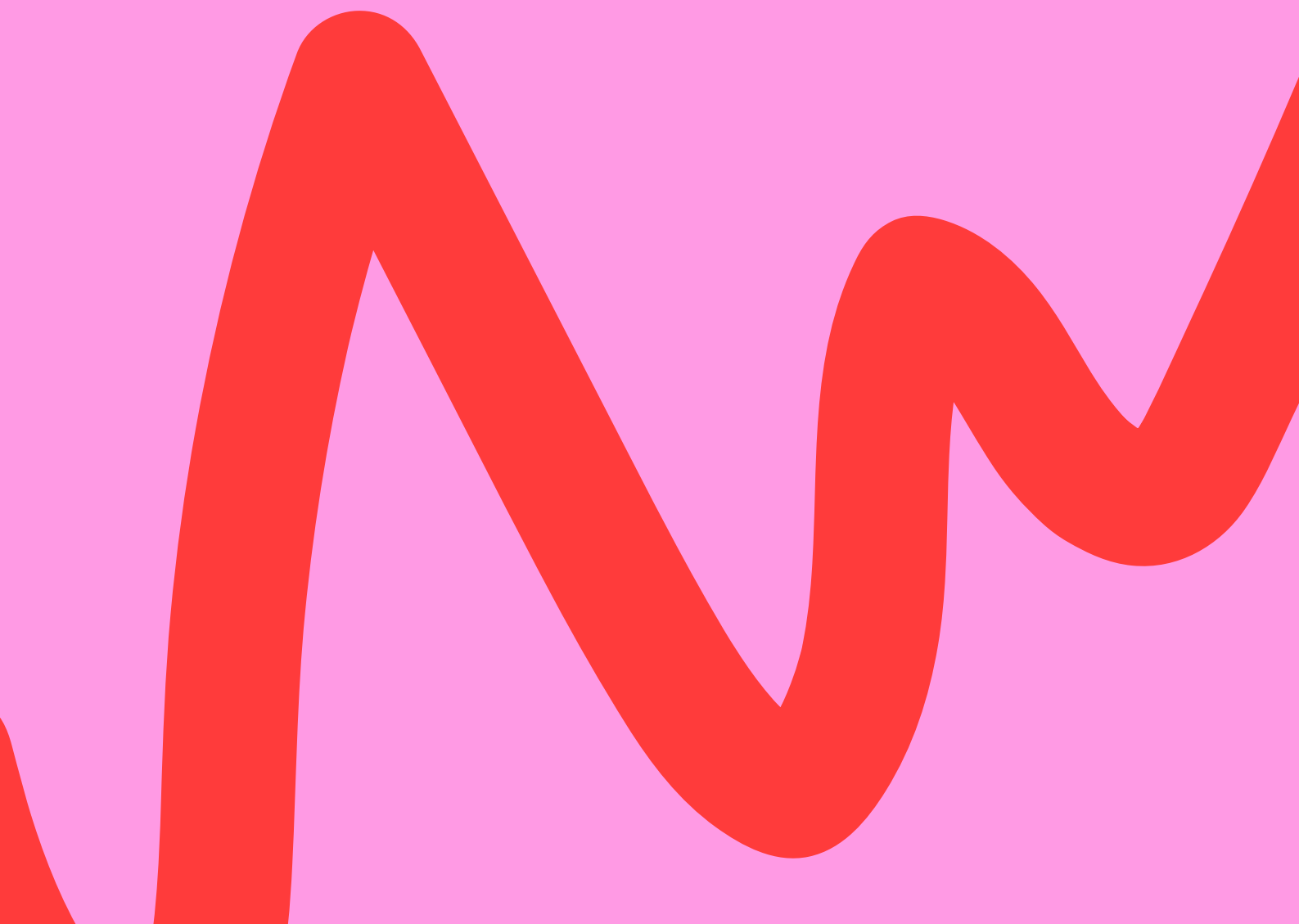


GREATER MANCHESTER HIGHER YEAR IN BRIEF

2022/23



WHAT IS GREATER MANCHESTER HIGHER?

Greater Manchester Higher (GM Higher) is a collaborative partnership between the higher education providers across our region, working together to provide a free and impartial programme of educational outreach for young people in school and college.

We are one of 29 Uni Connect partnerships across the country, and are funded by the Office for Students (OfS) to support the joint goal of ensuring that students' access to higher education is not limited by their background, location or characteristics.

WHAT DO WE DO?

Our events and activities are aimed at learners in Years 9-13, their parents/carers and supporters, and teaching staff in the schools and colleges we work with. We target most of our work in parts of the region where historically, the number of young people going to higher education is at its lowest.

Our mission is to:

- raise awareness of higher education and support young people from under-represented groups to realise their future ambitions, by giving access to impartial information, advice and guidance (IAG) through a progressive and sustained outreach programme.
- equip learners from under-represented groups to make an informed choice about their options in relation to the full range of routes into and through higher education.
- minimise the barriers learners from under-represented groups may face when choosing the option that will unlock their potential, including barriers relating to academic attainment.
- act as a strategic local infrastructure for universities, colleges and other partners to offer an efficient and low-burden route for schools and colleges to engage with higher education outreach.

ATTAINMENT RAISING

In response to a growing body of evidence demonstrating that academic achievement is the most important predictor of university progression, in 2022/23 the OfS asked Uni Connect partnerships to support schools to raise the attainment of their key stage 3 and 4 learners.

Following a consultation period with schools, we developed and delivered several evidence-led pilot activities, including tutoring, mentoring and teacher CPD. The pilot programme aimed to:

- improve the academic and study skills of learners.
- increase learners' confidence, motivation and resilience towards learning.
- boost teaching skills and knowledge.

Our attainment raising projects are highly targeted and designed to contribute to School Improvement Plans.

GO FOR GROWTH

Through our attainment raising consultation, schools identified that pupils needed support to build their confidence, resilience and study skills. Our Go for Growth programme was therefore created to improve the metacognitive skills and study strategies of learners; empowering them to understand and manage stress, and encouraging them to foster motivation through goal setting.

Delivered by Graduate Advisors with recent experience of higher education who act as role models, the programme was developed in collaboration between staff at the University of Bolton and the Trafford College Group.

Following a successful pilot, the programme has been expanded for the 2023/24 academic year and is being offered to schools throughout the year on a rolling basis to maximise capacity and offer greater flexibility.

45 learners from two schools took part in the pilot. We'd like to thank Oasis Academy MediaCityUK and Levenshulme High School for participating in our pilot scheme.



→ Learners said...


- “It was a good experience, the mentors helped me by supporting me with my education and how to succeed.”
- “The mentors were reassuring and comforting with my worries for the future.”
- “The mentors really helped me in telling me how to achieve my goals and made me feel comfortable.”
- “I enjoyed it, my mentor was very understanding and able to make the sessions fun.”

MATHS BUDDY

In 2022/23 our FE colleges and representatives on our GM Higher Governing Board expressed concern at the growing number of learners failing their GCSE Maths resit, and sought support to help address the challenge.

The Maths Buddy programme was therefore developed to support college pupils to break down and understand mathematical problems, and increase their confidence in their Maths learning.

Delivered to small numbers of pupils at Salford City College and Wigan and Leigh College, the pilot phase was led by undergraduate students from Manchester Metropolitan University who supported learners in the run-up to exams.

 *Due to the increasing demand on colleges, increasing learner numbers and the current shortage of qualified Maths teachers, for us as a college, access to this extra resource was invaluable.*

Salford City College 

We're excited about the innovative developments we've made to enhance our Maths Buddy programme for the 2023/24 academic year.



Building on our learnings from the pilot scheme, we've crafted a more structured programme which uses newly developed resources focussing on the topics learners struggle with the most. We've also integrated a session on determination to address the psychological barriers we know students face in relation to their confidence and resilience.

The support you need to lift them higher

MATHS MASTERY CPD

Focusing on enhancing teaching skills to achieve 'Maths Mastery', we offered a five-week programme of CPD through White Rose Maths. Supporting 28 educators from six schools in the Wigan area, the programme sought to empower educators to reflect on their teaching in the classroom and adopt new methods and approaches to maximise learning.

All respondents agreed they had gained and learned new skills in teaching Maths after attending the CPD programme.

 *It has made me think of how to break down topics into smaller steps and also how to interleave different topics. It has also given me ideas of different strategies I can use that will help to develop pupil understanding over time.* 

We are continuing to develop our CPD offer in 2023/24, including offering a programme of online discovery sessions for educators across Greater Manchester.

OUR IMPACT

In 2022/23, we...

Delivered 1,075 activities, including:

- 76 campus visits
- 431 general information, advice and guidance sessions
- 22 parents and carers events
- 256 skills and attainment activities
- 251 subject masterclasses
- 10 summer schools
- 5 staff development sessions
- 17 mentoring interventions

Worked with 130 different schools and colleges across the region.

Delivered 2,800 hours of activity to almost 17,000 unique learners.

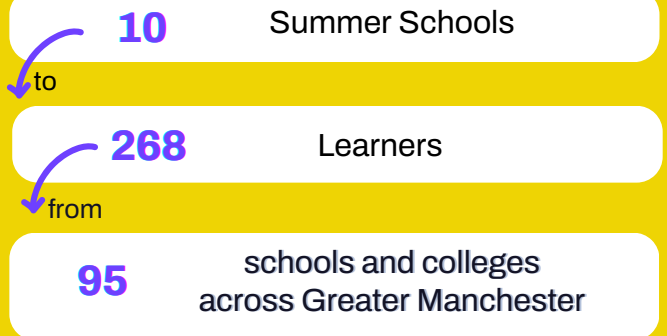
IN FOCUS

Uni:4U Summer Schools

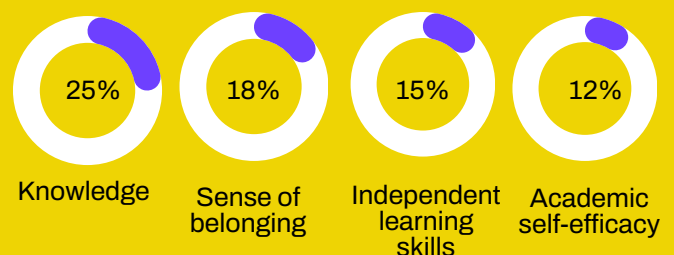
Uni:4U is a programme of summer schools for Year 10 learners which take place in June and July each year. Delivered by our partner universities and higher education providers, they offer learners an opportunity to experience student life and learn more about the courses and pathways available, supporting them to make informed decisions about their future.

From uncovering science and fashion, to exploring gaming, sport and law (via a murder) our summer school offer had something exciting to offer learners across a range of educational settings.

In 2023, we delivered...



After attending Uni:4U learners indicated an increase across the following proxy measures:



→ Learners said...



I got to experience what would happen in a real court. (Murder on Campus by University of Bolton)

The activities were biomedically relevant, led by engaging staff, and conveyed that biomedical scientists can have roles in diverse sectors. (Breaking the Mould by University of Salford)

It was great meeting new people from diverse backgrounds but with the same ambition. (Wise Up by The University of Manchester)

It encouraged innovation and gave an opportunity to develop ideas. (Future Creative Arts by Trafford College)



Care Experienced: **Success4Life**

Success4life is an 8-week programme for looked-after-children in Years 8, 9 and 10. It offers participants the opportunity to learn more about higher education and develop skills such as team-working, confidence, and resilience to better equip them to engage in their education, and make informed decisions about their future. Focusing on the specific barriers faced by this group, learners are supported to develop a sense of belonging in higher education and build a better understanding of their strengths and potential.

Starting life at the University of Manchester 10 years ago, Success4Life is now delivered

numerous times throughout the year by a number of our Higher Education partners, including Manchester Metropolitan University, the University of Bolton, the University of Salford and Wigan and Leigh College. The staff who run these programmes are highly knowledgeable and passionate about supporting this group of young people, and it is a great example of collaboration and sharing of best practice across institutional and competitive boundaries.

Linking with virtual schools and regional Care Leaver networks, we contribute to the wider regional agenda of supporting young people who have experience of the care system.



In addition to Success4Life we also offer bespoke campus visits; a 'Supporting the Supporters' conference for those working with care experienced young people; and each year we collaborate with the Local Authorities to deliver the Care Leavers Awards for the Greater Manchester region.


EVALUATING OUR FUTURE



Given the continued uncertainty about funding, we are working closely with the Greater Manchester Higher Governing Board to sustain our partnership by ensuring the way we work is as effective as possible; safeguarding successful practice and making efficiency improvements wherever possible.

We are developing and enhancing our approach to evaluation by applying guidance and resources from leading third sector organisations such as TASO (Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education). We have aligned our evaluation framework to a range of tested and validated scales and outcome measures to improve the strength of the evidence we produce.

Our renewed approach will keep evaluation at the centre of everything we do, and ensure we:

- Maximise our ability to generate high quality impact evaluation by using validated scales and methodologies.
 - Stay informed of the latest emerging evidence to inform the development of activity and evaluation approaches.
 - Conduct meaningful evaluation.
 - Establish an outcome and research-led approach to planning and developing activities.
 - Contribute to the growing bank of evidence across the sector.
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Committed & Motivated Staff

The 2022/23 academic year had a slightly challenging start, with a number of staff vacancies, particularly in the central leadership team. Despite the disruption during this time, the programme stayed on track thanks to the dedication and commitment of staff across the network.

Hub Managers worked to ensure our offer to schools was seamless, continuing to support them to engage in our programme offer.

Graduate Advisors, based in our regional Hubs, maintained our in-school delivery, being flexible and adaptable when needed.

Staff in our partner HE and FE institutions continued to offer and develop a diverse range of campus-based activities to stimulate and motivate learners about higher education, courses and careers.

Schools & Colleges

With so many competing priorities we know it's not easy for schools and colleges to organise campus visits and in-school interventions. We are grateful to all the partners who work with us to enable their pupils to have access to our programme of activities.

The right pathway changes lives, and together we can empower learners to aim higher.

We're proud to be a collaborative partnership and thank all our partners for their continued commitment to Greater Manchester Higher.



