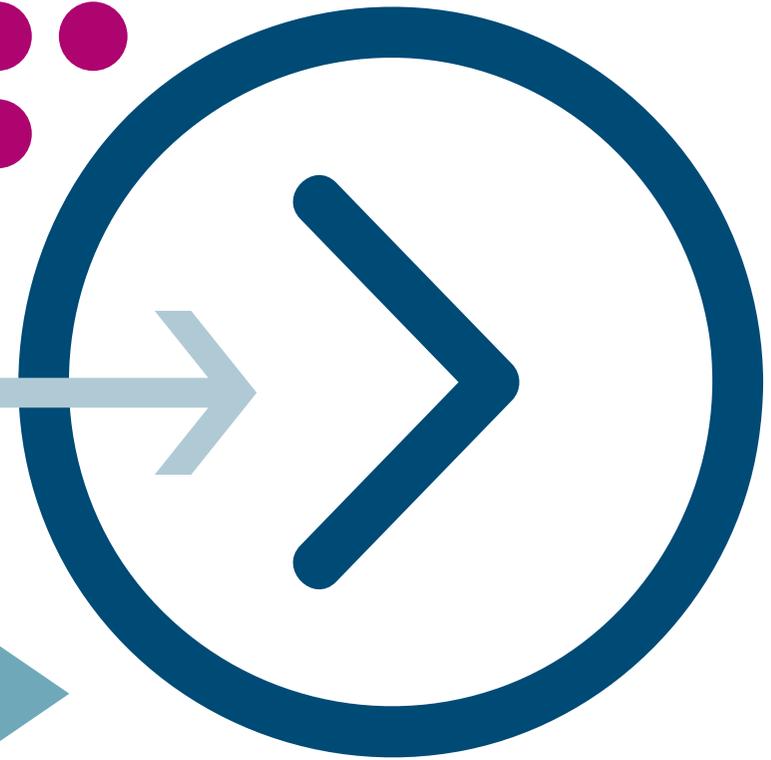




Attainment-raising
A toolkit



Introduction

The Office for Students (OfS) has asked Uni Connect partnerships and their higher education provider partners to do more to raise the academic attainment of pupils through access and participation activities. This toolkit is intended to help higher education partnerships and providers to develop their plans for supporting attainment-raising. It maps out the steps from considering the needs of schools and young people in your area, through to designing effective interventions.

Evidence shows that academic achievement is the most important predictor of university progression¹. This is one of several reasons the OfS² has identified for higher education to engage with attainment-raising. The others are:

- Disadvantage is associated with lower academic attainment at school
- Disadvantaged pupils have less access to specialist skills tuition
- Attainment at Key Stage 4 is a key predictor of participation in higher education
- Academic attainment is a key predictor of success in higher education.

This toolkit is designed to support Uni Connect partnerships but may be useful for any higher education provider planning attainment-raising activities for pupils in years 7 to 11.

¹ Crawford, C. (2014). The link between secondary school characteristics and university participation and outcomes, London: Department for Education: CAYT research report.

² Office for Students (2020). Topic briefing: Raising attainment in schools and colleges to wider participation.

Introduction

Persistent equality gaps in GCSE attainment remain. By working to support schools to address attainment gaps higher education providers can help to remove one of the main barriers to improving access to higher education.

This toolkit focuses on:

- Engagement with schools
- Attainment-raising for pupils in years 7 to 11
- Impactful interventions (including those shown to have intermediate outcomes).

This is not OfS guidance, but additional advice. The OfS will issue programme guidance to Uni Connect partnerships. Where we have quoted the OfS we have provided a reference.

This toolkit was produced by **Ceri Nursaw** in partnership with **Causeway Education**.

The design was by **Cam Design Studio**.

This is a toolkit for planning your attainment-raising work. Partnerships differ so we cannot provide you with all the answers, but following this toolkit will help you develop a coherent and impactful programme.

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Needs analysis

Needs analysis



This section will help you to identify the attainment-raising needs of young people in your local area. It will help you identify where opportunities for attainment-raising may lie, as well as areas where efforts can be concentrated.

This needs analysis shows how to use the data available to you to identify where best to focus your engagement. It will take you through the process of understanding the national attainment gaps, identifying the issues locally in schools, through to individual pupils.

The needs analysis will provide focus on how to identify pupils from groups that are under-represented in higher education who would benefit from attainment-raising activities.

You may identify a number of areas of need. Use these as a shortlist to consider when preparing your strategy. Uni Connect partnerships have limited resources and cannot do everything. Identify the areas of need where you are equipped to have the greatest impact.





Understanding national attainment gaps



Information taken from

Education in England:
Annual Report 2020

Jo Hutchinson, Mary Reader
and Avinash Akhal

August 2020

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UNBOUND

Research Area:
Social Mobility and
Vulnerable Learners

[https://epi.org.uk/
publications-and-research/
education-in-england-
annual-report-2020/](https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/education-in-england-annual-report-2020/)

Poverty and disadvantage

At secondary school, by the time they take their GCSEs, disadvantaged pupils (those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years) are at 18.1 months of learning behind their peers. This gap is the same as it was five years ago.

Children with a high persistence of poverty (those on free school meals for over 80 per cent of their time at school) have a learning gap of 22.7 months – twice that of children with a low persistence of poverty (those on free school meals for less than 20 per cent of their time at school), who have a learning gap 11.3 months.

Ethnicity

Gypsy/Roma pupils are almost 34 months behind White British pupils at GCSE level.

Traveller of Irish Heritage pupils are two years behind their White British peers at secondary level.

Black Caribbean pupils were 6.5 months behind White British pupils in 2011, but in the past eight years this gap has now widened, by over four months, to 10.9 months.

Gaps have also widened for pupils from other Black backgrounds, and for pupils with English as an additional language who arrived late to the school system.

When reviewing this information:

- There will be many different reasons why different groups experience under-attainment.
- Consider the intersection across different factors, for example, ethnicity and socio-economic factors.

Looked after children

Looked after children (LAC) are nearly 29.0 months behind their peers by the time they finish their GCSEs. Progress in closing this gap is slow; it has reduced by only 1 month (3.3 per cent) over the last six years.



³ Education in England: Annual Report 2020. Available at <https://epi.org.uk/publications-and-research/education-in-england-annual-report-2020/>



Understanding national attainment gaps

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Regional disparity

Large disadvantage gaps remain well-established in several regions in England but are particularly acute in the North, West Midlands and parts of the South East. In some areas, disadvantaged pupils (those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years) are over two full years of education behind their peers by the time they take their GCSEs, including in Blackpool (26.3 months), Knowsley (24.7 months) and Plymouth (24.5 months). The biggest gaps are Blackpool, Knowsley, Plymouth, Derby, Reading, South Gloucestershire, Portsmouth, Peterborough and Sheffield.

A full list of regions is available in the report.

Subject area

The attainment gap persists across all subject areas (apart from Gujarati, Arabic, Persian and Biblical Hebrew). There is a GCSE attainment gap between disadvantaged (those who have been eligible for free school meals at any point in the last six years) and non-disadvantaged pupils in music (20.1), physical education (17.7), geography (17.7) and mathematics (17.5).

Music and physical education have the highest disadvantage gaps.

English (16.2) and mathematics (17.5) have large disadvantage gaps compared to other subjects. These subjects are often the mainstay of higher education entry requirements.

Science subjects have disadvantage gaps of over 12 months. Disadvantaged pupils are 15 per cent more likely to take combined science than non-disadvantaged peers and 50 per cent less likely to take dual or triple sciences at GCSE. The report notes that it is surprising that the disadvantage gaps at dual/triple sciences are not larger.

In the humanities, all subjects have a substantial disadvantage gap. Geography (17.7) has a larger disadvantage gap than both history (15.8) and religious studies (11.3).

Language subjects have smaller disadvantage gaps. Disadvantaged pupils do better than their non-disadvantaged peers in community languages.

The information on all subject areas and their disadvantage gap and cohort size is available in the report.

Understanding school data

The schools you identify for interventions will be informed by the data, but you will also need to consider their willingness to engage and your existing relationships.

In the initial review of schools, consider all in your area. You may be building on existing relationships or building new partnerships.

All partnerships have access to a tracker service (HEAT, EMWPREP or Aimhigher West Midlands). The tracker services use publicly available data, such as school performance data, alongside information from the national pupil database. This is also combined with geo-demographic data such as TUNDRA and POLAR. In some instances you may have access to more granular information direct from the schools.

The tracker databases can provide school-level information on Key Stage 4 exam results alongside other factors such as free school meal take up, or Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). For all school performance data you will be reviewing 2019 data, as the government have not reported on 2020 or 2021 data due to the pandemic.



Understanding school data

There are several ways of looking at the data:

1 Key Stage 4 performance compared to similar schools

Consider schools that have similar characteristics in your region and compare their Key Stage 4 performance.

You can do this through using your tracker planning dataset. You can compare socio-economic factors (such as free school meals and IMD) alongside Key Stage 4 performance. For help and support using the data available contact your tracker service.

You can also use the Fischer Family Trust 'Schools Like Yours' dataset⁴ that has information on Key Stage 4 performance alongside pupil and school characteristics. You can compare schools that have similar intakes or schools within a region.

This is a comparison of similar schools in the same area in which you can see the schools that have a lower Progress 8 score compared to others.

For 'Schools Like Yours' the comparison will always be with one school, but you can build up a picture of schools that may have attainment gaps by carrying out a number of comparisons.

DfE number	School name	Local authority	School type	KS4 pupils, 2019	Prior (KS2) attainment, 2019	Attainment 8, 2019	Progress 8, 2019	Basics, 2019	Difference
	England			542,621	28.6	46.7	-0.03	65%	
		Leeds	Community school	258	28.7	52.8	0.51	74%	0.00
		Kingston upon Hull, City of	Converter academy/city technology college	261	28.2	54.0	0.77	72%	0.70
		Doncaster	Voluntary aided/voluntary controlled school	266	29.0	45.8	-0.18	67%	0.80
		Bradford	Converter academy/city technology college	296	28.7	48.8	0.23	72%	0.81
		Bradford	Converter academy/city technology college	266	29.1	50.5	0.16	70%	0.82
		Leeds	Voluntary aided/voluntary controlled school	240	29.5	52.4	0.26	72%	0.84
		Bradford	Converter academy/city technology college	287	28.5	46.8	0.09	63%	0.89
		Sheffield	Converter academy/city technology college	223	29.6	56.1	0.46	76%	0.91
		Kirklees	Converter academy/city technology college	259	29.9	49.1	-0.17	74%	0.95
		Sheffield	Converter academy/city technology college	194	29.1	55.6	0.68	78%	1.07
		Kirklees	Converter academy/city technology college	231	29.3	45.5	-0.40	67%	1.07

Example of a Schools Like Yours dataset for a school.

⁴ Fischer Family Trust 'Schools Like Yours' dataset. Available at <https://schoolslikeyours.ffteducationdatalab.org.uk>



Understanding school data

2 Comparison of Progress 8 scores

Progress 8 measures students' performance across eight GCSEs or equivalent qualifications in order to see how students in one school have progressed in comparison to similar students in other schools. Students' grades are given point scores, and these are added together. The government introduced it as a new performance measure for secondary schools in 2016.

Progress 8 is the difference between a pupil's **actual** attainment score across the eight subjects and the **average** attainment score of pupils with similar prior attainment. The average of all pupil Progress 8 scores gives the school's Progress 8 score. You are able to identify on a range whether schools are performing well above average or well below. The data for Progress 8 is available on the Department of Education's School Performance website⁵ or from your tracker.

This shows how well a school is performing in Progress 8. This school is performing well above average, which is only 12 per cent of schools in England.

This school's score is

0.51

Confidence interval
0.36 to 0.67

Well above average

Well below average

About **12%** of schools in England

Below average

About **20%** of schools in England

Average

About **37%** of schools in England

Above average

About **17%** of schools in England

Example of how Progress 8 performance is presented about a school.

⁵ Department for Education's School Performance website. Available at <https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables>



Understanding school data

The eight qualifications included are mathematics, English language or English literature, EBacc subjects (the three highest point scores from the sciences, computer science, geography, history and languages), three other GCSEs or other non-GCSE qualifications from the Department of Education's approved list.

The government's website also has Progress 8 scores by subject area (English, mathematics and others (grouped)). Here you can see how the school performs in a particular subject area compared to other schools and understand if there are any differences between English and mathematics performance.

Progress 8 scores are provided with a confidence interval. This the range of values that are within that sample.

Progress 8 and Attainment 8 scores by subject area

You can compare the pupils' results with performance at state-funded schools at local authority and national level.

	School	Local authority	England
Number of pupils	258	7621	542621
Progress 8 score and confidence interval	0.51 (0.36 to 0.67)	0.03 (0 to 0.06)	-0.03
Progress 8 score and confidence interval by subject area: English	0.62 (0.43 to 0.81)	0.02 (-0.02 to 0.05)	-0.04
Progress 8 score and confidence interval by subject area: Maths	0.59 (0.42 to 0.76)	0.09 (0.06 to 0.12)	-0.02
Progress 8 score and confidence interval by subject area: EBacc slots	0.38 (0.19 to 0.56)	-0.02 (-0.05 to 0.02)	-0.03
Progress 8 score and confidence interval by subject area: Open slots: Any qualification	0.53 (0.34 to 0.71)	0.03 (-0.01 to 0.06)	-0.04
Attainment 8 score	52.8	45.1	46.7
Attainment 8 score by subject area: English	11.4	9.7	9.9

Example of Progress 8 performance for a school by subject level.

3 Identification of particular groups

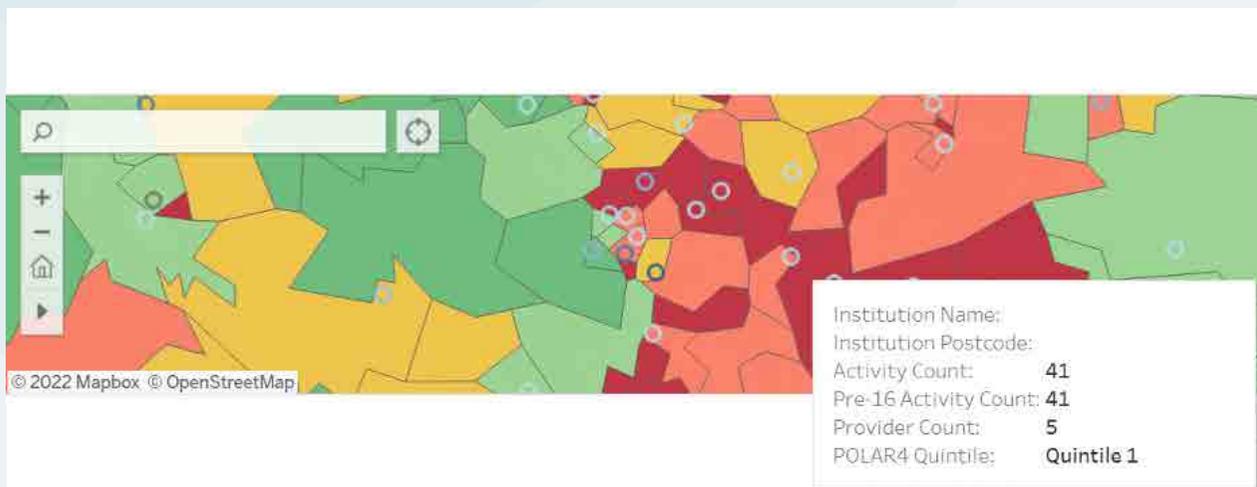
You may wish to consider cohorts who experience attainment gaps (identified by the national research). This may help you consider particular interventions for schools that have large or significant cohorts. The tracker services have available pupil counts for gender, English as an Additional Language, ethnicity, military family and care experienced.



Understanding school data

4 Understanding activity in your region

The Coverage Dataset⁶ shows the outreach provision from higher education outreach providers, which are members of tracking services. In this dataset you can see the number of outreach providers that have delivered in each school for the last three years. This will enable you to consider how your programme can contribute in terms of the amount and type of outreach they receive.



Example of information available in the Coverage Dataset.

⁶ Coverage Dataset. Available at <https://heat.ac.uk/research-and-evidence/currentprojects/>



Prioritise building your relationship with schools. You will have different relationships with different schools, and this may lead to different interventions. For example, a school may have particular priorities and have identified relevant cohorts of pupils for you to work with. This can inform your activities. Where possible you may wish co-create and shape your interventions with your school partners.

Pupil-level data

Having identified the schools you might potentially wish to engage with you can then work with them to explore their data to further refine and develop your needs analysis.

Schools will be constantly assessing and monitoring their pupils' performance. They will have access to the national pupil database for their own pupils. The national pupil database includes information about test and exam results, prior attainment and progression at each key stage for all pupils in state schools in England. It also includes information about the characteristics of pupils such as their gender, ethnicity, first language, eligibility for free school meals and awarding of bursary funding for 16-19 year olds.

Schools will also have their own datasets, which may, for example, include pupils they are targeting for particular interventions. This is likely to differ from school to school.

Schools will be able to provide more detail about their attainment gaps and you may wish to explore with them their individual context.

This could include reviewing:

- Attainment gaps they have identified through the review of their data and reflecting the local community and context in which they are working.
- Attainment gaps for pupils who have the same characteristics as underrepresented groups⁷ as identified by the OfS.
- The attainment for pupils demonstrating associated characteristics with students least likely to progress to higher education⁸. The OfS has created an association between characteristics of students' dashboard, which shows how likely groups of 18 or 19 year olds are to access higher education by single or multiple characteristics. The characteristics include ethnicity, free school meal eligibility, gender, IDACI (Income Deprivation Affecting Children Index), IMD and TUNDRA (Tracking UNDERRepresentation by Area).

Schools may have limited capacity to engage and may not see how their priorities align with those of the partnership. You may wish to consider your interventions before you speak to schools so you can provide a menu of activities that can respond to any issues that they observe in their data.

⁷ As defined by the Office for Students (2021). Regulatory notice 1: Access and participation plan guidance. Available at <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/regulatory-notice-1-access-and-participation-plan-guidance/>

⁸ Available from the Office for Students at <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/data-and-analysis/associations-between-characteristics-of-students/access-to-higher-education/>

Your strategic plan



Your strategic plan

Your strategic plan

This section gives you the tools for you to comprehensively develop your strategic plan, enabling you to consider where you want to be and how to get there. It will be useful for planning your approach to attainment-raising.

We are aware that you will have developed strategic plans before. This is here to provide some useful background and areas to consider, which may help as useful reminders to some, or alternative approaches to others.

You can use this to review or refresh your strategic plan to ensure it encompasses attainment-raising.

This strategic planning process will help you think about your attainment-raising plans, enabling you to be both visionary and realistic. It will support you to identify:

- Where you are now with your attainment-raising activity.
- Where you want to be.
- How you plan to get there.

Recognise that your strategic plan may change over time as you build relationships with schools and partners, and you learn from your evaluation. A strategic plan is there to help you move forwards, not to hold you back.

Strategic planning is about understanding and prioritising strategic objectives and then setting the direction as to how to achieve them. For strategic planning to be of value, you must be intentional, clear, and pragmatic in your approach. Unrealistic or incomplete plans result when there is ambiguity about strategic goals and priorities.

Successful strategic planning:

- Include initial feedback from your team and partners.
- Always tie strategic planning to goals and to delivery.
- Keep it simple and focussed.
- Continually review performance, areas of opportunity and any external changes.
- Establish reporting and review mechanisms with the team and your partners.

Your strategic plan

Key components of a strategic plan

Vision

This defines where you want to get to. Use it as an anchor that will stop you moving into other areas. It should help you ensure your strategy focuses on the outcomes that matter most to you. Everything else you write in your plan will be about helping you get closer to your vision. You may need to consider your vision in line with the enhanced attainment-raising activity you will be doing. Does your current vision encompass this area of work and reflect your partnership?

For example, a partnership might have the vision 'To convene strong partnerships between our local higher education providers and schools, which support attainment-raising and ensure young people are well informed about their future options'.

Values

Think of values as the enablers to your vision statement. They need to be relevant to the partnership - think honestly about how you want people to act and think. Shared and agreed values will help support your partnership, making it more effective. Outcomes matter but, if the way you go about achieving them is wrong, the outcomes themselves risk becoming irrelevant and alienating partners. Some values could be innovation, accountability, partnership.

Focus areas

These are the high-level things that you will focus on as you strive towards your vision and final destination. Tighter in scope than your vision statement but not to the level of having any metric, timeframe or deadline. Create three or four. They may be, for example, 'High quality teacher professional development'.

Strategic objectives

These will set out what you want to achieve, with a deadline attached. These should align with your focus area. In these times of uncertainty it is better to set objectives as incremental and iterative – a series of smaller steps that together keep you focused on the right initiatives to continually bring value. When steps are small and manageable, it is easier to change course to adapt to shifting priorities, initiatives, and research or evaluation findings.

Projects

These are the actionable steps you will take to accomplish your objectives. Projects are the layer of the strategic plan that outlines the tangible actions that your partners and your team will take to achieve the outcomes. Projects are important as they connect your objectives with the actual capabilities of your partnership and your resources.

Success measures

Establish how you will measure the achievement of and progress towards your strategic objectives. How will you know if you have been successful? Consider your evaluation and how you will capture not only the success measures but also your progress towards them.

Your strategic plan

Objective setting

Why are we doing this?

How will we do it?

Who will do it?

Objectives need to be **SMART**:

Specific:

Be specific when describing your objective. Be very clear about exactly what you want to achieve. This will help you focus on the task ahead. Use precise words.

Attainable:

Your goal should also be achievable and shouldn't seem like an impossible feat. Your goals should be achievable in the timeframe you've chosen.

Measurable:

Make sure that your objective can be measured, so you know whether you are making progress or need to make adjustments. Make sure there is a way to measure whether or not you are moving in the right direction.

Relevant:

Make sure that your goal fits within your partnership and the requirements of the OfS.

Timely:

Set realistic deadlines for yourself. This will help keep you accountable.

Examples

Support 12 teachers to develop their classroom strategies to raise attainment in mathematics, achieving two months progression improvements by end of year one of delivery.

Deliver an academic summer school in July 2023 to 50 students resulting in greater confidence in learning and effective study skills.

Delivery models



Delivery models

Delivery models

This section takes you through how to analyse your own capacity, the capacity within partner organisations and how to assess what is available from third parties. Through this analysis you can then consider the most effective delivery model for your chosen interventions.

Ker (2003)⁹ defines an organisation's capacity as its 'ability to successfully apply its skills and resources to accomplish its goals and satisfy its stakeholders' expectations'.

This section will provide a series of templates and checklists that you might find useful to complete or use with your team to aid planning. They are not essential but may help you to order your thinking and consider the options.

The delivery model you choose will be determined by your objectives. By setting out clear objectives you can then work out how best to deliver them.

Uni Connect and individual partners working on the same project may report on the intervention separately referencing their role.

⁹ Ker, A. 2003. Evaluating Capacity Development: Experiences from Canada, Chile, the Dominican Republic, South Africa and South Korea. Available from IDRC.



Types of delivery model

Critically important will be the consideration of how you deliver. As you consider your delivery you may wish to iterate and refine your objectives.

When assessing delivery models:

- Recognise and build on Uni Connect's unique role in an area providing strategic coordination between schools and higher education providers.

- Consider models that will attract support from your partners, providing added value to their programmes and activity.
- Build a sustainable programme that maximises limited resources. Consider how you can mitigate risk if stakeholder priorities or resources were to change.

There are three types of delivery model, which could also work in combination:

1

Self-delivery

Delivering the programme through your team of staff.

Pros

- Quick to organise
- Trusted delivery staff

Cons

- Does not harness partner contributions
- Relies on internal staff capacity and expertise

2

Partner engagements

Engaging with further and higher education providers to deliver activities.

Pros

- Further promotes partnership and collaboration
- Additional skills and expertise
- Sharing of resource contributions

Cons

- Time to negotiate and agree programme
- Longer decision-making process

3

Commissioned delivery

Commissioning external partners, including charities, to deliver parts of the programme. This may be all or parts of an activity; for example, providing a training course to the delivery team.

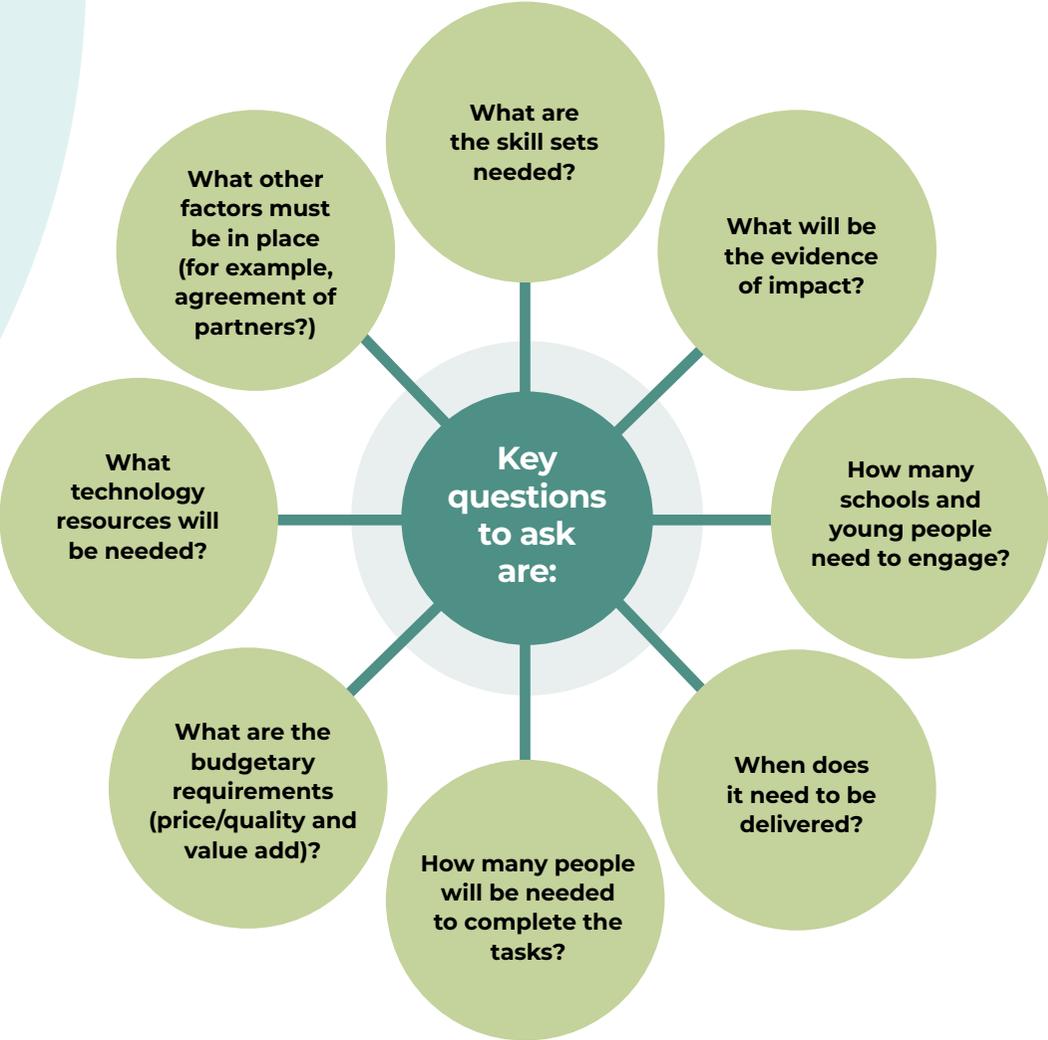
Pros

- Bring in specialised expertise that you do not have
- Enables a flexible response
- Less pressure on staff

Cons

- Cost
- May not provide sustainability
- May diminish partnership role

Types of delivery model





Establishing existing capacity

Review the capacity available in your team and your partners.

You may wish to develop your understanding in a phased approach during the programme, for example:

You may feel you already know the potential of your team and partners but the focus now is through the lens of attainment-raising.

Initial stages

- What is known now about your partners' capacity and capability? Can this be utilised in the first phase of development and delivery?
- What immediate gaps are there that can be fulfilled by partners?

Later stages

- Can you audit capacity to establish a comprehensive approach?

Your higher and further education provider partners can support in many ways:

- Direct delivery
- Supporting and contributing to delivery
- Training Uni Connect team members (for example academics skilled in education)
- Extending current relationships with external partners to you

Think about

What are their skill sets?
Is there an adequate budget?

Do we have the infrastructure?
Do we have the technology?

We have a useful tool you can use to review existing capacity.

Delivery area	Capacity to deliver Score 1=good capacity, 5=no capacity					Explanation to the score	Can you improve score?
	1	2	3	4	5		
Eg Delivery of meta-cognition sessions by staff			✓			Staff do not have confidence in meta-cognition theory	Training by academic from a higher education provider

Delivery models



Gap analysis

Gap analysis enables you to consider where you are and where you want to be.

It will help you determine any gaps or issues, what is required versus what is available, the magnitude of the gap and how the gap affects performance.

You can then analyse gaps and propose solutions – can you identify others to fill the gap, what additional resources are required, what adjustments?

Use this tool to identify the gaps.

Resource requirements	Current available resources	Gaps identified	Implications	Actions to address	Timeline
Skills	Eg School of Education engaged in professional development	Limited capacity to engage	Unable to deliver to a number of schools in the area	School of Education to develop framework for interventions. Team trained alongside commissioning external organisation to deliver	Framework by June. Training in July. Programme to start in September
Equipment or tools					
Partners					
Process					



Planning your delivery model

You can use the business model canvas below to work through your approach.

Developed by Osterwalder and Pigneur¹⁰, it provides a simple planning tool to consider all the elements to achieving your objective.

The right side of the canvas focuses on external factors that are not under your control while the left side of the canvas focuses on internal factors that are mostly under your control. In the middle, you get the value propositions that represent the exchange of value between your organisation and those you work with.

Key partners	Key activities	Value proposition	Relationships	Audience segments
<p>Identify your key partners. What resources do you receive from these partners? What key activities are performed by these partners?</p>	<p>What activities should higher education providers offer? What specific key activities are necessary to delivery your objective? What activities set you apart from others in the region? Consider your unique differences to others.</p>	<p>What value do you deliver to higher education and schools? What exactly are you trying to give to schools and higher education? What problem is your organisation solving? How do you offer something different that satisfies the demands of schools, higher education providers and OfS?</p>	<p>What type of relationship do schools and higher education expect us to establish and maintain with them? How do you interact with them – list of services, co-creation? Do you communicate frequently?</p>	<p>Identify your target audiences. Who are you creating value for? Who is your most important audience? What are they like? What do they need?</p>
Key resources		Channels		
<p>What specific key resources or assets are necessary to deliver your objective? Consider your partners and funding, your staffing and expertise/skills</p>		<p>How do you reach your audiences? What channels are used? What ones work best and are they cost efficient?</p>		
Cost structure				
<p>Identify the key costs in your model. What are the major drivers of costs? Are you utilising economies of scale? Are you focused on cost optimisation or value?</p>				

¹⁰ Osterwalder, A., Pigneur, Y. and Clark, T. (2010). Business Model Generation: A Handbook For Visionaries, Game Changers, and Challengers. Strategyzer series. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Activities and interventions

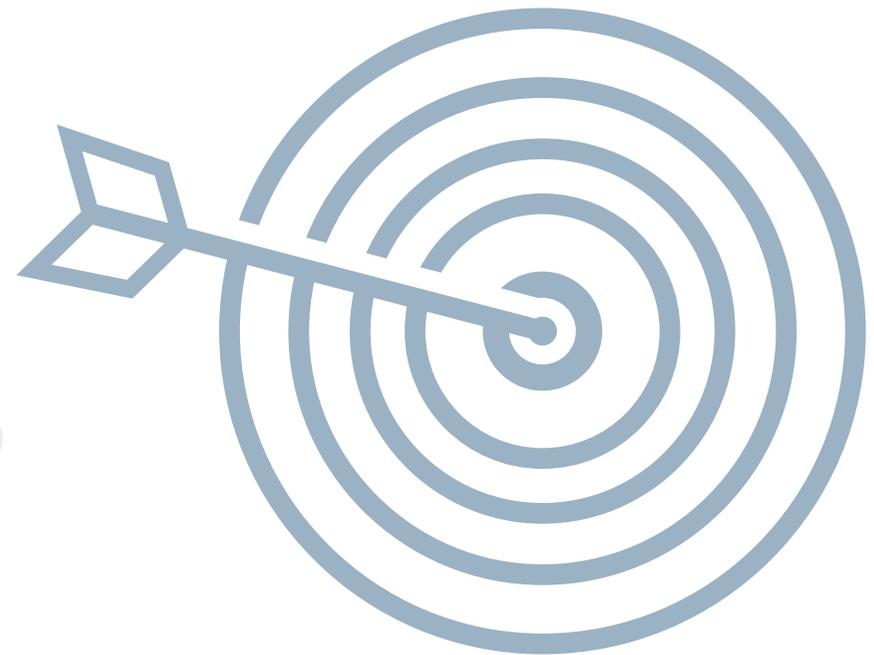


Activities and interventions

Activities and interventions

This section takes you through the activities and interventions that have been shown to be the most impactful. These activities have been shown to influence attainment-raising. This is not a definitive list and you may identify others because attainment can be influenced by a number of factors.

We will guide you through the effective practice, provide references for further research and an implementation checklist. The information is over two pages.



Summer schools
After school clubs



Evidence of effective practice

The Education Endowment Foundation suggest that summer schools can provide up to **four months' progress**. To be effective the activities need to be **intensive, well-resourced and involve small group tuition by trained staff**. It found that where summer schools do not have a clear academic component, they do not demonstrate any learning gains. Some studies indicate that the **gains can be greater for students from a disadvantaged background**.

Recent analysis conducted by TASO (June 2022) in collaboration with the Higher Education Access Tracker suggests that participation in summer schools is associated with **higher GCSE grades and progression to higher education**. These results align with existing studies showing that students who attend a summer school express **higher confidence and aspiration** at the end than at the beginning.

Cooper et al (2000) in a review of 93 summer schools in the US found that 'summer programs [sic] focusing on remedial or accelerated learning or other goals have a positive impact on the knowledge and skills of the participants'. They found that **secondary school students benefit the most**.

Carter-Wall and Whitfield (2012) suggest that interventions should have a 'clear set of intended outcomes which can be assessed'.

Attendance and recruitment remain key problems for running effective summer schools – with significant cost implications. The Education Endowment Foundation ran the Discover summer school. Whilst the programme was impactful for those that attended, there were specific challenges on pupil recruitment and attendance. The result from the evaluation was that other interventions would be more cost effective. TASO's recent review of summer schools (July 2022), found that there may be a need for higher education providers to 'better target ... disadvantaged and underrepresented students' as they found many on the summer schools already saw higher education as a probable path.

In terms of mathematics, Snipes et al (2015) reviewed Elevate Maths (funded by the Silicon Valley Education Foundation) designed to support 11-14 year olds. Elevate Maths is a year-

round programme but has strong summer school elements as it commences with an intensive 19 day programme over four weeks in the summer. A randomised control trial research found that the programme significantly **improved mathematics achievement and algebra readiness**. Compared with students in the control group, students in Elevate Maths scored significantly higher (4 points, or 0.7 standard deviation) on a test of algebra readiness and were also significantly more likely (29 per cent versus 12 per cent) to reach achievement thresholds associated with success in algebra.

Similarly, Patel and Bowes (2021) in their evaluation of Uni Connect found a positive correlation between summer schools and **improvement in maths and English attainment** as compared to predicted grades. They also found evidence that summer schools support the development of self-efficacy and interpersonal skills.

TASO is currently conducting two randomised control trials of summer schools and will report in 2023/4 whether these trials demonstrate a causal link between summer schools and increased attainment. Interim findings (July 2022) indicate that there is a '**positive effect on participants' self-reported self-efficacy** relating to HE.'

Summer schools and after school clubs

Summer schools and after school clubs are additional activities run during the summer or after school. Some have an academic focus with lessons and classes aimed at particular subjects or preparing students for examinations or transition.

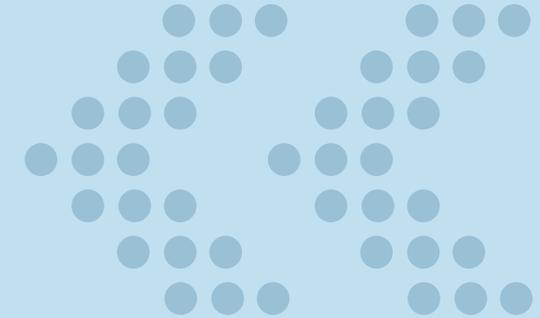
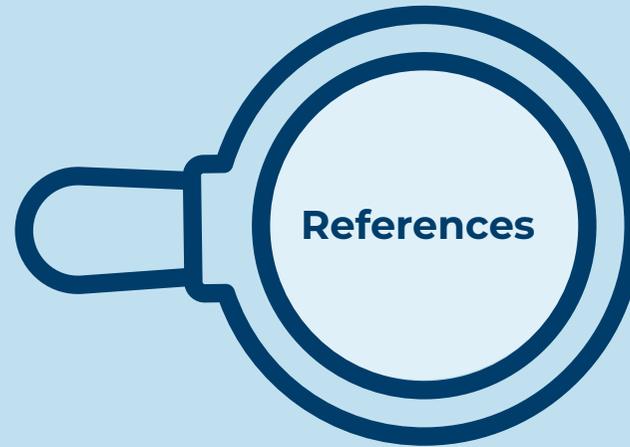
Summer schools
After school clubs



Summer schools and after school clubs

Implementation checklist

- Intensive
- Well resourced
- Small group tuition
- Well-trained staff
- Clear academic component
- Greater impact for pupils from low-income backgrounds



Carter-Wall, C., and Whitfield, J. (2012). The role of aspirations, attitudes and behaviour in closing the educational attainment gap. Joseph Rowntree Foundation (April 2012).

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Snipes, J., Huang, C.-W., Jaquet, K., and Finkelstein, N. (2015). The effects of the Elevate Math summer program on math achievement and algebra readiness. (REL 2015-096). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences, National Center for Education Evaluation and Regional Assistance, Regional Educational Laboratory West

Patel, R. and Bowes, L. (2021). Third independent review of impact evaluation submitted by Uni Connect partnerships: A summary of the local impact evidence to date for the Office for Students. CFE Research.



Evidence of effective practice

The Sutton Trust (2011) found that **‘for poor pupils the difference between a good teacher and a bad teacher is a whole year’s learning’**. If higher education providers can engage with teachers and support them to be ‘good’ they can make a significant difference in attainment.

Coe et al (2014) reviewed the research into what makes ‘great teaching’. They identified **six teacher characteristics** that were associated with increased attainment. They are:

- Strong pedagogical knowledge
- Quality of instruction
- Classroom climate
- Classroom management
- Teacher beliefs
- Professional behaviours.

They found strong evidence that good pedagogical knowledge and quality of instruction impacted on student outcomes.

In addition, Gibbons et al (2017) found that individual teacher retention has a small impact on the attainment of pupils, but this has a larger cumulative effect in disadvantaged schools where staff turnover is high.

The Education Endowment Foundation found that initial teacher training can be a powerful way of instilling the use of evidence in professional practice early on. Its partner organisation in Australia, Evidence for Learning, has collaborated with Monash University to inform trainee teachers on effective use of evidence.

There is, therefore, some promise in an approach to attainment-raising whereby higher education providers seek to improve teacher quality by supporting the six characteristics of high quality teaching and running activities that support teacher retention. Doing so successfully is likely to have a positive impact on attainment, particularly for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

The Foundation has also conducted research that has found that dissemination of evidence about ‘what works’ is not enough to change teacher behaviour: more intensive support is needed to transform evidence into practice.

The Foundation set up a network of Research Schools which share best practice and focus on the use of evidence-based teaching. Higher education providers may be able to set up similar collaborations using their research knowledge to support the implementation of new approaches.

When TASO reviewed the impact on attainment the studies they identified looked at a whole school partnership between universities and schools. There was no disaggregation looking solely at teacher training interventions. There may be merit in whole school approaches, with staff development as an element. Research referenced by TASO was Officer et al (2013) and Ward et al (2013). Officer et al (2013) looked at a programme in the US which involved a variety of activities including tutoring and mentoring as well as campus visits and training courses provided to teachers over the summer. It noted that high school graduation rates increased from 47 per cent in 2009 to 77 per cent in 2011. Similarly Ward et al (2013) looked at the Yale University Gear Up Partnership Project. Gear Up involves school staff training, academic enrichment support programmes, and the engagement of parents in the university application process. They found a higher 10th grade point average.

Teacher professional development

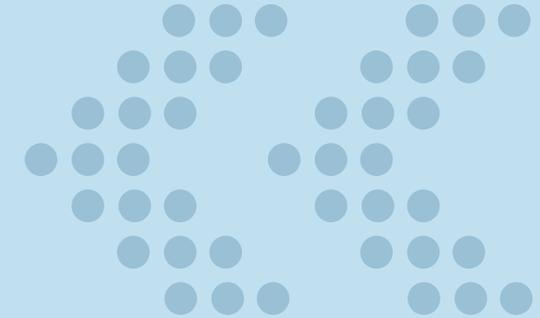
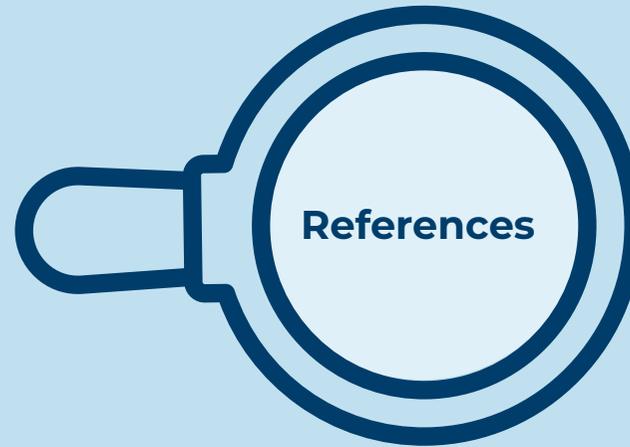
Teacher professional development is structured and facilitated activity designed to develop the quality of teaching. It includes a broad range of skill development ranging from communication and exploration of ideas to assessment.



Teacher professional development

Implementation checklist

- Activities that impact on the six characteristics of high-quality teaching
- Transform research-led evidence into practice



Centre for Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (2022). Typology of attainment-raising activities conducted by HEPs: Rapid Evidence Review. Working paper: updated June 2022.

Coe, R., Aloisi, C., Higgins, S., and Major, L. E. (2014). What makes great teaching? Review of the underpinning research. Sutton Trust, October 2014.

Education Endowment Foundation. Discover Summer School. Available at <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/discover-summer-school/>

Gibbons, S., Scrutinio, V., and Telhaj, S. (2017). Does teacher turnover affect young people's academic achievement? CentrePiece 500, 2017

Officer, S. D. H., Grim, D., Medina, M. A., Bringle, R. G. and Foreman, A. (2013). Strengthening Community Schools Through University Partnerships. Peabody Journal of Education pp 564-577.

Sutton Trust (2011). Improving the impact of teachers on pupil achievement in the UK – interim findings' (2011).

Ward, N. L., Strambler, M.J. and Linke, L. H. (2013). Increasing educational attainment among urban minority youth: A model of university, school and community partnerships. Journal of Negro Education 82 pp 312-325.



Metacognition or self-regulated learning

Metacognition and self-regulation approaches aim to help pupils think about their own learning more explicitly, often by teaching them specific strategies for planning, monitoring and evaluating their learning. Interventions are usually designed to give pupils a range of strategies to choose from and the skills to select the most suitable strategy for a given learning task.

Evidence of effective practice

The Education Endowment Toolkit found that metacognition and self-regulation approaches have consistently high levels of impact, with pupils making an average of seven months' additional progress.

Metacognitive activities can enable pupils to:

- Identify what they already know
- Articulate what they learned
- Communicate their knowledge, skills, and abilities to a specific audience
- Set goals and monitor their progress
- Evaluate and revise their own work
- Identify and implement effective learning strategies
- Transfer learning from one context to another

Higgins et al (2005) in their meta-analysis found that when thinking skills programmes and approaches are used in schools, they are effective in improving the performance of pupils on a range of outcomes. They found that the 'magnitude of the gains appears to be important when compared with the reported effect sizes of other educational interventions'. They conclude that **'thinking skills programmes and approaches are likely to improve pupils' learning'**.

Klauer and Pbye (2008) found that meta-cognition and self-regulation will 'improve cognitive functioning in terms of (a) increased fluid intelligence performance and (b) better academic learning of classroom subject matter'. They conclude that children of a broad age range and intellectual capacity benefit with such training. Mannion and Mercer (2016) analysed a whole school intervention in the UK and found that it led to a significant closing in the attainment gap between Year 9 Pupil Premium pupils and their peers compared to a matched control group.

Weinstein et al (2000), found that in the US students had higher GPA scores than their peers when they undertook activities aimed at increasing strategic learning.

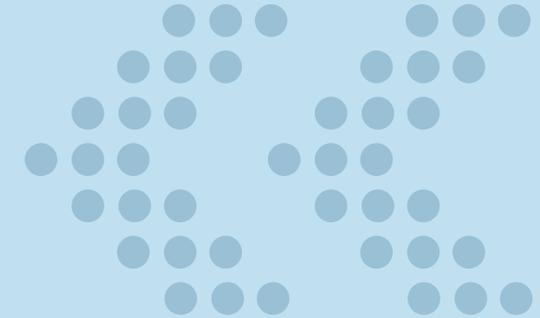
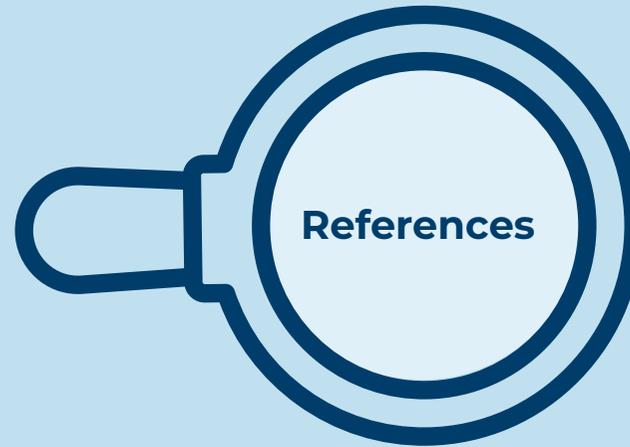
The Brilliant Club supports students from under-represented backgrounds to progress to highly selective universities. Their Scholars Programme aims to improve students' written communication, subject knowledge and critical thinking. The academic progress of students who have worked with a university researcher are assessed by comparing the baseline assignment at the beginning and a final assignment at the end of the programme, both pitched a key stage above the students' current year group. The Brilliant Club focus on metacognition, motivation and self-efficacy and university knowledge. They can demonstrate an improvement in subject knowledge, critical thinking and written communication from their baseline mark to the final mark.



Metacognition or self-regulated learning

Implementation checklist

- Providing a range of strategies for pupils
- Identify individual effective strategies
- Greater impact for pupils from a disadvantaged background



The Brilliant Club (2021). Annual impact report for 2019/20.

Higgins, S., Hall, E., Baumfield, V., and Moseley, D. (2005). A meta-analysis of the impact of the implementation of thinking skills approaches on pupils. *Research Evidence in Education Library*. London: EPPI-Centre, Social Science Research Unit, Institute of Education, University of London. (2005)

Klauer, K. J. and Phye, G.D. (2008). Inductive reasoning: A training approach. *Review of Educational Research* 78 (1) pp 85-123 2008.

Mannion, J. and Mercer, N. (2016). Learning to learn: improving attainment, closing the gap at Key Stage 3. *The Curriculum Journal* 27 (2), pp 246-271.

Weinstein, C. E., Husman, J., and Dierking, D. R. (2000). Self-regulation interventions with a focus on learning strategies. In *Handbook of Self-Regulation* (pp 727-747). Academic Press.



Evidence of effective practice

The Education Endowment Fund found that one to one tuition can be effective, reporting that it delivers approximately five additional months progress on average. However, quality of the tuition is the critical factor. From the Education Endowment Fund's review of the literature, **short, regular sessions** (about 30 minutes, three to five times a week) **over a set period of time** (six to twelve weeks) appear to result in optimum impact.

Evidence gathered by the Education Endowment Foundation also suggests **tuition should be additional to, but explicitly linked with, normal teaching**, and that teachers should monitor progress to ensure the tutoring is beneficial. Studies comparing one to one with small group tuition show mixed results. In some cases, one to one tuition has led to greater improvement, while in others tuition in groups of two or three has been equally or even more effective. The difference in findings may be due to the type or quality of teaching enabled by very small groups that is important, rather than the precise size of the group.

Importantly for higher education providers one to one tuition involving **volunteers can have a valuable impact**, but it must be noted can be less effective than those

using experienced and specifically trained teachers, which have nearly twice the effect on average. Where tuition is delivered by volunteers or teaching assistants there is evidence that training and the use of a structured programme is advisable.

The use of volunteers is supported by Ritter et al (2009) that found that volunteer tutoring has a positive effect on student achievement. With respect to particular subskills, students who work with volunteer tutors are likely to earn higher scores on assessments related to letters and words, oral fluency, and writing as compared to their peers who are not tutored.

As TASO found from studies conducted in the US, there is a positive impact on student attainment when using university students as tutors or other 'paraprofessional' tutors. For example, Nickow et al's (2020) meta-analysis of tutoring intervention in the US delivered to students aged 3-16 found substantial positive impacts on learning outcomes.

Resnjanskij et al (2021) found that a structured tutoring programme had significant positive effects on the educational attainment of **students from disadvantaged backgrounds**, particularly those who lacked family support from other adults. For students from low income backgrounds the programme raised attainment in maths by 0.29 standard deviations. The study also found that the qualitative factors of the mentor-mentee relationship mattered more for the effectiveness of the programme than the intensity of the sessions.

Carlana and La Ferrara (2021) found that university tutoring can improve the attainment of students attending Italian middle school (aged 8-13 years) by 0.26 standard deviations on average compared to a control group. This programme was most effective for raising the attainment of students from a low socio-economic background.

The Access Project describes its programme as comprising both tutoring and mentoring as weekly tutorial sessions are employed to address the topics that the students' teachers think they need most help with. Trained volunteer tutors work with students for an hour a week to improve grades and subject confidence. Their work supports both GCSE and A-level. From their 2021 Impact report they found that the extra progress made after two years' tuition when measured in relation to a matched control group of statistically similar students who did not receive tuition was the following:

- For GCSE overall attainment students gained up to six months of extra progress.
- For GCSE tutored subjects students made five months of extra progress.
- For A-level overall attainment students made two months of extra progress.
- For A-level tutored subjects they made three months of extra progress.

The National Tutoring Programme is already operating nationwide, with over 12,000 schools registered and as such it may be that schools are already receiving tutoring support.

The Centre for Education and Youth recently reviewed the National Tutoring Programme and recommended five design principles that are relevant to all tutoring programmes. They are:

- Schools want and need autonomy to procure and deploy tutors as they see fit.
- Simple accountability.
- Consistent over time but responsive to continuous improvement.
- Targeted at disadvantaged young people.
- Evaluation woven into the programme.

Providing a range of tutors with different skills sets and availability, whilst minimising administration may prove useful.

One to one tuition

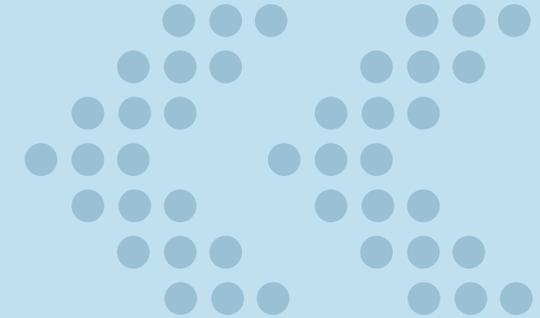
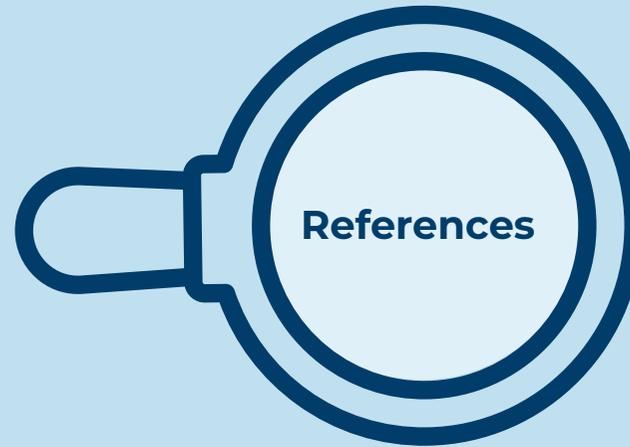
One to one tuition involves an adult giving a pupil individual learning support. It could take place outside of normal lessons, as additional teaching, or it could replace other lessons during school hours.



One to one tuition

Implementation checklist

- Training for tutors
- Short regular sessions over a set period of time
- Small groups
- Support the building collaborative relationships
- Link explicitly to normal teaching
- Target disadvantaged students for maximum impact
- Minimises burden on schools



The Access Project (2021). 2021 Impact Report

Carlana, M. and La Ferrara, E. (2021). Apart but Connected: Online Tutoring and Student Outcomes during the COVID-19 Pandemic. HKS Working Paper No RWP21-001.

Centre for Education and Youth (2022). Levelling up tutoring – How can tutoring best contribute to closing England's attainment gap in schools by 2030? Available at <https://cfey.org/reports/2022/06/levelling-up-tutoring-how-can-tutoring-best-contribute-to-closing-englands-attainment-gap-in-schools-by-2030/>

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Nickow, A., Oreopoulos, P. and Quan, V. (2020). The Impressive Effects of Tutoring on PreK-12 Learning: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of the Experimental Evidence. Working Paper 27476. National Bureau of Economic Research

Resnjanskij, S., Ruhose, J., Wiederhold, S. and Woessmann, L. (2021). Can Mentoring Alleviate Family Disadvantage in Adolescence? A Field Experiment to Improve Labour Market Prospects. CESifo Working Paper No 8870.

Ritter, G.W., Barnett, J.H., Genny, C.S., and Albin, G.R. (2009). The Effectiveness of Volunteer Tutoring Programs for Elementary and Middle School Students: A Meta-Analysis. Review of Educational Research 79 (1) 3-38, March 2009



Evidence of effective practice

Mentoring programmes which have a clear structure and expectations, provide training and support for mentors and use mentors from a professional background are associated with more successful outcomes.

Cummings et al (2012) in their review found that **mentoring improves academic attainment**. They found that this was due to a change on behaviours. They found that when mentoring was academically focused there is more of an impact on attainment.

Smith (2010) found that students that participated in mentoring sessions achieved 80% higher total GCSE points than the predicted estimates at Year 9 using Fisher Family Trust (FFT) data. This shows significant impact when compared with students who were not mentored where 65% of this group improved on their FFT estimates. Furthermore, the average total points score achieved by the mentee group was higher than the non-mentored group.

This is echoed by Brightside (2020), which found that pupils eligible for free school meals 'who received online mentoring through Brightside before the age of 16 did better on average by 6.5 grades across all subjects at GCSE level, compared to other students eligible for free school meals with similar levels of attainment at Key Stage 2'.

In a study of one of the best established and well-researched formal mentoring schemes, Big Brothers Big Sisters in the US, Rhodes et al (2000) found that mentoring had a direct positive effect, among other things, on 'perceived scholastic competence' – on grades achieved, and indirectly on the value young people place on school through positively influencing the young person's relationship with parents affected.

Patel and Bowes (2021) in their review of impact evidence from Uni Connect partners found evidence that 'face to face mentoring can have a positive impact on attainment by enhancing learners' written communication skills and subject knowledge'. They also found that online mentoring has a positive impact on attainment while pupils 'perceive that mentoring improves their academic performance'.

Carter-Wall and Whitfield (2012) described the elements needed to produce positive outcomes in mentoring:

- 'careful recruitment, screening and matching of mentors – the potential impact of self-selection of mentors needs to be borne in mind when designing interventions;
- strategies to lengthen mentoring based on needs;
- support and training for mentors in creating effective relationships;
- clear guidelines for mentors on relationship-building and how to work with mentees; and
- funding to support the development of programme infrastructure, and paced growth to ensure the support needed to continue development.'

Bayer et al (2013) found that **pupils who developed a close relationship with a mentor led to better academic outcomes**. Those pupils who were mentored but did not experience a close relationship showed no improvement in academic outcomes relative to the control group. This outcome holds for mentoring relationships of various durations. Practices should

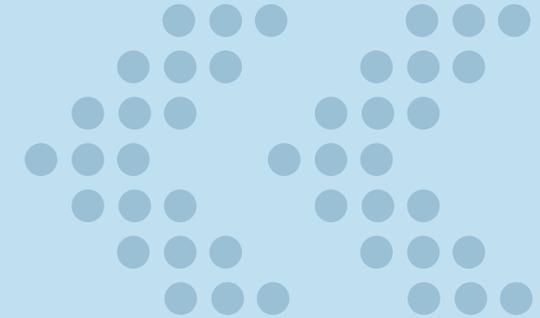
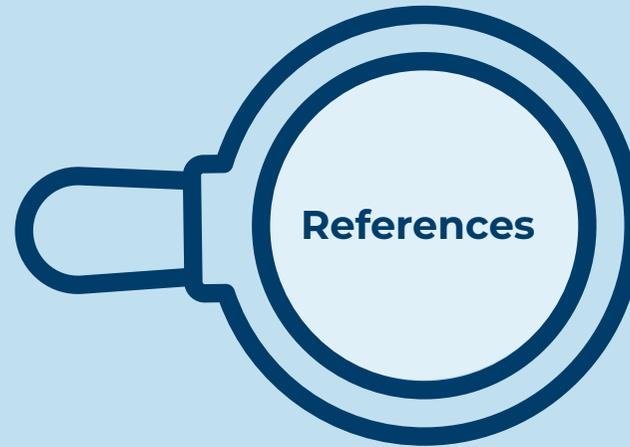
be incorporated that make it easier for mentors to form close relationships with the young participants and thereby improve academic outcomes. Rhodes et al (2006) described an effective mentoring relationship as one that provides 'an appropriate balance of structure, challenge, enjoyment and support'. Bayer et al (2013) also found that there is no evidence that mentoring programmes with an academic focus produced better academic outcomes than relationship-only programmes. This is reflected by research by Resnjanskij et al (2021) which observed that the relationship between the mentor and mentee mattered more for the effectiveness of the programme than the intensity of the sessions.

The optimum length of mentoring relationship has been the subject of much debate. Bayer et al (2013) found 'evidence that **long and close relationships led to improvements in academic outcomes**, but it is difficult to conclude definitively that shorter but close relationships had smaller or no positive effects'. However, they do note that 'improvements in the teacher's overall assessment of the student's performance and in the student's assessment of his or her own scholastic competence do appear to grow larger with longer relationships'. Grossman and Rhodes (2002) found that where mentoring relationships happen, they should endure long enough to have value; they conclude for at least one year.

Mentoring may also have benefits for particular groups of students. Gilligan (2007) stressed the importance of spare time activities, including mentoring as being of **particular benefit for young people in care**. However, he stressed the need to avoid 'all participation in activities being linked to school in case the young person is forced to leave that school because of any placement change'. There is evidence that such 'connectedness to non-parental adults' may offer adolescents the prospects of 'better outcomes in terms of scholastic success, social-emotional well-being, connections to social capital, and risk-taking behaviour' (Grossman and Bulle, 2006).

Mentoring

Mentoring is when a mentor shares their knowledge, skills and experience to help another to develop and grow.



Mentoring

Implementation checklist

- Careful matching of mentor and mentee
- Longer relationships
- Academically focussed
- Trained mentors



Bayer, A., Grossman, J. B., & DuBois, D. L. (2013). School-Based Mentoring Programs: Using Volunteers to Improve the Academic Outcomes of Underserved Students.

Brightside (2020). The power of online mentoring. Available at <https://brightside.org.uk/impact-reports/2020-yearofimpact/>

Carter-Wall, C., and Whitfield, J. (2012). The role of aspirations, attitudes and behaviour in closing the educational attainment gap. Joseph Rowntree Foundation (April 2012).

Cummings, C., Laing, K., Law, J., McLaughlin, J., Papps, I., Todd, L., and Woolner, P. (2012). Can changing aspirations and attitudes impact on educational attainment? A review of interventions. Joseph Rowntree Foundation report, April 2012.

Gilligan, R. (2007). Spare time activities for young people in care: What can they contribute to educational progress? *Adoption and Fostering* 31(1).

Grossman, J. and Bulle, M. (2006). Review of what youth programs do to increase the connectedness of youth with adults. *Journal of Adolescent Health* 39, pp 788-99, 2006.

Grossman, J. and Rhodes, J. (2002). The test of time: predictors and effects of duration in youth mentoring relationships. *American Journal of Community Psychology* 30:2, pp 199- 219, 2002.

Patel, R. and Bowes, L. (2021). Third independent review of impact evaluation evidence submitted by Uni Connect partnerships: A summary of the local impact evidence to date for the Office for Students. CFE Research.

Resnjanskij, S., Ruhose, J., Wiederhold, S. and Woessman, L. (2021). Can mentoring alleviate family disadvantage in adolescence? A field experiment to improve labor market prospects. CESifo Working Paper No 8870.

Rhodes, J. E., Grossman, J. B., and Resch, N. R. (2000). Agents of change: Pathways through which mentoring relationships influence adolescents' academic adjustment. *Child Development*, 71, 1662-1671.

Rhodes, J., Spencer, R., Keller, T., Liang, B., and Noam, G. (2006). A model for the influence of mentoring relationships on youth development. *Journal of Community Psychology* 34:6, pp 691-707, 2006.

Smith, S. (2010) Evaluation of Aimhigher Kent and Medway Learning Mentor Provision. Social Mobility Advisory Group (2016). Working in partnership: enabling social mobility in higher education. The final report of the Social Mobility Advisory Group. Universities UK.

Other interventions

Parental engagement

Parental engagement has been shown to have an effect on pupil attainment. You may wish to consider how you include parents in the programmes that you are running. Information to parents on how to support their child and effective home learning techniques are valuable interventions. The Education Endowment Foundation's Learning and Teaching Toolkit describes parental engagement as having a 'positive impact on average of four months' additional progress'.

Curriculum development

Enhancing the curriculum may be one way that higher education providers may wish to support attainment-raising. It can support schools to further foster, enrich, and create a developmental and progressive subject-specific curriculum. This can range from additional learning tools for use in the classroom through to more strategic interventions with schools or groups of schools.

Emerging practice

Higher education providers have taken a number of approaches to raise attainment. Within the OfS topic briefing 'Raising attainment in schools and colleges to widen participation' effective practice examples have been identified¹¹.

Examples of emerging practice for each of the activity types explored in this toolkit are given below.

Summer schools and after school clubs

Possibilities – A week-long residential programme at a higher education provider, Series of online workshops over the summer holiday, a weekly homework support club.

Emerging practice

- **The Urban Scholars Programme at Brunel University**¹²
A Saturday school for students aged 12-18, selected from local secondary schools, which provides research-based supplementary education. The programme works with 31 schools and 300 scholars, of which 250 students are drawn from eight local authorities.
- **Wohl Reach Out Lab at Imperial College London**¹³
Laboratories made available to pupils aged 6-18 years from schools without easy access to these facilities.
- **Tri-Borough Music Hub with the Royal College of Music**¹⁴
The Royal College of Music in partnership with IntoUniversity and music services of local authorities are able to identify pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds to participate in attainment-raising programmes.

Teacher professional development

Possibilities – Standalone CPD sessions, supported action research, accredited qualifications.

Emerging practice

- **Teacher University Research Network at Lancaster University**¹⁵
The Teacher University Research Network (TURN) brings together teachers in schools and colleges with academic and professional services staff at the University to offer training and development opportunities.

¹¹ OfS topic briefing 'Raising attainment in schools and colleges to widen participation. Available at <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/536f4e79-4e32-4db0-a8a2-66eb4e2b530b/raising-attainment-in-schools-and-colleges-to-widen-participation-ofs-topic-briefing.pdf>

¹² The Urban Scholars Programme at Brunel University. Available at <https://www.brunel.ac.uk/education/urban-scholars>

¹³ Wohl Reach Out Lab at Imperial College London. Available at <https://www.imperial.ac.uk/be-inspired/schools-outreach/wohl-reach-out-lab/>

¹⁴ Tri-Borough Music Hub with the Royal College of Music. Available at <https://www.triboroughmusicclub.org>

¹⁵ Teacher University Research Network at Lancaster University (page 16 in linked document). Available at https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/media/lancaster-university/content-assets/documents/widening-participation/LancasterUniversity_APP_202021.pdf

Emerging practice



Metacognition and self-regulated learning

Possibilities – Individual workshops for learners, integration of metacognition and self-regulated learning into other sessions and programmes, including teacher professional development opportunities.

Emerging practice

- **King's College London's 'King's Scholars' programme**¹⁶

The 'King's Scholars' scheme works with 13 local schools and engages 900 pupils in Years 7-9 each year. Its primary aim is to raise attainment by teaching metacognition, an approach endorsed by Education Endowment Foundation research.

One to one tuition

Possibilities – Sessions can be delivered by experienced professionals, trained volunteers or current students within a structured programme including ongoing oversight and support.

Emerging practice

- **The Access Project**¹⁷ (3rd sector organisation)

The Access Project offers a comprehensive programme from Year 10 to Year 13, involving 20 or more hours of one-to-one academic tutoring per year in the subject the student needs most.

Mentoring

Possibilities – Sessions can be individual or in groups. They might be delivered by experienced professionals, trained volunteers or current students within a structured programme including ongoing oversight and support.

Emerging practice

- **US in Schools Mentoring at the University of Sheffield**¹⁸

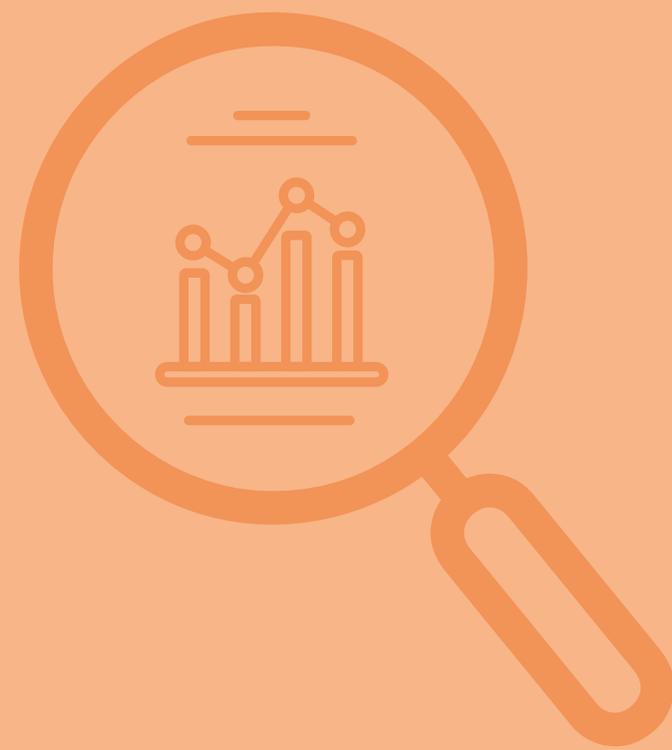
The University works with targeted local schools to identify young people who can benefit from mentoring support. Each student mentor is placed in a partner school/college and matched with 4-6 mentees. Each weekly one-to-one session will last 30 minutes in school/college but outside of the classroom environment. During the year, mentees have the opportunity to visit the University of Sheffield.

¹⁶ King's College London's 'King's Scholars' programme. Available at <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/to-university-and-beyond-2>

¹⁷ The Access Project. Available at <https://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/ukgwa/20180511112350/https://www.offa.org.uk/universities-and-colleges/guidance/topic-briefings/topic-briefing-raising-attainment/case-study-access-project/>

¹⁸ US in Schools Mentoring at the University of Sheffield. Available at <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/schools/programmes/mentoring>

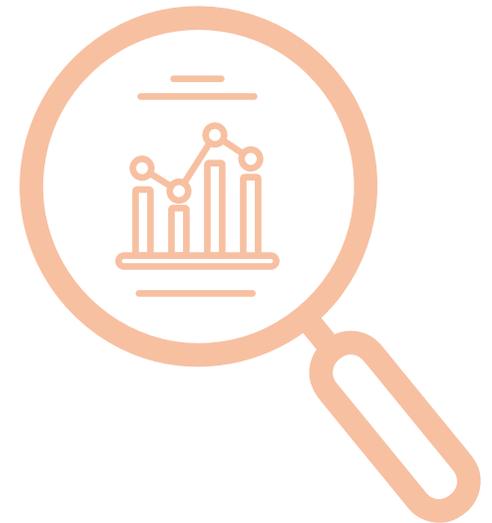
Evaluation



Evaluation

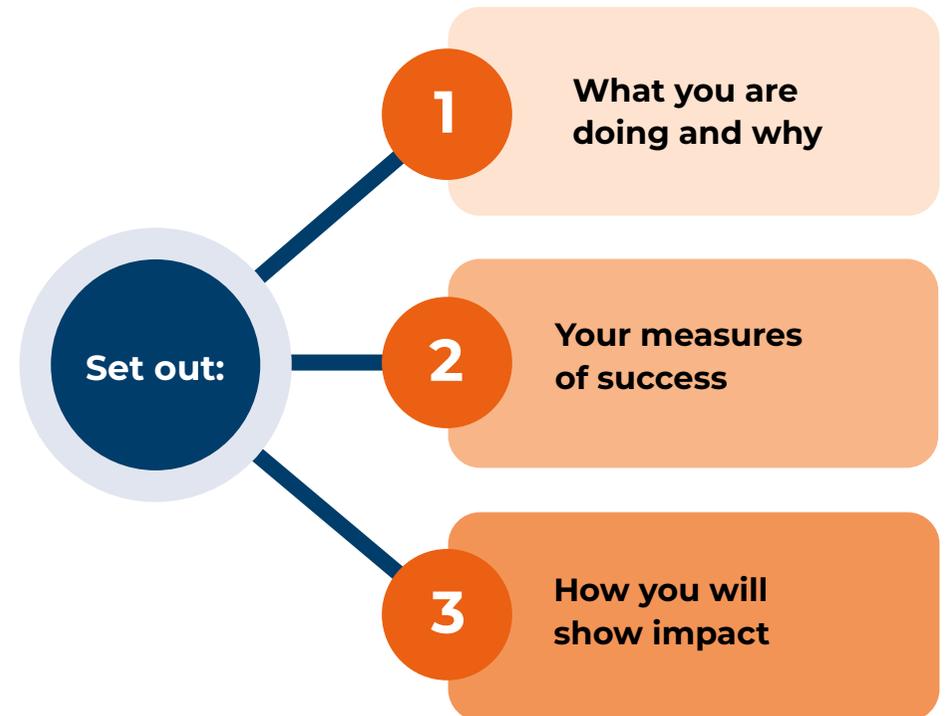
Evaluate, evaluate, evaluate.

Effective approaches to evaluation are crucial to understanding the impact of your attainment-raising interventions. Evaluation should be considered alongside your strategic planning and the design and implementation of activities.



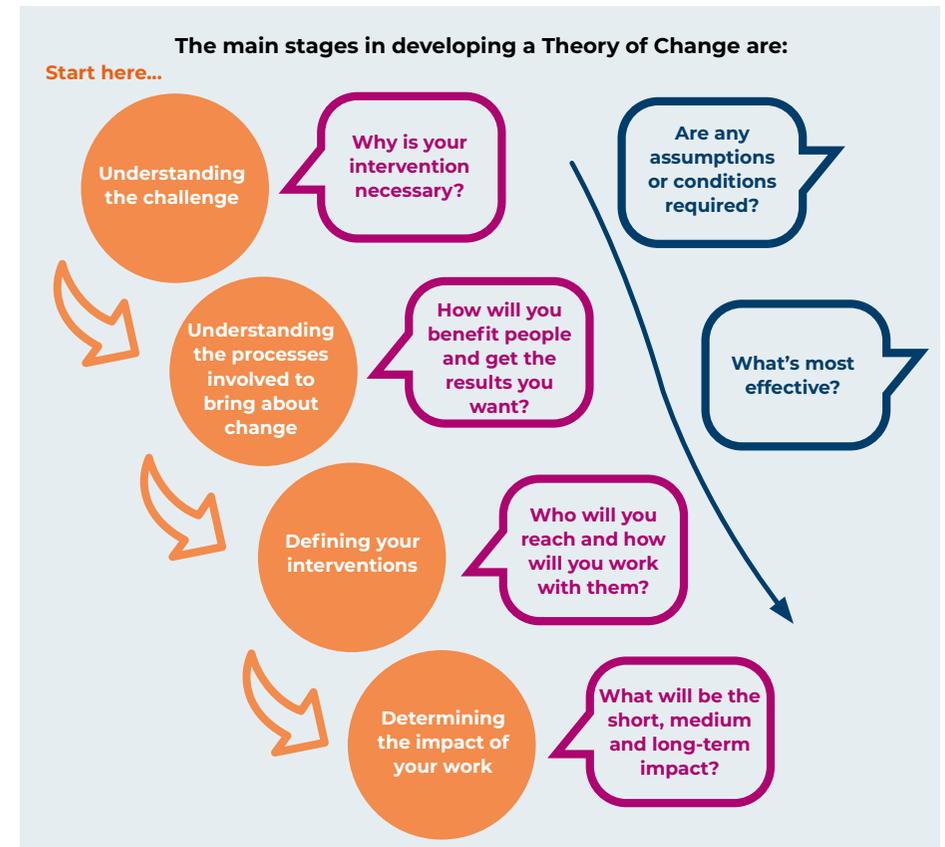
Evaluation design

Embedding evaluation into your programme design ensures that you are clear about what you are trying to achieve and why. It will encourage you to think about how best to deliver your activities to create the change you want.



Evaluation design

Many partnerships use Theory of Change, but there are other methodologies. Theory of Change is a way of thinking about a change and how you will achieve it. You will create a model of your theory that you can refer to throughout the activity. To develop your theory of change for attainment-raising activities work with your partners and other external stakeholders.



Evaluation design

Your evaluation should consider short-, medium- and long-term outcomes. Short-term may include pupil performance (for example improved pupil meta-cognition, exam marks or class results). Medium-term may be related to academic grades, improved subject knowledge or impact on school performance measures. Long-term can be entry to higher education. For some interventions, for example, those with limited intensity, you may only wish to consider short-term outcomes.

More information on how to evaluate impact is available from the OfS¹⁹.

Support for your evaluation approaches will be forthcoming in autumn 2022 from TASO. TASO will publish theories of change for attainment-raising activities for the sector to use. The theories of change will include:

- Secondary age pupils
- Activities that are commonly used by higher education providers.

The focus on attainment-raising activities will give you an opportunity for you to review your theories of change, adapting and refining them as necessary.



¹⁹ OfS. Available at <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/evaluation/standards-of-evidence-and-evaluation-self-assessment-tool/>

Standards of evidence

Your evaluation should consider the OfS Standards of Evidence²⁰, which categorises evidence into the following:

	Description	Evidence	Claims you can make
Type 1: Narrative	The impact evaluation provides a narrative or a coherent theory of change to motivate its selection of activities in the context of a coherent strategy	Evidence of impact elsewhere and/or in the research literature on access and participation activity effectiveness or from your existing evaluation results	We have a coherent explanation of what we do and why Our claims are research-based
Type 2: Empirical Enquiry	The impact evaluation collects data on impact and reports evidence that those receiving an intervention have better outcomes, though does not establish any direct causal effect	Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence of a pre/post intervention change or a difference compared to what might otherwise have happened	We can demonstrate that our interventions are associated with beneficial results
Type 3: Causality	The impact evaluation methodology provides evidence of a causal effect of an intervention	Quantitative and/or qualitative evidence of a pre/post treatment change on participants relative to an appropriate control or comparison group who did not take part in the intervention	We believe our intervention causes improvement and can demonstrate the difference using a control or comparison group

²⁰ Taken from the OfS Access and Participation Standards of Evidence. This builds on the work of Crawford et al. in 2017 that established a framework for types of evaluation of the impact of outreach (commissioned by the Office for Fair Access (OFFA) and the Sutton Trust). Available at <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/publications/standards-of-evidence-and-evaluating-impact-of-outreach/>

Standards of evidence

Type 2 and 3 standards of evidence will provide greater confidence that the intervention is making a difference. Developing evaluation plans that include a causal link between your intervention and increased attainment may not always be possible. Intermediate outcomes can provide timely information on the impact of your intervention.

TASO will start to publish further information in the autumn 2022. The intention is to publish a toolkit for evaluation methods for intermediate outcomes that:

- Are user-friendly and relatively easy to implement
- Work for pupils from a range of backgrounds who are at a variety of stages and settings
- Provide consistent scales to support cross-study understanding
- Provide scales that are validated against attainment and higher education access progression

It is recognised how difficult it is to isolate the effect of one factor from all the other influences that there might be. The use of comparator groups may be of use to help support your evaluation practice.

Ensure when you evaluate impact you consider the intensity of the intervention. It is difficult to justify increased attainment for one or two hours of activity.

Tracker services

Tracker services can support your evaluation and impact measurement. They will be unable to provide individual exam attainment for a pupil to you, but they are able to offer support:

- EMWPREP are able to provide bespoke evaluation support to help evidence the effectiveness of programmes, including those that help raise attainment.
- HEAT is able to share exam data at activity level.

- Aimhigher West Midlands are able to support evaluation to help evidence the effectiveness of programmes, including those that help raise attainment.

Through HEAT, you should be able to see any participation in activity and change in attainment (Progress 8 and Attainment 8). The attainment levels of your cohort will be compared to the average scores at the school or a comparator group. Using a comparator group can raise the standard of evidence to causal evidence.

Average Attainment 8 Scores (Average grade across 8 subjects)

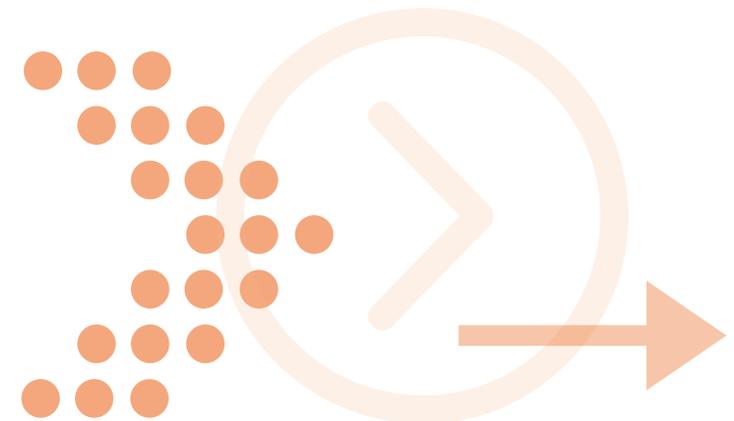


Average Attainment 8 Scores for low/average/high achievement band at Key Stage 2

	Participants	School Average	Difference
Low Key Stage 2 Attainment	27.8	22.1	+5.7
Medium Key Stage 2 Attainment	39.4	35.7	+3.7
High Key Stage 2 Attainment	55.4	51.2	+4.2

NB. This means that on average medium-attaining participants achieved an average of 3.7 grades higher when compared with pupils with similar attainment from their schools

Fix Up Participants' Attainment 8 Scores compared with the School Average



Implementing your evaluation

Establish an evaluation plan that sets out how it will be undertaken and managed, including:

- How data will be accessed and collected
- Data collection tools
- Ethical consideration
- Data protection regulations
- Oversight (including any partnership groups)
- Staffing and resources
- Dissemination of results, findings and recommendations.

The plan should reinforce the culture of evaluation, so it is a tool for learning and improving programme design and implementation.

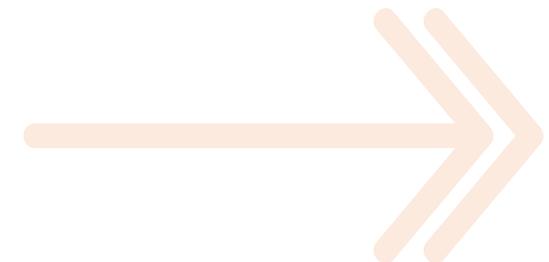
The evaluation plan should be a living document that is monitored and updated.

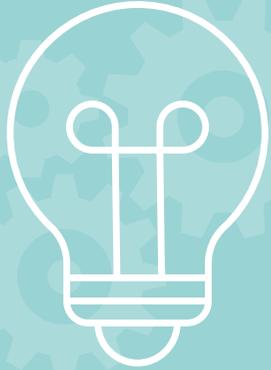
Learning from evaluation

The evaluation will provide information that can be used by you and your partners in future planning but can also inform practice by other providers and stakeholders.

Share and communicate your results. Produce accessible information that can influence practice elsewhere. Sharing information on what does not work is as important as positive evaluations. The OfS encourages providers to share what worked well as well as not so well to ensure that future investment in activities is well-informed and as effective as possible.

As part of your reporting, share your findings, including recommendations, and what you will do as a result of the evaluation.





Attainment-raising

A toolkit

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