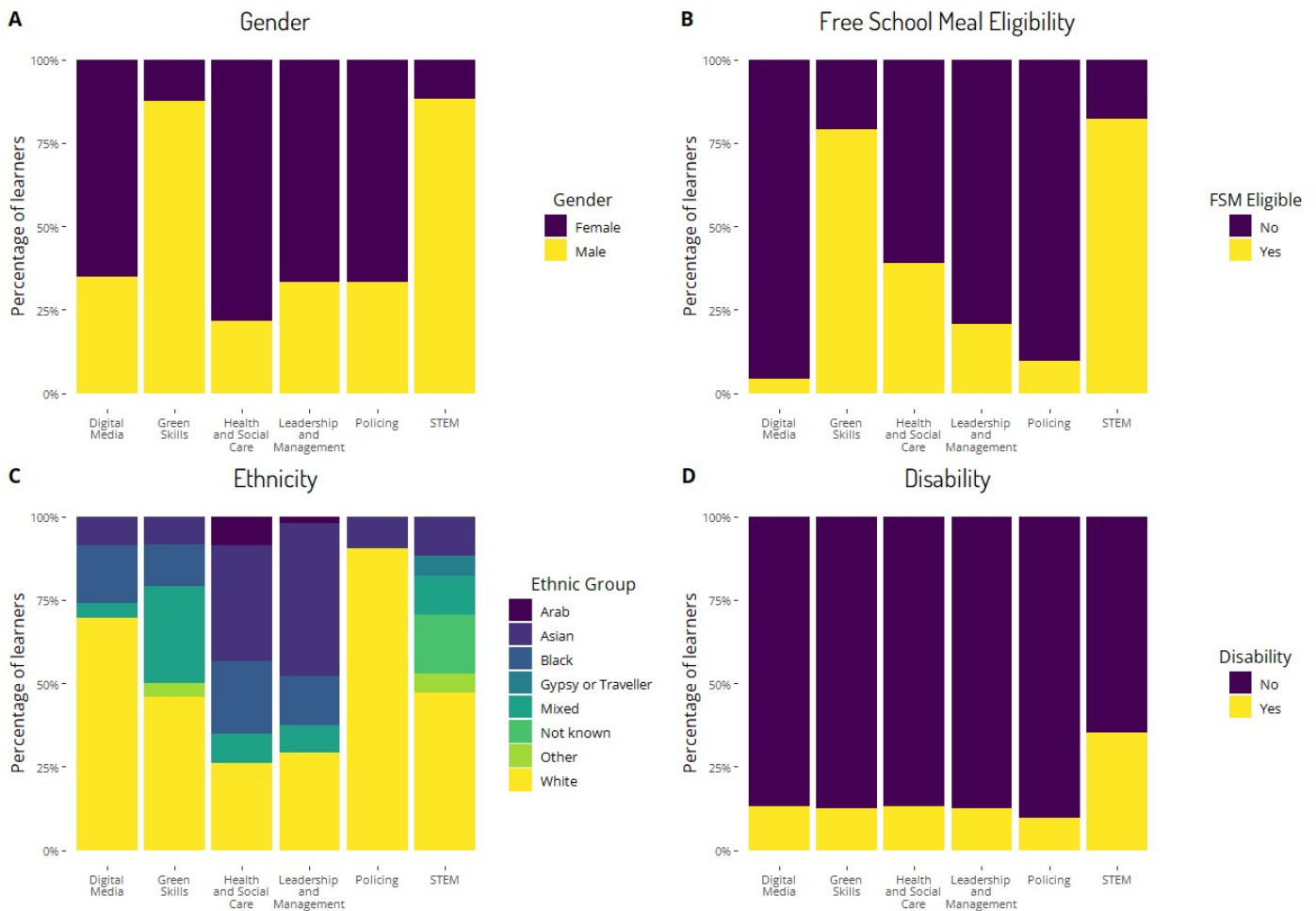


Figure 3 Who attended GH Industry Insight events? Note that this only includes learners from GHWY schools, as personal data was not collected from other participants. A) Percentage of male and female participants at different events b) eligibility of participants for free school meals at different events c) Ethnic group of participants at different events D) Participants with or without a known disability at each event.

Employer insights

In a survey, employers and academics who supported the event were asked about inclusive practices within their industry and their observations and insights following their involvement in the Go Higher Industry Insight programme. Several interesting insights have emerged from this.

The Go Higher Industry Insight programme is a learning opportunity for employers

Employers particularly value the opportunity to speak to learners, to get a sense for learners' attitudes towards the employer's industry and their future career plans. This includes identifying specific misconceptions that learners hold, e.g. that learners see their industry (or careers within them) as being 'elitist', London-centric or unattainable.

"I had the opportunity to talk to quite a few students to discuss their

future ambitions and the different pathways into STEM careers.”
(Employer)

The Go Higher Industry Insight programme showcases the benefit of increasing industry diversity

Employers and academics note the value of events such as the Go Higher Industry Insight programme to local industries by helping make workplaces and sectors more diverse and inclusive. They highlight how their presence at the Go Higher Industry Insight programme helps them to better understand what underrepresented learners can bring to the workplace, and enables them to directly address some of the concerns/misconceptions that learners may have about their industry or organization.

“[It helped me] understand more about the need to create more events to capture young students' imagination and skills to create a better diverse workforce”
(Academic)

Employers have many positive perceptions of employees from underrepresented backgrounds

Employers view employees (and potential employees) from underrepresented backgrounds as motivated, hardworking and highly ‘coachable’, having often overcome challenges to reach their goal. They note that these learners often demonstrate good social-emotional skills such as empathy and patience.

“Typically, those prospective employees who have overcome numerous obstacles (of any kind) in their pursuit of a particular field are highly motivated and extremely engaged in working with us. This mindset makes individuals very trainable/ coachable.”
(Employer)

Employer spotlight: Labcorp

Event: Go Higher in Health and Social Care

Labcorp are a “global life sciences and healthcare company harnessing science for human good”³, with sites in North Yorkshire. Callum, a representative from the company, attended the ‘Go Higher in Health and Social Care’ event.

Callum notes that the drug development industry may typically be perceived as unattainable by learners from underrepresented backgrounds, requiring those with the highest academic attainment and ability. The organisation is keen to challenge this as a misconception of the industry.

“Diversity is viewed as absolutely critical for Labcorp's future successes.”

Callum describes the value of having employees from a wide range of backgrounds as well as the strengths and skills they can bring to the workplace.

“[We focus on] bringing people in that fit our personality and culture, more than simply having a high academic ability.”

At ‘Go Higher in Health and Social Care’, Callum was able to talk to several students about their prospects and their impressions of the drug development industry. This helped him to identify misconceptions about the industry to take back to the organisation and work on breaking down.

“I have a growing understanding of how we can perhaps [break down these barriers]. The interactive nature of this event was much more conducive in bringing students over to us and engaging with us. Interaction at this level helped us break down some of those barriers and hopefully students realise the options they have for future careers are wider than they perhaps first thought.”

³ <https://www.labcorp.com/about>

Recommendations

Ensure clarity about the purpose of the programme (in relation to learners' pre-existing industry interests) to maximise potential impact on learners.

Who is this recommendation for? **GHWY, WYCA, schools & colleges**

Why? Some learners identified that they were already interested in the industry in focus, whereas others were not. As a result, events do not serve the needs of either group as well as it could. Greater clarity about whether the aim of the event is to give more information to those who are already interested, or to widen broaden the horizons of learners who have not considered this sector, may be valuable in ensuring suitable learner selection in schools and maximising impact at each event.

Provide ample opportunity for employers and learners to interact, supporting organisations to strategically refine and meet inclusivity objectives.

Who is this recommendation for? **GHWY, WYCA**

Why? Interactions between learners and employers were seen as valuable to both parties and should be encouraged and maximised within the structure of events. Learners value the opportunity to hear directly from employers and evidence shows this is likely to be impactful on their thinking. As well as the opportunity to showcase their industry, employers value hearing about underrepresented learners' perceived barriers to their industry and the chance to debunk any misconceptions directly.

Prioritise the selection of learners underrepresented in the industry relevant to each Go Higher Industry Insight event.

Who is this recommendation for? **Schools & colleges, GHWY, WYCA**

Why? Although the events are broadly targeted at learners underrepresented in HE, the GH Industry Insight programme also presents opportunity to actively address chronic underrepresentation within industries too. This also aligns with the strategic priorities of the industries in focus. Learners with characteristics that are underrepresented in the specific industry in focus at each event should therefore be prioritised for selection to attend.

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Appendix 1: Methods

Evaluation Design

Demographic Data and Longitudinal Tracking

Demographic and monitoring data were collected via schools and uploaded to the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) database for storage and longitudinal tracking.

Pre and Post Surveys

Learners were given a pre and post survey to complete at the start and the end of the event which included both quantitative and qualitative questions (see appendix 2).

Employer/Academic Survey

After taking part in an event, participating learners and academics were asked to fill in an online survey (see appendix 2).

Data Cleaning

Survey data were discarded if only either the pre or post survey was present. Where a learner had not answered a specific question in either the pre or post survey, but had otherwise completed the survey, they were excluded from analysis of this question alone.

Analysis and Statistical Testing

Survey Result Analysis

To analyse impact, a paired Wilcoxon test was done to compare pre and post survey results. For section-by-section analysis, questions were combined such that each response was treated as a separate data point.

Software and data availability

All statistical testing and data visualisation was done using R Statistical Software (v4.4.1; R Core Team 2024) (29) with R Studio. (v2024.4.2.764) (30). Graphs were made using ggplot2 (v3.5.1) (31) and ggstats (v0.8.0) (32). Raw data and code available on request.

Appendix 2: Survey Questions

Learner Survey

Question	Possible Answers				
I don't know what I want to do when I leave school.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I am thinking about going to university or college in the future.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
Higher education is for people like me.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I would fit in well academically with others in higher education.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I would fit in well socially with others in higher education.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I'm not sure what studying in higher education would be like.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I have all the information I need to know about studying in higher education.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I know how studying in higher education is different from studying in school or at college.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I know about different routes into higher education.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I know about different courses that are available to me.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I know about the benefits and downsides of going to higher education.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I know what qualifications I need for the specific careers I'm interested in	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true

Before today/, have you ever thought about a career in [sector]?/After taking part in the event today, would you consider a career in [sector]?	Yes			No	
Write down as many career paths or courses you can think of relating to [sector] and underline any that you might be interested in doing when you leave school or college.	Open text				
Before today, I had thought about how [sector] might be a part of my future career	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
To do a job in [sector], you have to study a higher education course specifically about this.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I understand what skills I need to do a job in [sector].	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I have the skills for a career in [sector]	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I understand what it's like to work in [sector] industries.	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true
I am aware of courses available in higher education that aren't subjects taught in school/college	Very true	Mostly true	A little bit true	Not really true	Not at all true

Employer Survey

Question	Possible Responses				
I, or others in my workplace, regularly attend outreach events like this one	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
I think outreach events like this one are valuable to the students involved	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
I think outreach events like this one are valuable to me as an employer	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
My workplace includes staff from a wide range of backgrounds	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
My workplace could be doing more to help young	Very	Mostly	A Little	Not	Not

people from underrepresented backgrounds access employment here	True	True	Bit True	Really True	True at All
My workplace consciously practices inclusive hiring practices	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
Vacancies in my workplace attract a diverse range of applicants	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
From your perspective as an employer, what strengths would you typically consider learners from under-represented backgrounds to possess (having likely experienced barriers and challenges progressing in their education and career)?	Multi-select of the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Attitude • Good Work Ethic • Communication Skills • Empathy • Teamwork Skills • Leadership Qualities • Time Management Skills • Decision-Making Skills • Conflict Resolution Skills • Critical Thinking Skills • Problem Solving Skills • Other 				
Are there any other barriers to employment that you have identified for learners from underrepresented backgrounds in your workplace?	Open text				
Are there any other particular strengths of learners from underrepresented backgrounds in your workplace?	Open text				
Has attending today's event had any impact on your views of learners from underrepresented backgrounds in the workplace?	Open text				

Academic Survey

Question	Possible Responses				
I, or others in my workplace, regularly attend outreach events like this one	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
I think outreach events like this one are valuable to the students involved	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
I think outreach events like this one are valuable to me as a Higher Education Provider	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All

My workplace includes staff from a wide range of backgrounds	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
My workplace could be doing more to help young people from underrepresented backgrounds access education here	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
My workplace consciously practices inclusive hiring practices when hiring staff	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
At my Higher Education provider, there are processes in place to support a diverse range of applicants	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
Vacancies in my workplace attract a diverse range of applicants	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
A diverse range of applicants apply to study at my Higher Education Provider	Very True	Mostly True	A Little Bit True	Not Really True	Not True at All
From your perspective as an academic, what strengths would you typically consider learners from under-represented backgrounds to possess (having likely experienced barriers and challenges progressing in their education and career)?	Multi-select of the following options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive Attitude • Good Work Ethic • Communication Skills • Empathy • Teamwork Skills • Leadership Qualities • Time Management Skills • Decision-Making Skills • Conflict Resolution Skills • Critical Thinking Skills • Problem Solving Skills • Other 				
Are there any other barriers to studying in HE that you have identified for learners from underrepresented backgrounds at your Higher Education Provider?	Open text				
Are there any other particular strengths of learners from underrepresented backgrounds for studying in Higher education at your institution?	Open text				
Has attending today's event had any impact on your views of learners from underrepresented backgrounds in HE?	Open text				

Appendix 3: Collaborators

Event	Collaborating employers/HEPs
Go Higher in... Leadership and Management	University of Huddersfield, representatives from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School of Human and Health Sciences • Holocaust Centre North • Research and Evaluation, School of Arts and Humanities
	Leeds Rhinos Netball
	Occupational Awards Limited
	Adam Corbally Motivational Speaker
	Reignite Development
Go Higher in... Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths	National Rail
	Kirklees College Engineering Centre
	Leeds Beckett University – Department of Surveying, Construction and Project Management
	University of Leeds – Business School, Finance and Economics
Go Higher in... Health and Social Care	Medical Mavericks
	Active Social Care
	University of Huddersfield – Paramedic Science
	Labcorp
	Wakefield College
	Leeds I Care
	University of Leeds Schools of Healthcare and Medicine
	Springfield Healthcare
	Xiros
	University of Huddersfield Podiatry Clinic
	Yorkshire Ambulance Service
Go Higher in... Digital Media	Production Park

	Buttercrumble
	Leeds Young Film
	Prime Studios
	MetFilm School
Go Higher in... Policing	West Yorkshire Police
Go Higher in... Green Skills	Lush
	Equans
	University of Leeds

Events were additionally supported by Student Ambassadors from the University of Leeds, the University of Bradford, the University of Huddersfield, Leeds Beckett University, and Leeds Trinity University.



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University

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