

Higher Education Careers Coaching: Impact Evaluation 2023/24

Background

Whats the project all about?

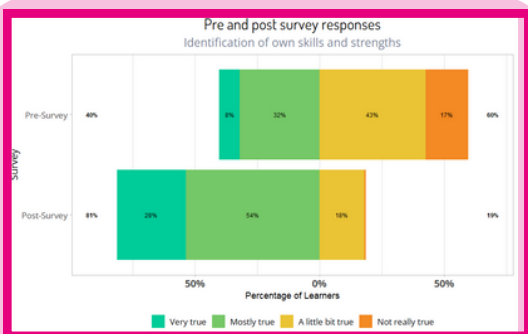
Two 1-1 sessions with a career coach - in the first, learners consider their skills, set a goal and identify steps to achieve that goal. In the second session they reflect and evaluate their progress.

Why will this work?

Available literature widely supports the idea that careers coaching will increase learners' self-efficacy.¹⁻⁴

Goal setting activities are linked to increased self-efficacy⁵, and are commonly used to develop self-regulated learning skills.⁶

Findings



There was a particularly clear positive impact on **identification of skills and strengths**.

"I think maybe [the learners] gained an insight into what they actually wanted, their preferences, that they probably wouldn't have got otherwise."

- Careers Coach

Recommendations

- 1 Provide guided opportunity for learners experiencing inequality to reflect on their skills and strengths as part of their planning for the future
- 2 Include follow-up reflection opportunities as part of goal-setting exercises
- 3 Embed goal-setting and reflection exercises into existing access programmes
- 4 Include HE careers coaching within the remit for future access programmes, such as regional access partnerships

References

1. Molyn J. The role and effectiveness of coaching in increasing career decision self-efficacy, outcome expectations and employability efforts in higher education students. 2018.
2. Rashidi *et al.* The effectiveness of strengths based career counseling on career exploration, self-efficacy and dysfunctional career thoughts in unemployed female graduates. 2021.
3. Armstrong *et al.* Executive coaching effectiveness: a pathway to self-efficacy. 2007.
4. Falco *et al.* Improving career decision self efficacy and STEM self efficacy in high school girls. 2019
5. Schunk DH. Self-Efficacy for Reading and Writing: Influence of Modelling, Goal Setting, and Self-Evaluation. 2003.
6. Martins van Jaarsveld G *et al.* Goal setting in higher education: how, why and when are students prompted to set goals? A systematic review. 2025.

- 1 Learners made **significant progress towards the intended outcomes** as a result of taking part in HE careers coaching
- 2 Learners experience **internal locus of control** as a result of **setting and achieving goals**
- 3 Many learners **think deeply about their skills** and how to build on them after engaging with coaching resources and support
- 4 Some learners increased their **understanding of what is right for them** through the experience of **setting an unrealistic goal and reevaluating it**
- 5 Learners are **proactively taking steps** to increase their ability to progress to HE by setting and achieving **goals related to their schoolwork and/or future**

Authors: Sophie Elizabeth Smith, Natalie Aldridge

Published: March 2025
p<0.05 was used as the threshold for statistical testing throughout.