



# HOP Learner Co-Creation Workshops

Summary Report  
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**HOP**  
HUMBER OUTREACH PROGRAMME

# OBJECTIVES & METHODOLOGY

The Humber Outreach Programme (HOP) commissioned Cosmos Ltd to conduct a series of co-creation workshops with Uni Connect target learners across the four HOP local authority areas. The research aims to explore the challenges and support needs of HOP learners and develop learner-led ideas to address those needs.

## PRIMARY QUALITATIVE DATA: CO-CREATION WORKSHOPS WITH LEARNERS

### PHASE I (April 2021)

	East Riding	Hull	North East Lincs	North Lincs	Total
Y9	3	3	4	1	11
Y10	3	3	1	3	10
Y11	3	3	6	1	13
Y12-13	4	2	2	6	14
<b>Total</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>48</b>

### PHASE 2 (June 2021)

	Total
Y9	7
Y10	7
Y11	8
Y12-13	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>27</b>

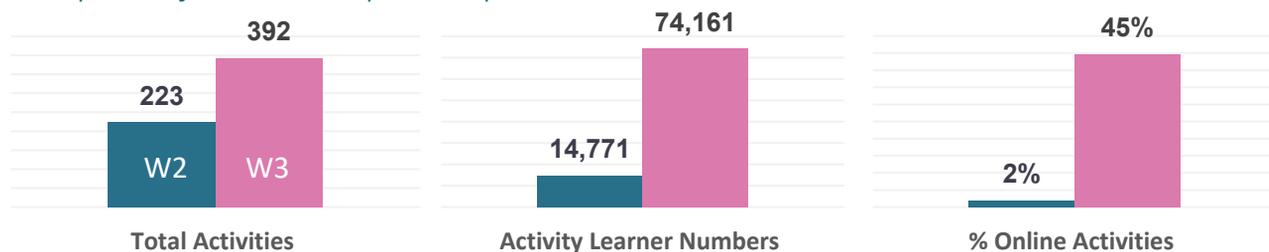
## SECONDARY DATA ANALYSIS - CFE SURVEY

HOP takes part in an annual independent survey of students conducted by CFE. Secondary analysis of CFE survey data was used to assess potential gaps and trends across the HOP sub-region at a wider, quantitative level, between Wave 2 (Oct 2019- Jan 2020) and Wave 3 (Sept 20- Apr 2021) of the CFE survey.

Overall trends between wave 2 and 3 were surprisingly positive, given the negative impacts of COVID-19 on learners' experiences in education. However, this appears to correlate with an increased volume of recorded HEAT activity – particularly online – in the period up to W3\*, with more learners able to benefit from access to HE/progression-related content. See full report for more details.

### HOP HEAT Activity Data\*

\*Comparison from September to the end of CFE survey collection in each wave/academic year:  
W2 Sep 2019 – Jan 2020 / W3 Sep 2020 – Apr 2021



We compared HOP HEAT activity data from the start of each academic year up to the end of survey collection for each CFE wave, to capture any activities that could have influenced learners' responses. Although covering a longer time frame, including later in the school year, it is important to note that almost half of these activities in the post-COVID period up to W3 were delivered online, compared to just a small fraction in the pre-COVID period up to W2.

# PHASE I WORKSHOPS

## QUALITATIVE WORKSHOPS



Phase I Workshops explored Learners' **general experiences in education, their plans for the future and any support they might need.**

## GENERAL EXPERIENCES IN EDUCATION



Phase I Workshops suggest that **learners' general experiences in education are mostly positive**, but have been negatively impacted by COVID-19.

## ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE



Academic **success and enjoyment of subjects/education in general, are closely linked.**

*"I decided on my choices via my thoughts and my feelings towards each different type of subject I could've chosen from. My parents found that okay, because I was using my own heart and my own thoughts to choose the right thing for me." Year 11.*

## COVID-19 & MENTAL HEALTH



As well as practical difficulties with online learning, **learners also struggled with motivation, stress and mental wellbeing.** Learners have also found it challenging to re-adapt to the return to school.

*"Well first of all we got told you're off for two weeks, you're back after Easter. Then suddenly you're off longer and then you're off until the next year and then it's exams are on, exams are off... It's confused everything and it's made school so much worse" Year 11.*

## FUTURE PLANS



**Most of the Y9-11 learners we spoke to intended to progress to FE, and most of the Y12-13s intended to progress to HE.** Many were aware of and/or had considered apprenticeships, but most favoured traditional academic routes to university.

*"I think I'm going to go with University because it leaves me with a wider career choice, but if I had a career that I wanted to do, then I would do an apprenticeship." Year 10*

## UNIVERSITY / HE PERCEPTIONS



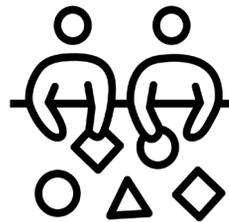
**Learners generally saw the value in HE/university in opening up career opportunities;** however some (particularly younger learners) felt unsure that they would fit in at university, academically or socially.

*"I think it might be quite hard to manage a workload and a social life, whilst being there. And you're away from home." Year 9.*



# PHASE 2 WORKSHOPS

In the Phase 2 workshops, learners developed a number of activity/support ideas to address the needs identified in Phase 1, including:



## Academic/Progression Support

- Support/study groups after school
- Revision prep lessons and resources delivered by teachers
- A mix of group and 1-2-1 support for students who need it
- FE, HE & Careers Fairs
- Personal Skills development
- Opportunities to talk about workload management
- Support in applications process

## COVID-19/Mental Health Support

- Adapted/ shorter school day
- Assemblies or Lessons dedicated to talking about mental health
- Opportunities to increase motivation at the start of lesson
- Support delivered by staff and peers or outside agencies as appropriate
- Outdoor activities to support positive mental health and a break from learning / home
- Dedicated space for MH support / drop-in
- Pre/ Post school day interventions to catch up on lost learning

Younger learners tended to suggest that academic support activities should be frequent and in school time, while older learners suggested these should be targeted at more specific times, and take place outside of normal lesson times

Academic/progression support activities were mostly recommended to take place in school, while mental health support activities may be better suited elsewhere or outdoors

Academic/progression support activities were mostly expected to be delivered by teachers, while mental health support activities may be better delivered by specialists in this area

Preference for large/small groups or one-to-one varied according to the specific activity or support being delivered

Learners generally felt that activities were best delivered in-person, but most could be adapted to online delivery; so long as resources were provided and that clear communication is ensured

Learners emphasise the importance of assessing their needs in advance of activities, tailoring to those needs, collecting feedback afterwards (via surveys and discussions) and making adjustments accordingly. Learners also point to the need for follow-up and additional resources to ensure activities provide the most benefit

# DIFFERENCES BY YEAR GROUPS

**Learners' support needs are closely linked to the stage of education they are in and are moving towards:**

Year 9s want help to identify and build upon their strengths and interests and to choose suitable GCSE options,  
Y10- 11s want more support in preparation for FE  
Y12-13s in preparing for HE

**Year 9s tended to describe 'keeping their options open'** regarding their future plans. Most of those we spoke to intended to progress to FE but had yet to look further ahead, while some Year 10s were starting to look towards HE.  
**Older learners tended to talk about their choice of future subjects and pathways more decisively**

**Younger learners** tend to want to wait to see how they perform in their GCSEs before deciding upon future subjects or career pathways

**Year 10s show the lowest scores on most CFE themes**, with Y9 scoring slightly higher. Y10s may have been more negatively impacted by COVID-19 than other year groups

**Year 11s** were most likely to express concerns about their **workload**

**Year 12-13s were most likely to express concerns about the impact of COVID-19 on their grades**, but were also more likely than younger learners to take positives from their experiences during the pandemic, such as developing independent research and accessing new resources

**Older learners tend to be more aware of the personal and social benefits of HE** than younger students, with both being aware of academic and career benefits

**Younger learners tended to be more concerned about the social experience** at university and whether they would fit in.

**Older learners were more likely to have concerns around debt, workload and mental health** at university

**Mental health concerns** were apparent among all year groups, with anxiety around the educational stages described above exacerbated by COVID-19

**CFE scores are highest for Y12-13** learners across all themes except Application Knowledge, where Y11s score higher. Y12-13 appear to experience greater confusion around HE applications (e.g. UCAS), with many of those we spoke to being in the midst of this process

# RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are derived from the co-creation research and Cosmos' interpretation of these findings, highlighting the needs expressed by those learners who took part.

## COVID-19/MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

**Look to support the challenges that were triggered and increased by COVID-19 as a priority**, including learning gaps, workload stress and mental health challenges. Traditional outreach focus on FE and HE progression may be of limited benefit without first supporting learners to overcome these shortfalls and regain a degree of stability and confidence with which to look further ahead.

**Mental health** was a common challenge raised by learners, impacted by the challenges of COVID-19 compounding existing academic and progression challenges. While these may be beyond the typical remit of HOP (and acute mental health challenges would be expected to be dealt with within schools/colleges), HOP can take insights from the co-creation research to advise schools and colleges.

## ACADEMIC/PROGRESSION SUPPORT

### **Tailor academic/progression support by year group:**

- Year 9: learners emphasised the need for support in identifying their strengths, building on their interests and understanding their options (particularly GCSEs)
- Y10: some of the same kinds of support as Y9s, but with a greater emphasis on FE and HE decisions.
- Y11: more detailed, individual support around their options and for transitioning to their next steps.
- Y12: specific support on applications to HE as well as understanding what to expect from the university experience.

**Utilise a variety of feedback mechanisms** (quantitative and qualitative), both pre- and post-activity, to ensure that activities are tailored to learners' needs and evaluated for their effectiveness, recognising that these needs are subject to change. It is hoped that the current co-creation research serves as a significant positive step in embedding the learner voice in shaping delivery.

**Pay particular attention to learners' preferences** around the format of different activity ideas and types (what, where, when, who, how and why, as listed in the full report) to ensure activities are in line with learners' preferences, where possible. **The 'way' in which content is delivered can be equally if not more important than the content itself, in determining its effectiveness and impact.**



# COSMOS

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