

SHEET 1: Theory of Change Activity Template

University of Derby (Intervention Strategy) Theory of Change Activity Template												
APP objective (or issue/situation to be addressed through the activity/programme)		To support Primary and Secondary school pupils across Derby City and Derbyshire to gain the knowledge and skills needed to be accepted onto higher education courses that match their ambitions and expectations.										
Risks to equality of opportunity		Knowledge and skills; information and guidance; perception of higher education; application success rates; cost pressures; and progression from higher education. (EDRRs 1,2,3,4,10,12)										
Actions		Outcomes and Success Measures		Evaluation	Publication							
Activities		Inputs	Outcomes	Success Measures	Cross Intervention							
What activities will be adopted to achieve the objectives? Name of the activity, brief description (delivery mode, location, duration, session), target group, year group, numbers of participants, schools/programmes, sessions etc?		Numbers of staff, students? Resources? Participants, partners, stakeholders, budget, evaluation? Financial and human resource (pro-rata where required). Over 4 years.	What are the intended outcomes of the activity in the short, medium and longer term? What step changes do you expect to see that you believe will lead towards achieving the intended impact/objective.	How will you measure success/progress in the short, medium and long term? What will be your measurable changes? Increased knowledge, engagement, attainment? Short, Medium and Long term	How will you gather the evidence of success? What methods will you use? Quantitative, qualitative? Surveys, focus groups, existing data? Short, Medium and Long term	Where will the evaluation findings to be published/shared? Internal or external? TASO, NERUP? Journals, blogs?	Indicate if an activity also contributes to another intervention strategy (or link to other activities or objectives)					
1.1 KS3/4 mentoring support: Mentoring programme for KS3/4 learners delivered by University of Derby (UoD) student mentors		Time: Learners, University staff, School staff, UoD students. Costs: Staff pay costs, Student pay costs, Third Party contract costs, Materials/Resources	Partners: University of Derby target schools, East Midlands Widening Participation Research and Evaluation Partnership (EMWPREP), Brightside, DANCOP, Derby City PSEA.	Short term change: Participants - increased motivation to study, increased knowledge of HE, increased ability to reflect on development, independent learning skills, increased self-efficacy and increased engagement with HE students. UoD student mentors: Reduction of non-continuation and cost pressures, increased relevant work experience/professional practice, increased self-efficacy.	Short term: Teacher observation of behaviour/attitudinal changes in regard to increase in motivation and developed independence learning skills. Participants self-reported knowledge of HE, demonstrating reflection and confidence/ developing independent learning skills. UoD student mentors - measure impact of the role on financial pressures (including continuation) and acquisition of professional practice and increased self-efficacy.	Short term: Teachers - observation survey, pre- and post survey, self-reporting survey, focus groups for both participants and UoD student mentors. UoD student mentors - pre- and post survey ref development of professional practice and self-efficacy and importance of paid work to continuation/success. Use of TASO and NERUPI questions bank and validated scales (self-efficacy). UoD continuation data. Standard of evidence OIS Type 2	Case studies, conference papers, Sharing with specific networks including Network Evaluating and Researching University Participation Interventions (NERUPI), National Education Opportunities Network (NEON), The Forum for Access and Continuing Education (FACE) and Transforming Access and Student Outcomes (TASO). UoD Knowledge Hub, Derby city/Derbyshire networks and D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership, UoD website and peer-reviewed papers, journal articles (including Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning Journal, Open University), book chapters and TASO repository	I, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6				
				Medium term change: Participants - sustained positive attitude to study, increased capacity to make informed decisions about HE, and increased confidence to succeed in HE, increased confidence regarding the application of independent learning skills. UoD student mentors: increased employability skills, increased continuation on programmes of study	Medium term: Participants - continuing to report improving attitude towards learning, and teachers reporting the same. Improvements in attainment. Participants - Reporting increased confidence regarding HE (decision making and options) and increased confidence in regard to independent learning. UoD student mentors - observations. Self reporting employability skills. UoD continuation data.	Medium term: Participants - Creative evaluation session (and/or quiz). Teachers - survey/report. UoD student mentor focus groups regarding their own skills and participant behavioural change. UoD continuation data. Standard of evidence OIS Type 2						
				Long term intended impact: Participants - confidence in and experience sense of belonging in HE pre- post entry; increased applications and participation and achievement in HE; reduced non-continuation rates for participant (by target group); increased social and cultural capital from participation in HE; increased employment prospects and earning potential; and increased health, wellbeing and life expectancy. UoD student mentors - increased employment prospects and earning potential; increased health, wellbeing and life expectancy. How are you measuring?	Long term: Participants - long-term tracking through EMWPREP into HE, attainment grades. Case studies and focus groups (end of programme). Teachers interviews/questionnaire. Graduate Outcomes datasets. ONS datasets. Standard of evidence OIS Type 2							
Total cost		£660,000										
Evidence base and rationale: A needs analysis has been informed at national level by the Office for National Statistics (ONS, 2017), the OIS Causeway Education Attainment Raising Toolkit (Causeway, 2022), and the National Outreach Coverage Dataset, published by the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT, 2021). It has been informed local level by the D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership Local Skills Report (D2N2, 2022), Derby City PEIA Delivery Plans, EMWPREP School Profiles, individual school attainment information, and DANCOP datasets. The University's approach has been developed following a literature review, scoping exercise of sector research, the identification of existing evaluation into 'what works', and the application of a theory of change methodology. The activities described in this intervention strategy form long-term outreach initiatives aimed at raising the awareness and attainment and supporting the realisation of ambitions of under-represented and target learners through a multi-intervention approach creating 'drip feed' touchpoints for cohorts of learners. Evidence shows this approach has proven impacts on learners in attainment, motivation and understanding; and ensures sustainable change. (Causeway, 2022; Harding and Bowes, 2022; OIS, 2021 etc). NERUPI Framework: Participants - Level 2 in all areas - Intellectual and Skills Capital, Habitus, and Social and Academic capital. UoD Student Mentors - Level 2 in Educational capital and Habitus												
Evaluation The University has developed mixed methods evaluation strategies that will apply to the activities described in the six intervention strategies presented in the plan. The aim is to generate OIS Type 2 standards of evidence to measure impact and establish whether the activities have led to their intended outcomes and are contributing towards meeting the University's overall objectives. Findings from the evaluation activity will be disseminated each year, and/or at key points during the delivery. The University will share evaluation findings through sector conferences and events, the TASO repository of evidence and other relevant professional networks. Learning will also be shared through the University website (as appropriate) and the University's APP Knowledge Hub.												
To help grow a sector body of knowledge regarding what works and what does not in access and participation, and inform future practice, the University will seek to publish findings in relevant peer reviewed journals and blogs.												

SHEET 2: Mechanisms and Assumptions

Mechanisms	Assumptions	Activities
Participants/Mentees - Increase confidence to apply to HE and think they can fit in and succeed in HE, as their awareness and understanding of it grows through engagement with and support from current students and UoD staff. Including how HE is delivered and that 'people like them' go to university	Mentees engage positively with the programme. Form positive opinions around HE as an opportunity, and that it is accessible to them	1.1
Participants/Mentees - As a result of taking part in activities levels of reading, literacy and/or study skills will increase leading to an increase in attainment	Mentees engage positively with the programme and apply new skills in the classroom	1.1
Participants/Mentees - As a result of feeling they can achieve, and become aware of the opportunities higher grades can deliver, students will become more motivated to study and apply	That increased awareness of HE will motivate mentees. This depends on positive engagement and outcomes in regard to outreach activity and content, and for the mentoring programme the mentor/mentee relationship	1.1
Participants/Mentees - As their knowledge grows the participants/mentees are able to make more informed decisions about their future choices. Focus on support to reflect and evaluate through the programme will increase the skills required to make decisions.	The programmes provide access to the information participants/mentees need, through the programme. Also participants/mentees willing to commit the time to reflect and evaluate the information provided, therefore developing the programmes intended skills	1.1
Participants/Mentees - Improved continuation and outcomes post-entry through making more informed decision pre-entry and also through more informed expectations about the experience	Assuming that participants/mentees enter HE and that the skills, knowledge and experience that the programme has provided proves to be valuable in their context, if they do participate.	1.1
Participants/Mentees - increased employability, employability skills and social and cultural capital through successful participation in HE and development of subject expertise. Also associated, well documented advantages of HE in terms of stand of living and wellbeing.	That participants/mentees continue to develop their employability skills through participation. Assumes that the services, subject knowledge and overall HE experience provides the building of social and cultural capital that HE is intended to deliver. Assumes integration into the provider and engagement with services and opportunities	1.1
Mentors - Increased continuation and completion through the evaluation of financial pressures due to the work of mentor being paid to be mentors	Assumes that the role provides adequate financial reward. Additional workload does not have a detrimental effect on studies	1.1
Mentors - Employability skills and subject knowledge development of transferable skills through training and fulfilling the role. Also increase in confidence as their practice develops in fulfilling a rewarding role	Assumes mentoring role is rewarding and that the training and experience is valuable in terms of their future careers/careers progression.	1.1

SHEET 3: Risks and Mitigation

Risk	Mitigation
Changes to government policy and/or funding	Activity linked to achievement of a number of University strategies that sit outside main government policy drivers. Activity and staffing resource funded by University and not linked to short-term external funding sources. Best practice from any externally funded projects eg DANCOP, Derby city PEIA and any collaborative activity will be embedded in UoD outreach activity to ensure sustainability.
Failure to achieve targets and milestones	Realistic targets and milestones are set through the development of Theories of Change. Targets and milestones are aligned with University Strategic Framework, ISMs, APP and Civic University Agreement. Shared targets and milestones with collaborative partners are agreed in the planning stages of programmes
Failure to engage with appropriate target schools	Widening Access named contact for each target school and lead for each outreach programme. Annual plan of comms and meetings with target school contacts. Attendance at relevant cross-city/county groups and committees to build relationships and raise awareness.
Failure to identify and/or engage with appropriate target groups	Clear indication of who target groups/schools are communicated to all key stakeholders internally and externally. Monitoring and tracking of pre-entry groups through use of Tableau and EMWPREP tracking database and datasets. Data shared on individuals by schools to be checked against target group criteria
Reputational risk if we fail to deliver on expected programmes	Agreed activities and outreach programmes are realistic and deliverable. Funding for programme delivery sits within the University and not at risk from changes to short-term external funding streams
Failure to comply to procurement and financial regulations	The WA team to engage with key University departments and teams, such as procurement, legal services and finance to seek advice and ensure proper process is followed.
Failure to recruit enough Student Ambassadors/Mentors	Governance structure for APP includes identified University College lead. Widening Access named contacts for each University College. Awareness raising of student ambassador/mentor opportunities through APP governance structure, College meeting attendance, bi-monthly college reports, annual report, Derby Daily articles, and UoS networks to gain buy-in. Clear comms regarding requirements and types of opportunity.
Safeguarding/child protection issue	All UoD delivery staff have an enhanced DBS, are trained on safeguarding procedures and refresher courses are delivered on an annual basis. All mentors have a basic DBS and do not have unsupervised one to one access to mentees. All UoD delivery staff and student ambassadors/mentors know who the University DSL is and how to report any concerns.
Unsafe employment of Student Ambassadors/Mentors	Student ambassadors/mentors are given annual training on safeguarding and engaging with under 18s. H&S risks to student ambassadors/mentors are included on outreach risk assessments. Student ambassadors/mentors are provided with a schedule of work for each activity.
Data protection breach	Data protection policies and procedures are in place. All Widening Access staff undertake mandatory training and refresher modules and EMWPREP database and information handling training. UoD delivery staff seek advice and guidance from the Data Controller and Data Compliance team to ensure compliance to GDPR regulations. Widening Access GDPR and data handling processes are clear and available to all team members, including those for processing EMWPREP data. There are lockable facilities for the transport/transfer of data. Data is logged and stored in lockable facilities in the office. Data sharing agreements are in place with school partners where appropriate.

SHEET 4: Activity Mapping to NERUPI Framework

Level	Aim	Objective
2 (Year 5-11 participants/mentees)	Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment	Explore academic, social, economic and personal benefits of progressing to higher education (all)
2 (Year 5-11 participants/mentees)	Develop students capacity to navigate HE and graduate employment sectors and make informed decisions	Explore differences between higher education institutions and study opportunities within subject areas (all)
2 (Year 5-11 participants/mentees)	Develop students confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenge of university life and graduate progression	Increase confidence in their capacity to progress onto higher education (all)
2 (Year 5-11 participants/mentees)	Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment and successful graduate progression	Develop study skills through educational projects which encourage active learning
3 (Year 12 participants)	Develop students' confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenge of university life and graduate progression	Anticipate challenges they will face in higher education and make a successful transition to university
3 (Year 12 participants)	Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment and successful graduate progression	Enhance academic skills that develop capacity for critical thinking, independent research and self-directed learning
3 (Year 12 participants)	Develop students' capacity to navigate higher education and graduate employment sectors and make informed choices	Evaluate course, student finance & graduate opportunities and make informed choices that align with personal interests and career aspirations
5 (student mentors)	Develop students confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenge of university life and graduate progression	Engage with careers advice and utilise placement opportunities to enhance employability and capacity to realise graduate goals
5 (student mentors)	Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment and successful graduate progression	Consolidate their communication and language skills within formal and informal settings; Consolidate a varied skills set to enhance future employability and develop the capacity to demonstrate skills to potential employers; Consolidate their interpersonal and group work skills and capacity to work collaboratively with others;

SHEET 5: Evidence Base

Activity References	Strength of evidence (emerging, medium, strong)
Brightside (2020). The power of online mentoring. London, Brightside.	Medium
Causeway Education (2022). Attainment-raising: A toolkit. London, Causeway Education. Available at: https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/f9242db8-8329-4c45-92ed-b4007e841d4e/attainment-raising-a-toolkit-final-interaction.pdf	Medium/strong
D2N2 Local Enterprise Partnership. (2022). <i>D2N2 Local Skills Report</i> . Nottingham, D2N2.	Medium/strong
Gordon D.M., Iwamoto D., Ward N., Potts R., Boyd E. (2009) Mentoring urban Black Middle-School Male Students: Implications for Academic Achievement. <i>The Journal of Negro Education</i> , 78(3), p277-289.	Strong
Harding, S., & Bowes, L. (2022). Fourth 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. London, Office for Students	Medium/strong
Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT). (2021). National Outreach Coverage Dataset. Available at: https://heat.ac.uk/research-and-evidence/currentprojects/	Medium/strong
Mannion, J. and Mercer, N. (2016). Learning to learn: improving attainment, closing the gap at Key Stage 3. <i>The Curriculum Journal</i> 27 (2), p246-271.	Medium/strong
Office for National Statistics (2017). An overview of lifestyles and wider characteristics linked to Healthy Life Expectancy in England: June 2017. London, ONS. Available at: https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/healthandsocialcare/healthinequalities/articles/heathrelatedlifestylesandwidercharacteristicsofpeoplelivinginareaswiththehighestorlowesthealthylife/june2017	Medium/strong
Office for Students (OfS) (2018) National Collaborative Outreach Programme: The first year, London: Office for Students.	Medium/strong
Office for Students (OfS) (2021) Uni Connect annual report: Phase two, August 2019 to July 2020, London: Office for Students.	Medium/strong
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. London, Office for Students.	Medium/strong
Sanders, M., Burgess, S., Chande, R., Dilnot, C., Kozman, E., Macmillan, L.A. (2018). Role models, mentoring and university applications - evidence from a crossover randomised controlled trial in the United Kingdom. <i>Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning</i> , 20 (4) p57-80.	Strong
Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Education (2021) Summary report: An investigation into the relationship between outreach participation and KS4 attainment/HE progression. London: TASO.	Medium/strong
Transforming Access and Student Outcomes in Higher Education (2023) Understanding online mentoring delivered as part of multi-intervention outreach programmes. London, TASO.	Medium