



Higher
Horizons



Progression Framework



Treat this booklet like your Outreach Curriculum – we look forward to working with you to build a higher education outreach and careers education programme for your school or college.

Higher Horizons is part of the Uni Connect programme. Uni Connect is funded by the government to increase the numbers of young people from backgrounds under represented in higher education progressing to university-level study.

Higher Horizons delivers free activities to learners in target secondary schools and colleges in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Cheshire. Higher Horizons is a partnership of local universities and colleges and has offices based at Keele University, Staffordshire University, Harper Adams University and the University of Chester.

Our goal is to deliver trusted, impartial information, advice and guidance about post-16 and post-18 options so that every young person can make an informed choice about their education and set themselves on the road to a fulfilling career. We provide information about all routes to and through further and higher education, whether that is A Levels and a traditional undergraduate degree, the new T levels and other technical and vocational qualifications, or apprenticeships.

Higher Horizons has been delivering higher education outreach through various government funding streams for over ten years. Our activities are evidence-based, with clear measurable outcomes for learners who take part in them.

Individual activities are designed to fit together to form a programme, because we know that sustained engagement with young people throughout their time at school is the best way to influence their attitudes and intentions to progress to higher-level study. We evaluate every activity to make sure that we are making a difference to the schools and colleges we serve. Our evaluation shows that young people who take part in our activities are two times more likely to progress to higher education than their peers who don't engage with us.

You can use this booklet to find out more about the activities we offer and why we do them, including outcomes for learners who take part in them. It also explains where our activities align to the Gatsby Benchmarks so you can build a portfolio of evidence for OFSTED. We have a number of core activities available to all our schools, which you can find inside, and information about how to get in touch with us to find out more.





The Higher Horizons Progression Framework

The Higher Horizons Progression Framework shapes all the activities we deliver. Each theme is designed to address specific barriers to university progression. It is based on evidence of what makes the most difference to help young people consider whether higher education is an option for them.

What is it?

The progression framework is split into three themes:

1. **Inform**
Information, Advice and Guidance
2. **Experience**
Campus Visits and Experiences
3. **Enable**
Attainment raising and curriculum enhancement

Activities that fit into the **Inform** theme are designed to teach learners about different aspects of higher education. For example, a workshop might explain what it's like to study at university, how student loans work, or what a higher or degree apprenticeship is like. These sessions are designed to bust myths and any preconceived ideas learners may have about higher education. By learning about different types of qualifications, how post-16 options affect your choices at post-18, or the realities of university life, we help them understand what they might want to study in the future and how this can tie in with any career goals they have.

Activities that fit into the **Experience** theme are designed to immerse learners in the world of higher education. This might be a university campus visit, like visiting a Medical School or Vet School, or a student experience day where current Students share their experiences. By experiencing university for themselves, learners will be able to see what it feels like to be in that environment and understand what it is like to study there.

Activities that fit into the **Enable** theme are designed to support learners' attainment and enhance curriculum learning. We do this by explicitly teaching study and revision skills, or by delivering subject-specific sessions designed to build on curriculum knowledge and inspire a love of a subject. These activities enable learners to make successful transitions at 16 and 18 by enhancing their skills and knowledge.

Why do we do it?

All of our activities have higher education at their core – our goal, set by the government, is to support young people from areas with the lowest rates of participation to progress to higher education, if this is the right choice for them. The Progression Framework helps demonstrate how this works in practice—listing the outcomes from different types of activities and how these work together to help young people make an informed choice about progressing to higher education. The Progression Framework also helps schools and colleges understand the types of activities Higher Horizons can support with and those we can't. If we can't support you directly with a particular type of activity, we will signpost you to other organisations we work with who may be able to help.

Which learners is Higher Horizons outreach targeted to?

Higher Horizons targets learners from areas with low levels of participation in higher education. These were identified by the government in 2017 based on postcode analysis. Our targeting is therefore based on the home postcodes of learners – they either live in our target area or they don't.

We can also work with specific cohorts of learners who face additional barriers in progressing to higher education or are under-represented in higher education. Examples of these cohorts include looked after children, children from military families, children from low socio-economic backgrounds or those on free school meals, young carers, disabled children, etc.

Building a sustained programme of outreach for your school

Higher education outreach works best when it is sustained over time. Research shows that around 6 hours of outreach activity each year through secondary school and sixth form or college is the best way of ensuring young people have all the information they need to make an informed choice at 18.

The next few pages explain our three themes of higher education outreach in more detail, including giving examples of the types of activities that fit into each theme. You can use these to plan an outreach curriculum for your school or college.

The last few pages give you some information about our core activities—including our Core Information, Advice and Guidance Programme, our online question and answer platform, and how and why we use data about the students we work with to evaluate our impact. Please get in touch with us to find out more and book activities for your school—you'll find our contact details at the back of the booklet or you can visit higherhorizons.co.uk to look up who the contact is for your school.

The Progression Framework



	Inform	Experience	Enable
Why are we doing this?	Learners with no family history of HE and no history of HE within their peer network have lesser ability to access impartial, correct, up-to-date information about FE and HE progression routes including traditional degree options, vocational routes, and apprenticeships	Learners with no family history of HE and no history of HE within their peer network have lesser ability to access hands-on experiences of FE and HE and may not understand what FE and HE are like	Learners from 'disadvantaged backgrounds' have lesser ability to access extra-curricular activities and experiences which motivate and promote good attainment Learners from 'disadvantaged backgrounds' may not be explicitly taught, or given the opportunity to practice, learning skills and strategies which can improve their attainment
Aim	To give all learners relevant information about their educational choices to enable informed decision making	Add context to learners' knowledge by allowing learners to experience college and university for themselves	To support and nurture subject interests, improve study and learning skills, and enable good attainment
Activity Types	Information, advice and guidance workshops about: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Academic and vocational/technical routes + Post-16 choices (A Levels, T Levels, apprenticeships) + Higher and Degree level Apprenticeships + University applications and choices + Student Finance + Employability skills such as interview skills and CV writing 	Campus visits and experiences such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + University residentials + Campus visits – with a student life focus + Campus visits – with a subject-specific focus 	Curriculum and Attainment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Revision skills and exam technique + Study skills + Extended Project Qualification workshops + Presentation and communication skills Activities to enhance curriculum learning: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Subject-specific workshops + Extra-curricular workshops

Short-term outcomes (one or more per activity)	Increase knowledge of post-16/post-18 options Increase knowledge of the links between education and employment Increase knowledge of how to research courses and universities Reduce common misconceptions about student finance Increase knowledge of graduate outcomes and the value of higher education Increase knowledge about university/Higher Education generally Increase understanding of subject pathways created by GCSE and post-16 choices Increase knowledge of vocational and technical routes into and through higher education	Increase learner understanding of what it is like to study at university Increase learner understanding of what it is like to live at university Increase learner understanding of the extra-curricular university experience Increase learner understanding of what it is like to study an apprenticeship Increase sense of belonging in higher education Increase learner understanding of the world of work	Increase knowledge of how subjects are studied at university Improve confidence in key academic skills – study and revision skills Increase motivation to succeed at school and college Increase confidence to progress to the next level of study Increase sense of agency and control Increase ability to cope with risks Increase confidence in managing workload Increase ability to plan pathway to future career Increase ability to achieve grades needed for next level of study
Medium-term outcome	Learner has the information to make an informed decision about further and higher education options and pathways	Learner has experienced further and higher education first-hand and understands what it is like and that it is accessible for them	Learner remains motivated to progress, with the learning skills to succeed
Long-term outcome	Increased number of learners from backgrounds underrepresented in higher education progress to higher-level study		

1. Inform

Information, Advice and Guidance

Activities that fit into this theme are designed to improve learners' knowledge of post-16 options, post-18 options, academic and vocational routes, what university life is like and how to apply for higher-level study.

Aim:

To give all learners relevant information about their educational choices to enable informed decision making.

Activities delivered as part of this theme must:

- + Increase knowledge of post-16/post-18 options
- + Increase knowledge of the links between education and employment
- + Increase knowledge of how to research courses and universities
- + Reduce common misconceptions about student finance
- + Increase knowledge of graduate outcomes and the value of higher education
- + Increase knowledge about university/Higher Education generally
- + Increase understanding of subject pathways created by GCSE and post-16 choices
- + Increase knowledge of vocational and technical routes into and through higher education

Activities delivered as part of this theme might include workshops on:

- + Academic and vocational/technical routes
- + Post-16 choices (A Levels, T Levels, apprenticeships)
- + Higher and Degree level Apprenticeships
- + University applications and choices
- + Student Finance
- + Employability skills such as interview skills and CV writing

Gatsby Benchmarks:

Activities delivered as part of this theme can help you meet Benchmark 4.

Some sessions delivered as part of this theme help learners understand the links between curriculum subjects and future careers. We also help learners understand the links between what subjects you choose to study at GCSE and post-16 and how this relates to university entry—making sure learners can map out a pathway through education to the career they want in the future.

2. Experience

Campus Visits and Experience

Activities that fit into this theme are designed to give learners a first-hand experience of what university, college and careers are like.

Aim:

Add context to learners' knowledge by allowing learners to experience college and university for themselves.

Visits and experiences delivered as part of this theme must:

- + Increase learner understanding of what it is like to study at university
- + Increase learner understanding of what it is like to live at university
- + Increase learner understanding of the extra-curricular university experience
- + Increase learner understanding of what it is like to study an apprenticeship
- + Increase sense of belonging in higher education
- + Increase learner understanding of the world of work

Activities delivered as part of this theme might include campus visits and experiences such as:

- + University residentials
- + Campus visits – with a student life focus
- + Campus visits – with a subject-specific focus

Gatsby Benchmarks:

Activities delivered as part of this theme can help you meet Benchmark 7.

Campus visits and experiences help learners understand the variety of higher education institutions and qualifications on offer to them. Our impartial nature means we deliver activities which enable learners to explore the wide range of further and higher education options available, including sixth forms and colleges, universities, apprenticeships and other vocational and technical routes.



3. Enable

Attainment raising and curriculum enhancement

Activities that fit into this theme are designed to help learners achieve well at school and college, and make successful transitions after level 2 and level 3. These activities are about getting learners ready for their next steps and helping them understand what they look like, and helping them develop the skills to succeed.

Aim:

To support and nurture subject interests, improve study and learning skills, and enable good attainment

Activities delivered as part of this theme must:

- + Increase knowledge of how subjects are studied at university
- + Improve confidence in key academic skills – study and revision skills
- + Increase motivation to succeed at school and college
- + Increase confidence to progress to the next level of study
- + Increase sense of agency and control
- + Increase ability to cope with risks
- + Increase confidence in managing workload
- + Increase ability to plan pathway to future career

- + Increase ability to achieve grades needed for next level of study

Activities delivered as part of this theme might include:

- + Revision skills and exam technique
- + Study skills
- + Extended Project Qualification workshops
- + Presentation and communication skills

Activities to enhance curriculum learning:

- + Subject-specific workshops
- + Extra-curricular workshops

Gatsby Benchmarks:

Activities delivered as part of this theme can help you meet Benchmark 4 and Benchmark 7.

Activities delivered as part of this theme help learners understand their next steps, how the qualifications and subjects they study link to and influence their post-18 and career options, and what it is like to study at university. They are also designed to boost learning skills and support good attainment.



Evaluation and Data Collection

We have to collect data on the learners who take part in our activities as a condition of our funding. Our funding is public money provided by the Department for Education and we must monitor its use and that it is being targeted to the right learners to ensure good value for money for the public.

We use Public Task as the legal basis for the processing of this data under UK GDPR.

What data do you collect?

We collect the personal data of learners who take part in our activities. A specific list of the information we collect can be found in our Privacy Policy on our website: higherhorizons.co.uk/privacy-policy

Why do you collect this data?

We collect this data for two reasons: to evaluate our activities and to track the learners who take part in our activities, to see if they eventually progress to higher education.

Evaluation and tracking allow us to prove the impact of our work to the Department for Education and Office for Students and access further government funding. Without this funding we would not exist and would not be able to provide free activities to your school or college.

Who do you share the data with?

The majority of our data is shared anonymously: for example, evaluation reports will never identify individual learners, and neither will our reporting back to the Office for Students.

Identifiable data is shared with organisations such as UCAS and HESA in order to determine if individual learners have progressed to higher education or not following engagement with our activities.

A complete list of who we share data with and for what purposes can be found in our Privacy Policy: higherhorizons.co.uk/privacy-policy

What do we need to do?

We ask schools and colleges that work with Higher Horizons to complete our Data Sharing Agreement to ensure both sides know their responsibilities and that we are sharing data in a legal, safe and transparent way. We also ask schools and colleges to provide some data on their learners, which can be uploaded to our secure site. All data will be stored privately, only accessed by those who need to, and in line with appropriate Data Protection laws.

What happens if we don't share data with you?

We would like to work with schools and colleges to overcome any barriers to data collection and sharing you may have, and hope our Data Sharing Agreement process helps towards this.

Ultimately however, if schools and colleges are unable to share data with us, they may not be able to access Higher Horizons activities.



Core Programme

In 2020 we launched our Core Programme: six hours of information, advice and guidance workshops available for Key Stage 3, Key Stage 4, and Key Stage 5/Post-16 available to all our target schools and colleges.

It is designed to be delivered over six sessions in PSHE lessons or similar over a half term, but we can also deliver all the sessions in one day, or over a couple of half days.

The programme is designed to cover all the important information learners need to know to make informed decisions about their next steps. We can work with you to deliver additional activities, like a campus visit, or more tailored support on particular topics like post-16 options, to best support your learners.



What does it cover?

Each programme is tailored to where young people are in their educational journey. Sessions are designed to give learners information about their next key decision point and make an informed choice about their next steps.

How is it delivered?

The programme is designed to be flexible and meet your needs. It can be delivered by Higher Horizons staff in the classroom, by teachers using our teachers' guide, resources, and lesson plans, or we have pre-recorded video sessions so teachers can just press play!

Key Stage 4

- + Intro to higher education
- + Student life
- + Post-16 options
- + Pathways and Careers
- + Study skills
- + Research your post-16 pathway

How to book

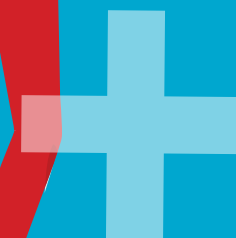
To book the programme for your school get in touch your Higher Horizon Officer, or email ncop@keele.ac.uk

Key Stage 3

- + Intro to higher education
- + Student life
- + GCSEs and Post-16 options
- + Employability skills
- + Study skills
- + Imagine your future self

Key Stage 5

- + How to choose a university
- + Student finance and budgeting
- + UCAS and Results Day
- + Graduate Careers
- + First Term Survival
- + Personal Statements



Design your own Outreach Programme

You can use the table below to start planning your outreach programme, using some of the ideas in this booklet as a guide. Get in touch with your Higher Horizons Officer or email us on ncop@keele.ac.uk to start booking activities.

Key Stage	Inform	Experience	Enable
3			
4			
5/Post-16			

Questions to ask yourself:

1. Do my learners know what university is, how to apply for it, and what the benefits are?

YES – Great! Can we help build on that knowledge with our IAG sessions or a campus visit?

NO – Use the IAG programme to find some sessions to boost learner understanding.

2. Do my learners understand the student finance system?

YES – Great! Our student finance sessions are designed to test knowledge and reinforce key messages; do your learners need this extra support?

NO – We offer lots of different student finance sessions to choose from to get them up to speed.

3. Have my learners visited a university campus?

YES – Can they visit a different university to see what other options are available?

NO – It's really important your young people experience what a university is like – find some options in the Experience theme.

4. Can we support curriculum learning by practicing skills or refreshing learning in an out of school setting?

YES – Great! We run lots of subject-specific activities and EPQ days to boost curriculum learning. Find some options in the Enable theme.

NO – We have lots of activities available to support this in later years of study.

5. Do my learners need help with revision skills or exam techniques?

YES – We can organise revision skills workshops to get them ready for their exams.

NO – Great! It sounds like they have the skills to succeed, could we offer some extra support around next steps and making the transition to the next level of study?

6. Do my learners know what employability means?

YES – Great! Can we support them with interview skills or other transferrable skills?

NO – We offer different IAG sessions to explain what employability is and how universities boost it.

7. Do my learners know the different educational pathways open to them?

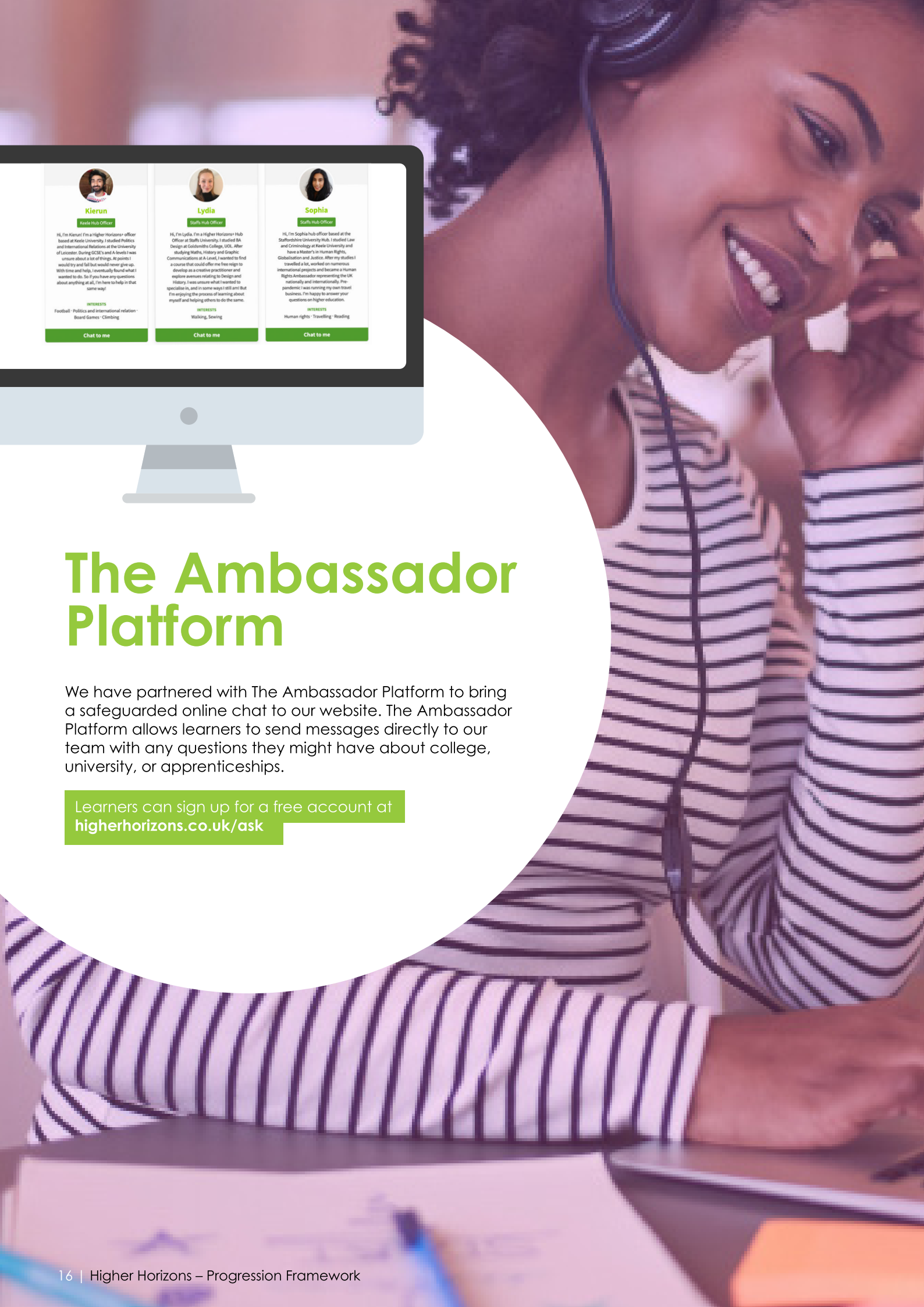
YES – Great! Can we give them any extra information about how these pathways enable access to different career options?

NO – We offer sessions for each year group about their next steps and how these lead on to different future options, from A Levels, to BTECs, to T Levels and Apprenticeships.

8. Do my learners know how to apply for university through UCAS and how to write a personal statement?

YES – Great, can we deliver any sessions about what to expect on results day or during your first term at university?

NO – We have a number of workshops covering this to support learners making applications. Find some options in the enable theme!



The Ambassador Platform

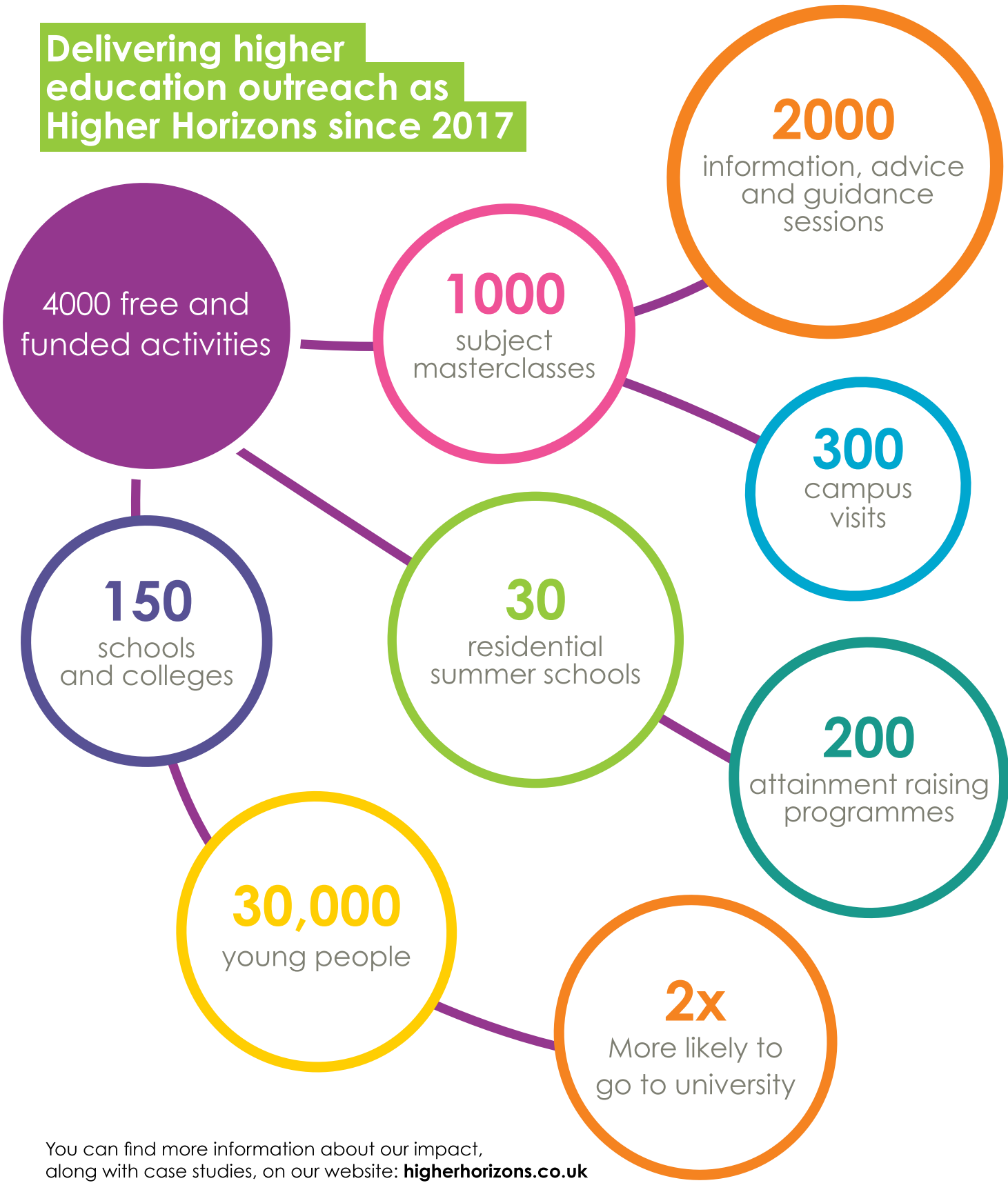
We have partnered with The Ambassador Platform to bring a safeguarded online chat to our website. The Ambassador Platform allows learners to send messages directly to our team with any questions they might have about college, university, or apprenticeships.

Learners can sign up for a free account at higherhorizons.co.uk/ask

Our Impact

Our programme has been developed over the years based on our evaluation and evidence of what works. We make sure that we evaluate all our activities to make sure they have a positive impact on the young people we work with.

Delivering higher education outreach as Higher Horizons since 2017



You can find more information about our impact, along with case studies, on our website: higherhorizons.co.uk

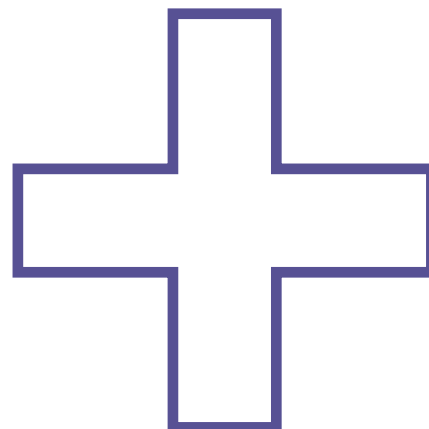


Find Activities on our Website

We have teamed up with UniTasterDays to host an outreach event search tool on our website. This tool lets you quickly and easily find outreach activities for your school. This includes university visits all over the country and workshops delivered by hundreds of universities in the UK.

To use the search tool just visit higherhorizons.co.uk/teachers

On the same page you will also find links to our partner university and colleges, other organisations who support schools, and trusted websites you and your students can use to find out more about university and college.



Contact Us

If you have questions about anything in this booklet or would like to start booking activities for your school or college:



ncop@keele.ac.uk



www.higherhorizons.co.uk

We are also active on social media, follow us to find out more about our latest projects and activities!



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