



Study Higher's Young Carer Access Programme

Nerupi 2024

Who are we?

- One of 29 Uni Connect partnerships
- Working across Swindon, Buckinghamshire, Berkshire and Oxfordshire
- Funded externally by the Office for Students
- Students in years 8-13
- Collaboration between Oxford Brookes, Oxford, Reading and Buckinghamshire New University



Young (adult) carer access programme



- For young carers aged 13-19 years old
- Open to young people across our four regions
- Students attend unaccompanied outside of school (mainly Saturdays)
- Advertised through schools and young carers trusts and once registered, email contact directly to students
- Majority of funding pays for transport to events.
- Multi-activity programme, encouraging (re-)engagement year on year
- Mixed year groups

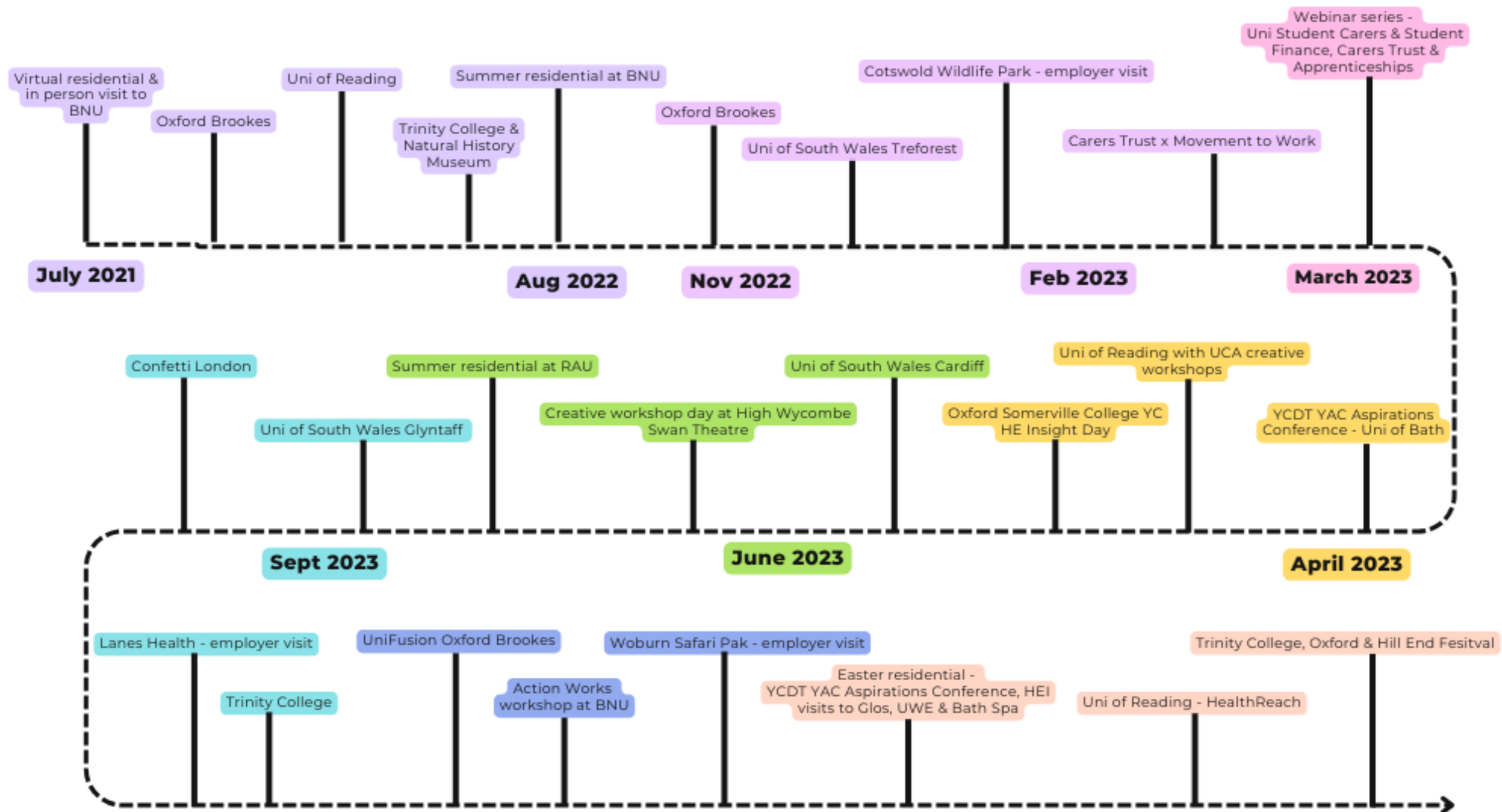
Useful for:

- Creating a sense of community and belonging,
- attendance figures,
- working across wide regions,
- making resources go further.

Additional consideration:

- creating 'new' experiences/ activities,
- making it progressive year on year,
- how to evaluate,
- safeguarding.





Plans for 2024-2025

DATE	EVENT
October 2024	Bletchley Park trip; code breaking workshop, guided tour and entry to museums and grounds
December 2024	Oxford Brookes University; workshops including motivational speakers, budgeting and finance, subject tasters and university transition
1st February 2024	Hertfordshire University trip; content TBC
14th-16th April	Easter residential including attendance at Young Carer Development Trust Conference
June 2025	Oxford University visit exploring higher tariff universities

Attendance figures

In 2023-24

- 54 young carers engaged across 10 events,
- 72% came to two or more events.

Since July 2021 the programme has worked with

- 112 young carers,
- One third of the group have returned for 2+ years.

Theory of change- how it started

Office for Students July 2020

- 1 There is no national data on the number of carers in higher education as not all disclose their caring responsibilities and their carer status can change.
- 2 Young adult carers are often a hidden population and so can be harder to reach and encourage into higher education.

Research over time

‘Young carers have significantly lower attainment at GCSE level – the difference between nine B’s and nine C’s’.

(The Children’s Society, Hidden from View, 2013)

‘One in 12 young people is a young carer’
BBC and University of Nottingham (2010)

‘The 2011 Census found that there were 166,363 young carers aged 5 to 17 years old in England, an almost 20% increase from the figure in the 2001 Census.
(Between 2001 and 2011 then, sandwiched between the two Censuses, five estimates of the number of young carers were published)’

‘There’s nobody is there – no one who can actually help?’ Feb 2016



Useful data from 2023 onwards

Young carers added to the [school census](#) in January 2023

Number of pupils known to be a young carer, 2023/24

	2022/23		2023/24	
	Number of pupils	Percentage	Number of pupils	Percentage
Total	38,983	0.5	53,975	0.6
State-funded primary	15,441	0.3	21,001	0.5
State-funded secondary	23,261	0.6	32,473	0.9

Young carer tick box added to UCAS application form in 2023

- **18,915** young adult carers *applied* to higher education in the 2023 cycle: representing 3.9% of all applicants.
- **14,615** were then *accepted* onto courses at higher education institutions (3.5% of all accepted applicants).
- 82% of applicants aged under 25 *were accepted* to higher education providers in 2023, in comparison to **77% of young adult carers**.

UCAS Next Steps: Young carers 2024

- 72% of all schools recorded zero young carers in their 2024 school census return. [Carers and Classes \(Carers Trust\)](#).
- Across our four regions 46% recorded zero young carers.

Our objectives



2021-23

- Provide young carers with information and experiences which will help them to **understand the different routes and skills needed for different jobs/careers.**
- Develop young carers' capacity to navigate higher education and graduate employment sectors and **make informed choices** which align with their personal and career interests

2023-25

- **Develop knowledge and awareness of the different pathways** post 18 (e.g., university, apprenticeships) and the benefits of these pathways (KNOW)
- Developing students' capacity to **navigate future pathways** and make informed choices (CHOOSE)
- Increasing **general confidence, resilience, supporting positive mental health** and creating an environment where participants feel safe and supported (BECOME)



Our evaluation evolution

July 2021-July 2023

Student

- Registration form questions
- Evaluation surveys after every event
- *End of year* residential -final survey

Staff

- Staff reflective feedback post- event
- One final end of year report

Sept 2023-July 2025 (SEER)

Remains the same

Student

- Registration form questions

Staff

- Staff reflective feedback post event

SEER

- One final end of year report

New

Student

- End of year survey

Parents

- End of programme survey

Staff

- Snapshot log
- Impact infographic

Other tweaks

Easter residential

Focus group



Postcard activity
feedback

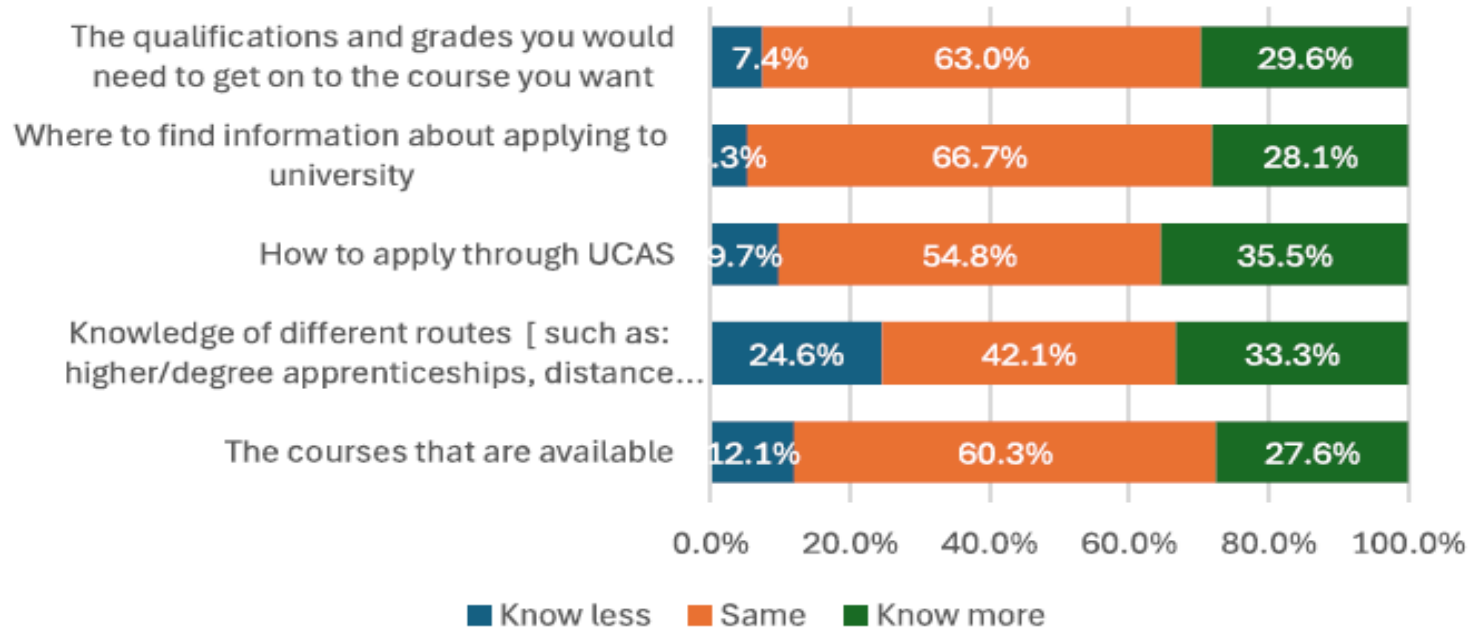
Student post-
event feedback

Impact insights (2023-24)

- All stakeholders were **highly satisfied** with the programme.
- Young people most commonly outlined that the programme has helped them **learn about different universities and courses**, given them the opportunity to **make friends** with people in similar circumstances and supported their **mental health**.
- Just under 40% of young people were more inclined to study for a degree.
- 94% of parents were highly satisfied with the programme.

A reflection on longitudinal data... or qualitative vs quantitative data

Figure 4: How much do you know about the following....



Young carers programme impact in 2023/24

Information

"Taking part these past couple of years has been the highlight of my university progression and finding my options/calling."
Young carer

"Actually visiting the range of universities has opened my daughter's eyes to the world of further study and the opportunities she can have. The events where she stayed for a few days to sample life in the area and meet other learners to ask questions were particularly valuable."
Parent

Wellbeing

"I think young carers across the Study Higher regions have really benefitted in terms of wellbeing and mental health and knowing whether or not higher education is an option for them."
Young carer

Confidence

"Learned lots of info about universities so is now more confident in making choices for the future."
Parent

"I really want to come to university now...It made me realise I could actually do it if I tried and put myself first."
Young carer

Respite

"Learning to be away from home and being away from my caring role."
Young carer

"Was a bit scary being away at first but doing OK now... enjoyed having my own room and my own space."
Young carer



50%

of participants mentioned social and confidence benefits as the biggest impact of the programme.

94%

of parents were highly satisfied with the YCOT programme for their child.

Community

"[He] really enjoys his time with you and has made some friends over the years he's been attending."
Parent

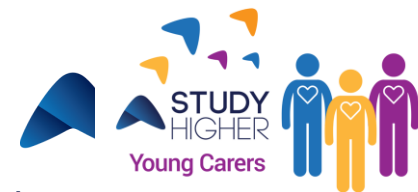
"The first time I came to an event I didn't speak to anyone but now I have."
Young carer

Sense of belonging

"Relating to student ambassadors and learning about university costs and how/ what I need in the future".
Young carer

"Being able to engage with people similar to my situation and making the most out of my experience."
Young carer

Parent / Guardian feedback



Parents / Guardians have shared that, since taking part in the programme, their young people feel more confident, have made new friends and have a better understanding of their future options and the steps they need to take to achieve their goals.

I HOPE THESE OPPORTUNITIES CAN CONTINUE, IT HAS BEEN THE MOST BENEFICIAL OPPORTUNITY EVEN COMPARED TO WHAT SCHOOL OFFERED, WHICH WAS DEFINITELY NOT AS COMPREHENSIVE OR FORWARD THINKING.

ACTUALLY VISITING THE RANGE OF UNIVERSITIES HAS OPENED MY DAUGHTER'S EYES TO THE WORLD OF FURTHER STUDY AND THE OPPORTUNITIES SHE CAN HAVE.

THE EVENTS WHERE SHE STAYED FOR A FEW DAYS TO SAMPLE LIFE IN THE AREA AND MEET OTHER LEARNERS TO ASK QUESTIONS WERE PARTICULARLY VALUABLE.

SHE ABSOLUTELY LOVED THE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE A UNIVERSITY AND EXPERIENCE THE CAMPUS. SHE IS DEFINITELY GOING TO UNIVERSITY!

WE ARE REALLY GRATEFUL FOR THESE OPPORTUNITIES AND HOPE THAT THERE WILL BE MORE VISITS PLANNED OVER THE NEXT FEW YEARS. THANK YOU!

What works?

- Community, relationships
- Regular programme/frequency of events
- Variety of activities and content
- Collaboration with HEIs and third sector
- Termly planning

What we've learnt?

- Costs (transport)
- Closure/ transition for young carers
- Student ambassadors
- Last minute drop-outs
- Carers service confusion
- Interactions outside our events
- Need for flexibility





STUDY





Keep in touch

www.studyhigher.ac.uk

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