FUTURE QUEST

Annual report 24/25



Introduction



This impact report reflects on the profound impact of a programme designed to support young people in connecting with their future selves and making informed decisions about their educational pathways. At its heart, Future Quest recognises that every young person deserves the opportunity to explore their expectations, build confidence, and make informed choices that shape their future.

As the programme has developed, it has been a privilege to witness the dedication, creativity, and commitment of the team in creating a supportive environment where young people can thrive. Equally inspiring has been the journey undertaken by the participants themselves. Through honest reflection, meaningful discussion, and engagement with new opportunities, many have demonstrated increased confidence, ambition, and a greater understanding of the pathways available to them. Their willingness to embrace the process has been central to Future Quests ongoing success.

This report critically evaluates the extent to which Future Quest continues to achieve its intended outcomes by examining participant engagement, evidence of change, and the wider social and civic value generated through its activities. It considers not only individual outcomes, such as increased self-awareness and informed educational decision-making, but also the broader contribution to educational equity, social mobility, and community wellbeing.

While this report presents an evidence-based evaluation of Future Quest's impact, it also celebrates the collective effort that made these outcomes possible. The achievements documented within these pages are a testament to the commitment of the team, partners, and, above all, the young people whose enthusiasm and resilience continue to inspire the work.

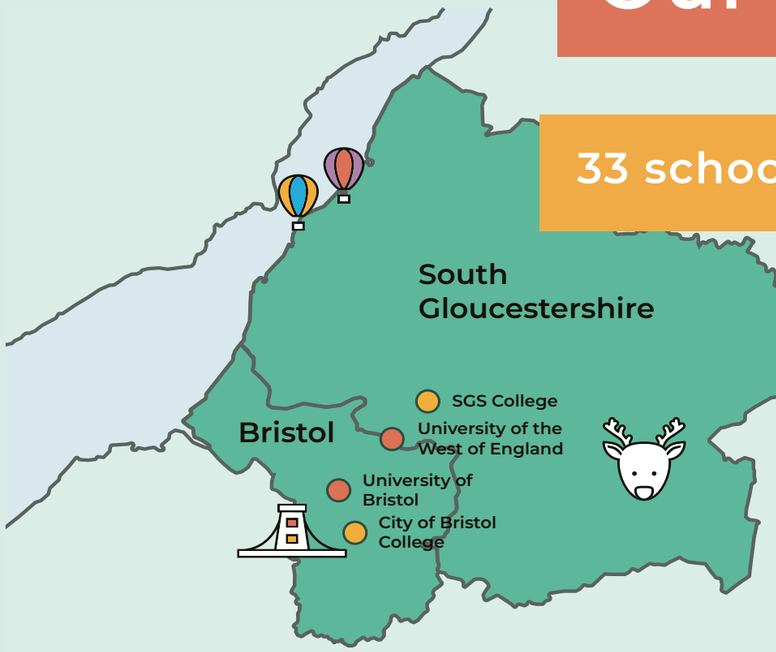
Stacey Giles

Head of Widening Access and Collaborative Outreach Programmes, UWE Bristol

Future Quest is the Uni Connect partnership for Bristol and South Gloucestershire, formed in 2017 and primarily funded by the Office for Students. We are a partnership between the University of the West of England (UWE Bristol), the University of Bristol, City of Bristol College and South Gloucestershire and Stroud (SGS) College, which supports young people to connect with their future selves and make informed decisions about their educational pathways. We want to live in a world where all young people in our region have the same opportunities to progress to higher education, work or study, regardless of their background. Since our inception, we have supported thousands of school students to achieve their full potential through evidence-based, progressive programmes which focus on building resilience, celebrating difference and finding purpose.

In 2024/25, Future Quest and our partners in UWE Bristol's Widening Access team delivered outreach sessions to 6215 students in 33 local schools and colleges. In line with Office for Students funding guidelines, our delivery was split into three overarching elements: strategic outreach, targeted outreach and signposting. Strategic outreach included OfS-funded raising attainment activity, which is treated separately below.

Our region



33 schools and colleges

6215 students

435 activities

Raising attainment

Evidence-based collaborative approaches to raise attainment from Key Stage 3 (Y7-9) into KS4 (Y10 and 11).

Designed with education professionals, our raising attainment sessions form a progressive programme of activity allowing young people to develop awareness of their skills and strengths, build resilience and establish a growth mindset to support them through their GCSEs and beyond.

In 2024/25, **480** students took part from **10** schools

You can read our full raising attainment report for 2024/25 on our website.

Our three programmes

Y7: Successful Me!

- Character Strengths
- Everybody's Different
- Meet Someone New

Y9: Future Mindset

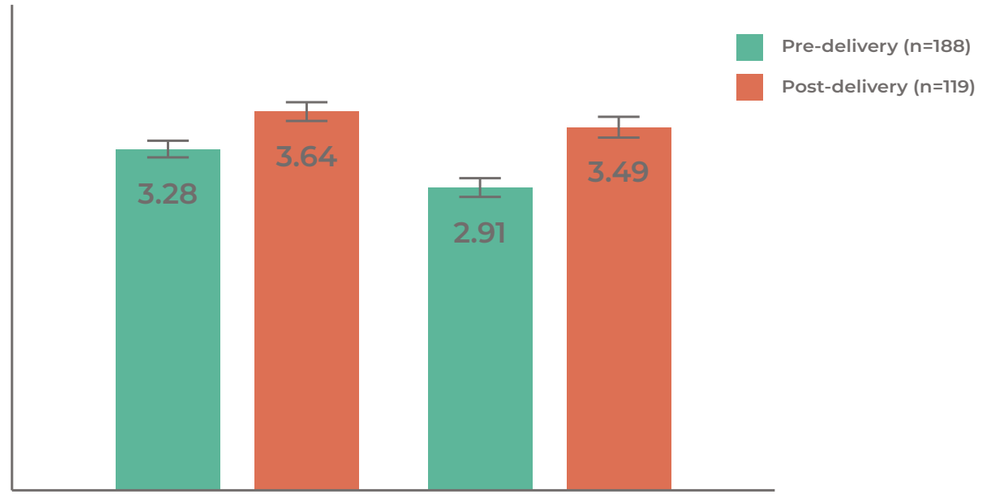
- Growth Mindset
- Character Strengths 2
- Study Sense
- My Mindset Toolkit

Y10: Future Fundamentals

- Level Up Your Learning
- Memory Magic
- Unearthing Texts
- Mastering Notes
- Crafting Your Revision Strategy



Measurable impact





"I most liked being able to talk to people who aren't my friends"

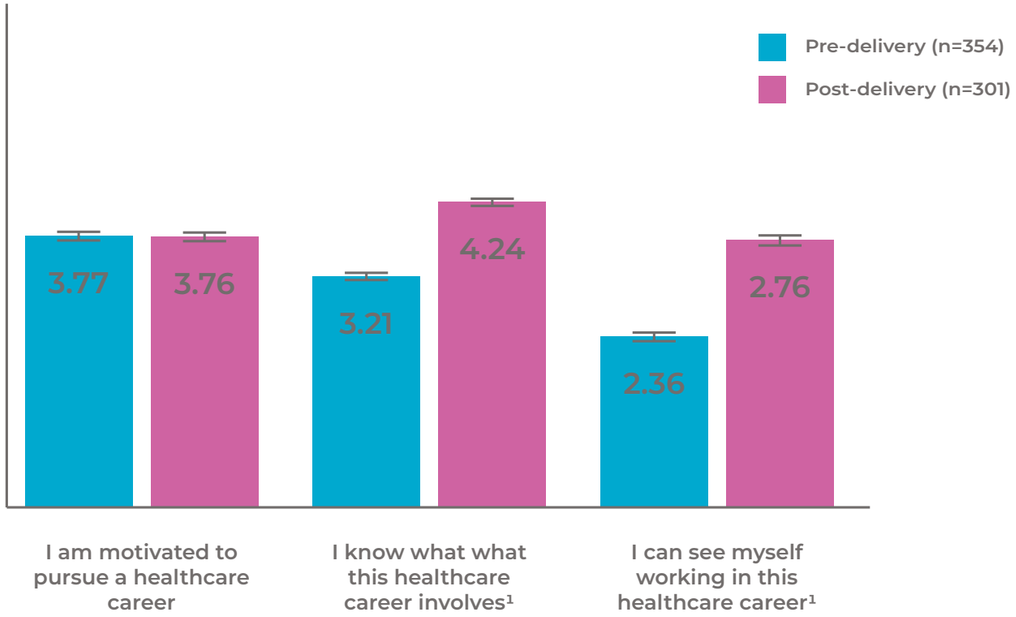
"It's all going really well and it's like a lot of interactive stuff. So it's not a lot of just writing; they have to get up and move around, so it really engaged them."

Future Quest Healthcare

2024/25 was the last year of the NHS-England-funded Healthcare programme. Delivery was offered primarily to those cohorts who had already started the programme in previous years, with few standalone activities.

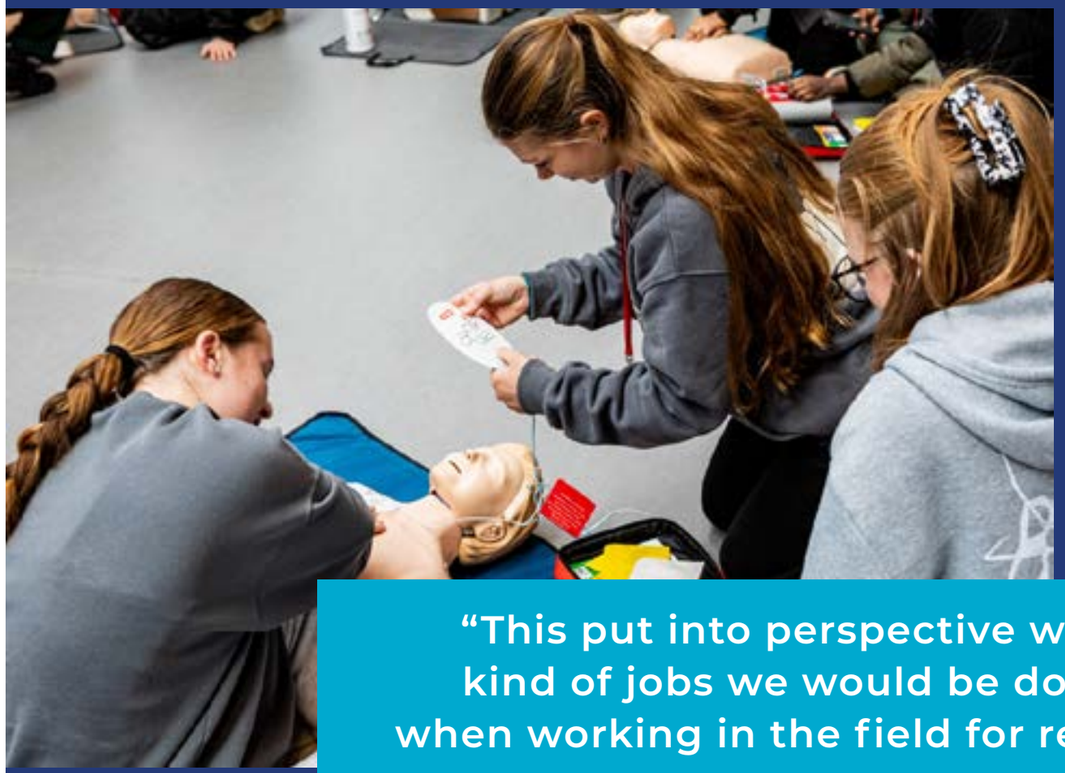
706 students took part, of whom nearly **300** were post-16, at local sixth-forms and colleges.

We're incredibly proud of our Healthcare programme and have continued it in 2025/26 with internal funding. Our final report on the programme can be found on our website.



[1]"This healthcare career" was individualised for each workshop, e.g. "an Occupational Therapist"

The impact of the programme does not lie in changing the minds of those not interested in a career in healthcare, but in supporting those who are interested to make better choices.



"This put into perspective what kind of jobs we would be doing when working in the field for real"

"It allowed for us to visualise ourselves in the careers we were interested in."

"I've never had the experience of going to see professionals at work."

Step Ahead

In collaboration with Universify Education, we piloted the Step Ahead programme for care-experienced learners in Year 10. We provide small-group sessions, campus visits and support through GCSE and post-16 education to help students explore their pathways and the support available.

Full analysis of this cohort will be available after Year 11 delivery is complete.

Campus visits to UWE Bristol and University of Bristol

Trip to University of Oxford

Coaching throughout Year 11

Easter tutoring sessions

Post-16 support and signposting

“I think I will feel at home here… There is loads of support to help you.”

“It has made me really really want to come to university. It has made me knuckle down on studying and actually getting revision done so I can get my grades up.”



Colleges

We delivered **343** activities to **1862** students at City of Bristol College and South Gloucestershire and Stroud College, an increase of 40% on the previous year.

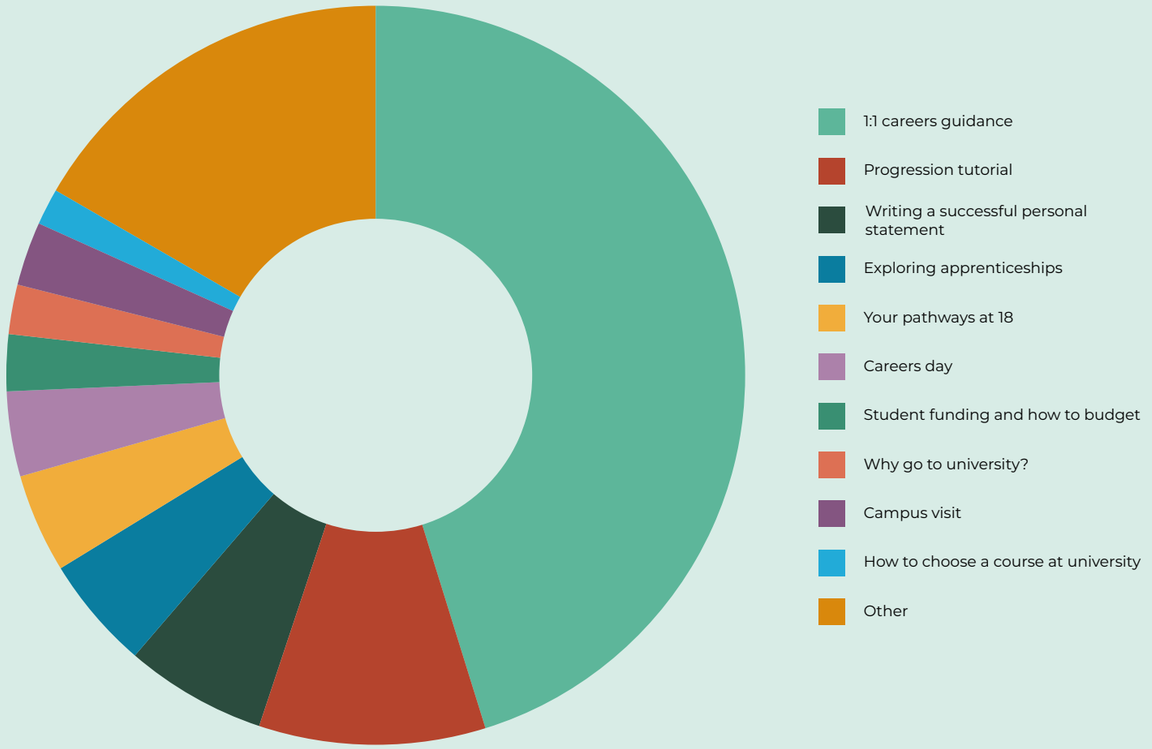
With a focus on Level 3 students preparing for their next steps, Future Quest staff at the colleges delivered workshops on student finance, choosing a course, and specific subjects available at university. They also provided over a hundred one-to-one sessions which offered tailored support from planning pathways, through the UCAS application cycle and making final decisions.



Specialised delivery

Led by UWE Bristol's Widening Access team, Future Quest college staff are based at our two further education colleges to offer a specialised programme of delivery for young people making decisions about their next steps after leaving compulsory education.

Students in the colleges benefit from dedicated 1:1 careers guidance sessions alongside practical information about higher education.



Student survey

2024/25 was the first year of our new student survey, open to all young people from 11 to 19. Combining scales from TASO's Access and Success Questionnaire with other sources, it seeks to understand young people's self-concept, confidence and plans once they leave school. As a young person repeats the survey, we will gain valuable insight into the factors influencing outcomes at post-18.

777
responses

18
schools and colleges

Because this survey is still in its pilot phase, we will not be releasing reporting specific to 2024/25. However, this information will be factored into future programme analysis.



Progression to Higher education

56
destinations

26.3%
progression rate from IMD q1&2

In 2023, the most recent data we have, **895** Future Quest students started higher education through a UCAS-listed course: that's our highest number yet. In total, we've supported around **4300** young people to progress to higher education since 2017, contributing to narrowing the progression gap between most and least disadvantaged students. Our students are 2.4pp more likely to progress to HE than their peers in our region.

Looking to the future...

2025/26 is the last year of our current delivery model, as our original target cohort is now in Year 13. We will continue to deliver evidence-backed programmes of activity to local young people and are excited to see what the future will bring.

Our partners

Office for Students

UWE Bristol | University of the West of England

University of BRISTOL

sgs South Gloucestershire and Stroud College

City of Bristol College

Universify Education

NHS England

SOUTH BRISTOL YOUTH