



HEART Collaborative Residential 2016

REPORT PRODUCED FOR THE HEART PARTNERSHIP BY DR DAVID WILKINSON
RESEARCH TOOLKIT LIMITED (OCTOBER 2016)

PHOTOGRAPHY: IAN HINCHLIFFE



UNIVERSITY OF
BRADFORD

University of
HUDDERSFIELD



universitycentre
at wakefieldcollege



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The HEART collaborative residential took place across seven of HEART's partner organisations from Tuesday 19th July 2016 to Thursday 21st July. The residential was targeted provision offered to schools in West Yorkshire with low engagement and low progression rates into HE.

Aims of the collaborative residential programme

The HEART collaborative residential programme had a number of ambitious aims:

- To raise aspirations and confidence.
- To enhance awareness of choice for HE institutions and courses in the region.
- To familiarise students with the HE environment, and make them feel welcome in our institutions.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT GAIN

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.

Motivation at school

At the beginning of the collaborative residential, the highest average scores were received for statements about motivation at school and desire to study for a degree. Participants were more unsure about student life in higher education and making appropriate subject choices for degree level study.

Most positive gains

The most positive and considerable gains, from the participants own perspective, were in relation to understanding what student life is like in higher education and a much greater understanding of the courses available to them at university and college.

TEACHER FEEDBACK

Teachers supporting the collaborative residential were asked to complete a short paper-based form at the end of the 3-day programme in order to collect their views and reflections on the residential and its organisation.

Reflections on organisational elements of the programme

Very positive comments were received in relation to the administration and organisation of the collaborative residential. Teachers welcomed the structured nature of the programme and the commitment and support provided by the programme team and the student ambassadors supporting the events and activities.

Which elements worked particularly well

Again, the structure of the programme was mentioned by some teaching staff as a positive and something that worked well. Others also commented that the mixture of groups across schools helped to support and aid confidence development and working with others/in teams. Opportunities to participate in 'real-life' university experiences were also mentioned as a key strength of the programme.

Which elements worked less well

Some comments were received from teachers in relation to mixed messages from student ambassadors and that clearer prior briefing may have helped here. Also, clearer information for participants could be provided so that they are better aware of timing of events and activities. A number of teachers also suggested that, when travelling, school groups (with accompanying teachers) would work better for behaviour management.

Impact

Impact on pupils has been extremely positive – as reported by their accompanying teachers. Many teachers reported that views on accessing Higher Education are much more positive from their pupils than they were prior to the collaborative residential. Comments on further enhancements and improvements included the request that more information and guidance on financing and funding should be provided.

STATEMENT QUESTION SESSION

This session was delivered at the end of the summer school programme and sought to explore participants' views on a range of content areas covered by the residential.

I've got a much clearer idea of where I can study and what I can do

Most (79%) participants who responded to this question indicated that they had a much clearer idea of where they can study and what they can do as a result of the collaborative residential.

I've got a good plan for progressing my education to Higher Education

Most (82%) participants left the collaborative residential with a good plan for progressing their education to Higher Education.

Higher Education is for people like me

Almost all (93%) of participants left the collaborative residential believing that Higher Education is for people like them. A small number (2) of participants were unsure about this and indicated that they had yet to decide whether it was right for them now but 'maybe further in the future'.

I feel more confident about my future after taking part in the residential

Three quarters (75%) of participants felt more confident about their future after the collaborative residential. Comments from those who indicated they were still 'unsure' suggested that whilst confidence may not be strong, they were much more aware of what was possible in the future.

FOCUS GROUP SESSION

Impact

The collaborative residential had a profound impact on some participants who, as a result of their involvement in the programme, could clearly identify what it was going to be like in Higher Education. One comment encapsulates this:

“

For me this whole experience has been like starting my future before I've even started my university degree.

Desire to progress

A clear benefit and impact of the collaborative residential has been a strengthening of desire to progress to Higher Education. Through the varied experiences and activities, participants have become much more aware of the different types of higher level study available across the region.

“

Each time you participate in an activity, you gain more knowledge and more experience, so hopefully by the time you are ready to make those decisions you'll be really well-informed.

Recommendation to others

We asked those present in the focus group to think about the advice they might offer to others considering participating in future collaborative residentials. One participant offered this clear recommendation:

“

I'd probably ask them what they were planning to do, like what their future was and if they weren't sure I'd say well definitely take it (the opportunity to participate in the residential)... I'm sure not everyone gets this opportunity, so you might as well just take it since you have it and learn something new, it could open up your future.

INTRODUCTION

The HEART collaborative residential took place across a number of HEART partner organisations from Tuesday 19th July 2016 to Thursday 21st July. The residential was targeted provision offered to schools in West Yorkshire with low engagement and low progression rates into HE. 80 residential places were offered to target schools, which included:

- Airedale Academy, Castleford
- Appleton Academy, Bradford
- Cathedral Academy, Wakefield
- Dixons Trinity Academy, Bradford
- Featherstone Academy, Wakefield
- Immanuel College, Bradford
- Leeds City College (14+ Apprenticeship Academy)
- Westborough High School, Dewsbury

Sessions and activities delivered included:

- Teambuilding (provided by Leeds College of Art / Leeds Beckett University)
- STEM workshop (Bradford University)
- Media Makeup (Bradford College)
- Sport session (Leeds Trinity University/Leeds City College)
- Dance session (Leeds City College)
- Childcare session (Leeds City College)
- Fashion insight (Leeds College of Art)
- Animation insight (Leeds College of Art)
- Mechanical engineering session (University of Huddersfield)
- Music technology session (University of Huddersfield)
- History session (University of Huddersfield)
- Science session (University of Huddersfield)
- Mock graduation session (Leeds Trinity University)
- Campus tour (Leeds Trinity University)
- Enterprise session (Leeds Beckett University)

Additional social events were also timetabled across the three days of the residential and included: Bowling event at Hollywood Bowl, Film night, Group meal at a local restaurant.

Aims of the collaborative residential programme

The HEART Collaborative residential programme had a number of ambitious aims:

- To raise aspirations and confidence.
- To enhance awareness of choice for HE institutions and courses in the region.
- To familiarise students with the HE environment, and make them feel welcome in our institutions.



EVALUATION

The collaborative residential evaluation consisted of a number of constituent parts:

Strand 1: Learning gain tool

Utilising a pre- and post-collaborative residential survey designed to explore impact and learning gain from the perspective of participants.

Strand 2: Teacher feedback session

An informal discussion session designed to explore teacher views on effect and impact of the collaborative residential.

Strand 3: Statement question session

An interactive session at the end of the collaborative residential programme that explored reaction to a set of likert-scale statements put to all participants.

Strand 4: Focus group session

An informal discussion session with participants of *last year's* collaborative residential to explore views on effect and impact.

Learning gain tool analysis

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. We have successfully used this tool to assess change in provision in Hospital Trusts, examined successful elements of University Summer School programmes, and are currently using it as part of the evaluation strategy for Heart in West Yorkshire. Results, using this tool, are generally displayed visually as radar charts – aiding participants and programme management to quickly view impact areas.

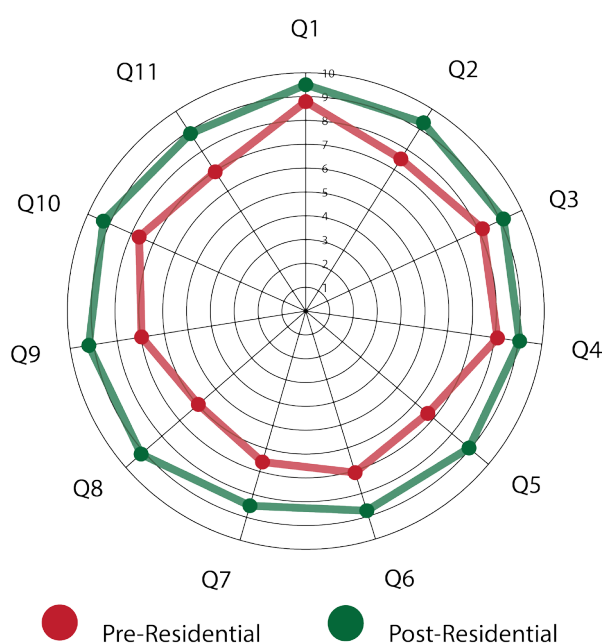
Learning gain tool – how it works

The Learning Gain© tool seeks responses to statements from each collaborative residential participant. Responses are given on a scale from 1 to 10 (where 1 equals strongly disagree or this very rarely happens/is the case; 10 equals strongly agree or this always happens/is the case). Responses to statements are then averaged across the entire group to determine pre-collaborative residential scores or ratings, as well as post-collaborative residential scores or ratings. Differences between pre- and post-collaborative residential averages are calculated and this produces the learning gain/development or distance travelled in that statement area.

We asked participants, at the beginning of the programme, to rate or rank themselves in a number of areas in order to identify baseline positions in relation to attitude and expectation for the collaborative residential. A single A4 sheet survey was provided to each participant containing eight statements related to the collaborative residential programme.

LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT GAIN

Our analysis is based on 34 paired responses received from the collaborative residential participants. Many more completed the pre-collaborative residential survey but this could not be linked to a completed post-collaborative residential survey for these participants.



Motivation at school

At the beginning of the collaborative residential, the highest average scores were received for statements about motivation at school and desire to study for a degree. Participants were more unsure about student life in higher education and making appropriate subject choices for degree level study.

Most positive gains

The most positive and considerable gains, from the participants own perspective, were in relation to understanding what student life is like in higher education and a much greater understanding of the courses available to them at university and college.

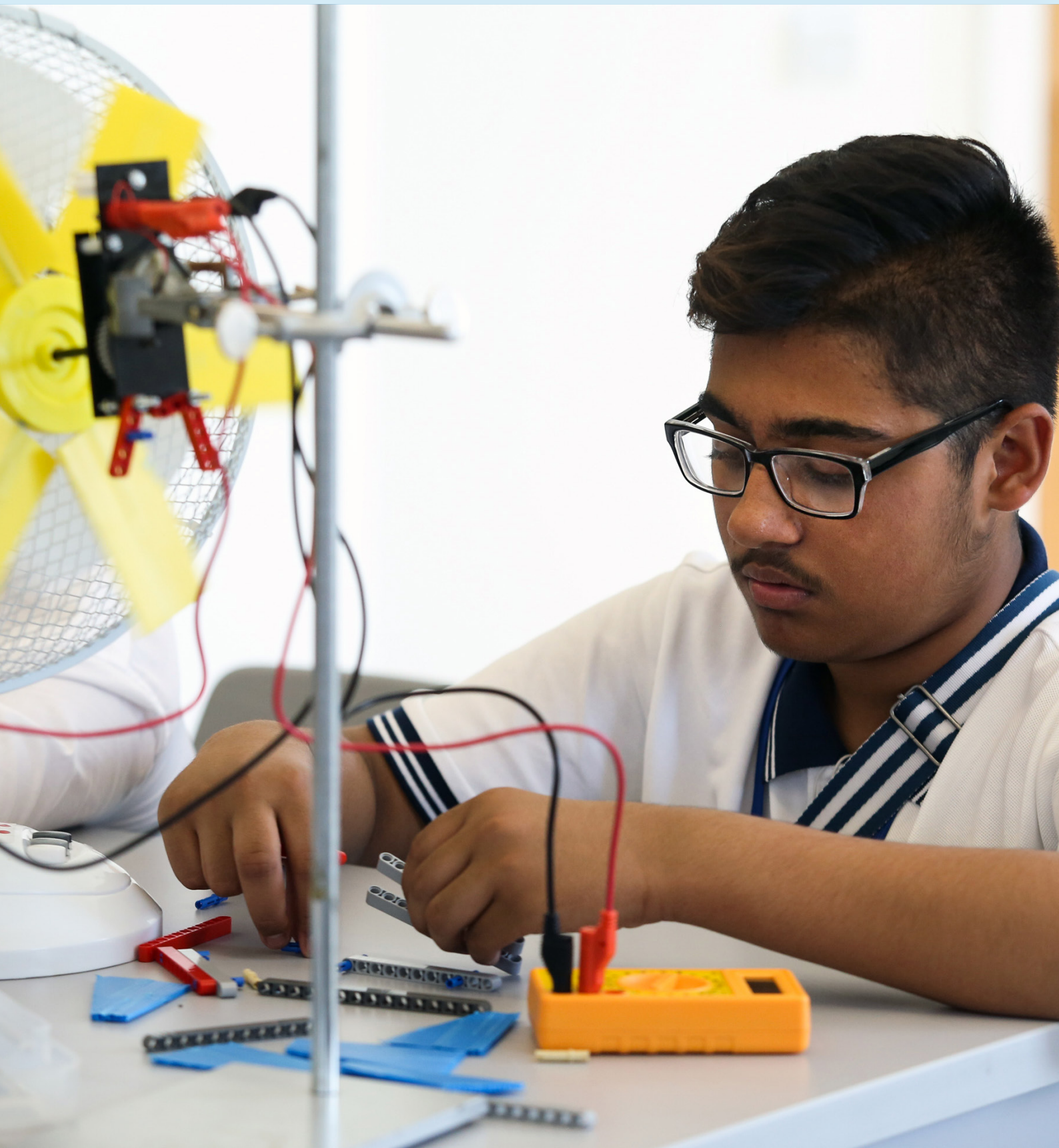
I understand what student life is like: **35% increase in understanding** from the beginning to the end of the programme.

I understand the variety of courses available at university and college: **25% increase in understanding** from the beginning to the end of the programme.

Least change

Whilst positive changes were observed in all statement areas, the least movement was seen in statements relating to current levels of motivation and intention to study for a degree. However, the starting position 'score' for these areas were extremely positive and this may explain their limited movement.

Statements:	Pre-Residential average (out of 10)	Post-Residential average (out of 10)	Change	% Change
(1) I am motivated to achieve well at school/college	8.79	9.50	0.71 ▲	7%
(2) I understand what higher education is	7.53	9.32	1.79 ▲	19%
(3) I want to study for a degree	8.18	9.15	0.97 ▲	11%
(4) I can see myself studying for a degree in the future	8.12	9.06	0.94 ▲	10%
(5) I understand the variety of courses available at university and college	6.68	8.94	2.26 ▲	25%
(6) I understand the different routes I can take when I leave school	7.09	8.76	1.68 ▲	19%
(7) I know the subject choices I need to make so that I can go to university/college	6.59	8.50	1.91 ▲	22%
(8) I understand what student life is like	5.97	9.15	3.18 ▲	35%
(9) I feel I would be comfortable at university/college	6.97	9.21	2.24 ▲	24%
(10) I feel I would enjoy being a student	7.65	9.29	1.65 ▲	18%
(11) There's lots more to gain from being a student than a degree	6.97	8.88	1.91 ▲	22%



TEACHER FEEDBACK

Teachers supporting the collaborative residential were asked to complete a short paper-based form at the end of the 3-day programme in order to collect their views and reflections on the residential and its organisation.

Reflections on organisational elements of the programme

Very positive comments were received in relation to the administration and organisation of the collaborative residential. Teachers welcomed the structured nature of the programme and the commitment and support provided by the programme team and the student ambassadors supporting the events and activities.

“

The residential is something I would like our school to be involved with again. It has been rewarding seeing our students gaining confidence and independence. HEART staff have been brilliant with our students.

“

Well organised, liked how the coaches arrived on time – no waiting about!

“

Which elements worked particularly well

Again, the structure of the programme was mentioned by some teaching staff as a positive and something that worked well. Others also commented that the mixture of groups across schools helped to support and aid confidence development and working with others/in teams. Opportunities to participate in 'real-life' Higher Education experiences were also mentioned as a key strength of the programme.

“

The mixture of schools [worked well] so our students, and students from other schools, could interact.

“

Grouping the pupils out of school groups allowed pupils to meet new people - much like a real life university experience.

“

The actual lecture and session experience was invaluable.

“

Timings and getting to and from locations has run very smoothly.



Which elements worked less well

Some comments were received from teachers in relation to mixed messages from student ambassadors and that clearer prior briefing may have helped here. Also, clearer information for participants could be provided so that they are better aware timing of events and activities. A number of teachers also suggested that, when travelling, school groups (with accompanying teachers) would work better for behaviour management.

“

Occasionally ambassadors were not where they needed to be or they provided mixed messages in terms of timings and plans.

“

Something that could be provided is more specific timings for students - so they are not waiting around as much - also more documentation for students.

“

Travel arrangements - school groups would be better for this.

Reflections on content of residential/what worked well

Limited comments were received on the content of the residential. Those who did provide detail in this area indicated that the content was appropriate and developmental for their students. Some also commented that they welcomed the way that sessions were practical and related to the school curriculum. Some teachers felt that the opportunity to experience a mock graduation was valuable for students as it showed what could be achieved and outlined the process involved (it had particular resonance with students as it took place during the graduation period at Leeds Trinity University). The varied nature of sessions and activities undertaken by participants was also seen as a strength of the programme from the teachers' perspective.

“

A wide range of choice of courses and activities provided in the evening.

“

Great variety, pupils enjoyed the more engaging active sessions.

“

The graduation tasks and sports activities were enjoyed the most, having spoken to students.

“

Carousels that students completed in the colleges and universities were varied and gave students a chance to sample lots of different courses.



Reflections on content of residential/what worked less well

The intensive and stretching nature of the residential was commented upon by some teachers as difficult for their pupils. Also some teachers indicated that messages were unclear and inconsistent from student ambassadors. Information and guidance on finance and funding for university would be useful.

“

Although it is a true university experience, pupils found the more didactic sessions difficult to focus in upon.

“

Some ambassadors were a little negative about lectures etc.

Impact

Impact on pupils has been extremely positive – as reported by their accompanying teachers. Many teachers reported that views on accessing Higher Education are much more positive from their pupils than they were prior to the collaborative residential.

“

All [my] pupils have stated that they are now definitely wanting to attend university!

“

The students are now more determined to do well in order to attend university.

STATEMENT QUESTION SESSION

This session was delivered at the end of the summer school programme and sought to explore participants' views on a range of content areas covered by the residential.



I've got a much clearer idea of where I can study and what I can do

Most (79%) participants who responded to this question indicated that they had a much clearer idea of where they can study and what they can do as a result of the collaborative residential.

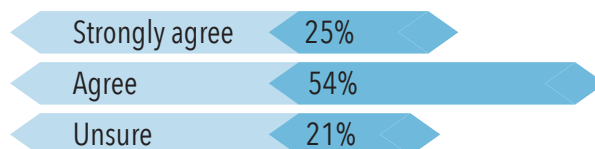
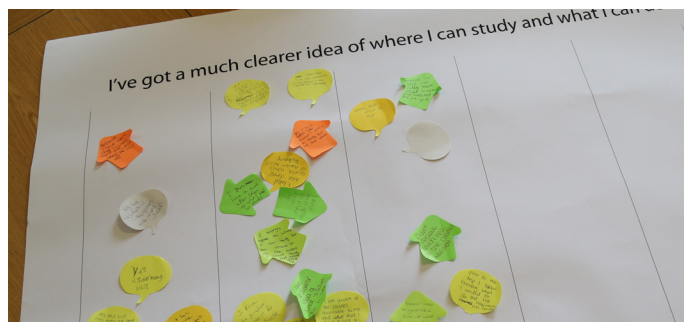


Chart 1: I've got a much clearer idea of where I can study and what I can do

Typical comments included:

“

HEART has shown me different universities where I can study.

“

Yes, this trip has given me good knowledge on things I can study and all the variety of what I can do in the future.

“

Because I have seen what courses there are, and where the universities and colleges are.

“

I've experienced it so now I know what to expect.

I've got a good plan for progressing my education to Higher Education

Most (82%) participants left the collaborative residential with a good plan for progressing their education to Higher Education.

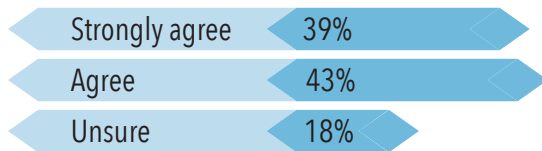


Chart 2: I've got a good plan for progressing my education to Higher Education

Typical comments included:

“

I would like to come to Uni even more now!

“

This residential has really opened my eyes to university.

“

I know and have established what I need to do to achieve my goals.

“

I've got a good plan now because this residential helped me to know what I want to achieve.

Higher Education is for people like me

Almost all (93%) of participants left the collaborative residential believing that Higher Education is for people like them. A small number (2) of participants were unsure about this and indicated that they had yet to decide whether it was right for them now but 'maybe further in the future'.

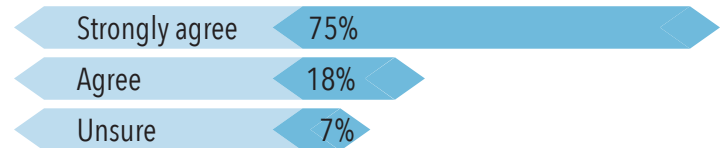


Chart 3: Higher Education is for people like me

Typical comments included:

“

Uni is for me because I would enjoy the independence and accommodation and I feel it sets you up for your future.

“

I came unsure about university – but now I am sure I want to go to university.

“

This statement applies to me as I could have so many more opportunities from higher education.

I feel more confident about my future after taking part in the residential

Three quarters (75%) of participants felt more confident about their future after the collaborative residential. Comments from those who indicated they were still 'unsure' suggested that whilst confidence may not be strong, they were much more aware of what was possible in the future.

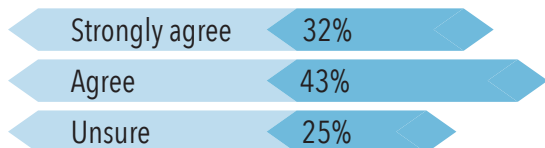


Chart 4: I feel more confident about my future after taking part in the residential

Typical comments included:

“

Because I have interacted with other people I have gained more confidence.

“

It has given me more confidence about my future and finance.

“

I have a better knowledge of University life.

“

Not necessarily more confident but definitely much more aware of my future possibilities.

I've enjoyed the residential summer school

Almost all (93%) participants indicated that they had enjoyed the collaborative residential. Positive comments tended to focus on meeting new people and exploring participants' options post-school.

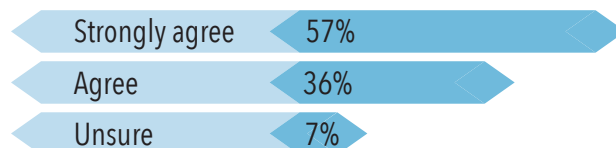


Chart 5: I've enjoyed the residential summer school

Typical comments included:

“

I've met new people, become more aware and confident in my ability in education. I've now got a much clearer image of my options and future.

“

I have enjoyed it all and would love to experience it again #GoUni!

“

I have learnt new things and experienced things not many people can.

“

Because it has helped me understand how universities work.

FOCUS GROUP SESSION

Impact

The collaborative residential had a profound impact on some participants who, as a result of their involvement in the programme, could clearly identify what it was going to be like in Higher Education. One comment encapsulates this:

“

For me this whole experience has been like starting my future before I've even started my university degree.

Taster sessions

Taster sessions offered as part of the programme explored topics of perceived relevance to participants. Methods of delivery were mixed to reflect the many different formal and less formal approaches used by HE providers in the region. Some participants found group 'lecture' tasting sessions less engaging and interesting than the more hands-on and active sessions of the programme. This, in the main, was because of the limited one-to-one engagement and less personalised nature of large group lecture sessions. However, there was an understanding amongst participants that this was the normal approach to delivery for some subjects in larger HE institutions.

“

I think sometimes the classes were too big ... the person who was trying to lecture us wasn't able to answer all the questions or was lecturing one person and the rest of them just kind of wandered off and didn't know.

League tables

Performance rankings and league tables appeared to be less important to participants than the 'look and feel' of institutions. One large local university was identified by one focus group participant as a particularly positive and welcoming institution.

“

It's kind of nice because this is a nice area and you've got everything, each place has its own building and it's all planned out and it's like ordered which is nice.

Desire to progress

A clear benefit and impact of the collaborative residential has been a strengthening of desire to progress to Higher Education. Through the varied experiences and activities, participants have become much more aware of the different types of higher level study available across the region.

“

Each time you participate in an activity, you gain more knowledge and more experience, so hopefully by the time you are ready to make those decisions you'll be really well-informed.

“

The other thing that helped me is it's just made me understand more about university because I didn't really know what was available for people like me. Obviously, I now know a lot more about it all and that's great.

Recommendation to others

Participants clearly enjoyed the diverse range and variety of sessions and experiences on offer to them. Their knowledge of HE and understanding of potential study routes has been enhanced. All will be able to make more informed choices about what to do and where to progress.

We asked those present in the focus group to think about the advice they might offer to others considering participating in future collaborative residencies. One participant offered this clear recommendation:

“

I'd probably ask them what they were planning to do, like what their future was and if they weren't sure I'd say well definitely take it (the opportunity to participate in the residential) ... I'm sure not everyone gets this opportunity, so you might as well just take it since you have it and learn something new, it could open up your future.



