

Future Focus Mentoring Programme evaluation report to LiNCHigher

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Executive summary

Overview

The LiNCHigher Future Focus Mentoring Programme, delivered by Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU), is aimed at engaging Year 10 students through a series of 1:1 tailored activities of support. The programme is designed to run for a total of eight weeks and includes an introduction and evaluation session and six weeks of substantial 1:1 mentoring activity. Last year the programme ran as a pilot with Year 12 students in one school. This academic year (2022/23) the programme was delivered to Year 10 students, in the same school as the pilot ran, during February and March. The LiNCHigher evaluation team were asked to evaluate the programme and make recommendations for its future delivery.

Evaluation approach

The evaluation was predominantly qualitative in nature consisting of separate focus group interviews with the mentors and mentees and semi-structured interviews with the school Careers Lead and the BGU Futures Programme Lead.

Key findings

The programme this year was a great improvement on last year. By all accounts it ran more smoothly, the mentees wanted to be there, and they were engaged. The mentees were reported to be the right age group for the programme and they all knew why they were there and wanted to listen and learn more about their post-16/18 options.

The programme seems to have had a positive effect on the mentees. Improved confidence and knowledge of CVs and interviews were reported as the main benefits. The mentees enjoyed the sessions, especially having someone to talk to about their future plans.

Both mentors and mentees said they would have liked the programme to have run for a few more sessions. The programme was scheduled to run for eight weeks but only ran for six.

Main recommendations

Limit the number of excess mentors that attend a session. Too many mentors in the room without a mentee can be intimidating for the mentees.

Mentor training should have more of an emphasis on how to plan sessions.

If funding allows, schedule time at the end of each session, approximately half an hour, for the mentors to plan the following weeks activities together.

Where possible, schools should have two classrooms available for each session rather than one.

Ensure a minimum of six 1:1 sessions are delivered, excluding the introduction and evaluation sessions.

1. Introduction

The LiNCHigher Future Focus Mentoring Programme, delivered by Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU), is aimed at engaging Year 10 students through a series of 1:1 tailored activities of support. The programme is based on the Career Development Institute (CDI) Framework¹. By the end of the programme students should be able to demonstrate:

- An increase in positive attitude towards Higher Education
- An increase in personal rating of their own confidence levels
- An increase in personal rating of their own resilience levels

Last year (2021/22) the programme ran as a pilot in one school with Year 12 students in May and June and was evaluated by the evaluation team at the University of Lincoln. The evaluation report made several recommendations which were implemented for the roll out of the programme. The revised programme is designed to run for eight weeks and includes an introduction and evaluation session and six weeks of substantial mentoring activity. All sessions are designed to be one hour long. The eight steps of the programme are:

- Step 1: Programme Introduction: Personal development and goal setting
- Step 2: Self Awareness: Self-reflection and learning
- Step 3: Life Balance: Looking after yourself (health and wellbeing)
- Step 4: Opportunity Awareness: Increasing your knowledge of the full range of post 16 & 18 options available to you
- Step 5: Career Management: Explore online resources to support your opportunities awareness and decision-making processes
- Step 6: Exploring Connections: Be proactive and build positive relationships
- Step 7: Personal Role in Society: Understand how society connects with your personal life and professional career
- Step 8: Evaluation session

At the start of the programme a baseline assessment is also carried out in which students rate themselves on a scale of one to five on their perceived strength within each of the CDI Framework development skills, this same assessment is carried out again at the end of the programme (Step 7).

This academic year (2022/23) the programme was delivered to eight Year 10 students during February and March in the same school as the pilot. Initially the intention was to deliver the programme in two of LiNCHigher's target schools but unfortunately one school had to withdraw. The LiNCHigher evaluation team were again asked to evaluate the programme and make recommendations for its future delivery.

¹ CDI Framework: https://www.theccdi.net/write/Framework/CDI_86-Framework-Guidance_in_Secondary_Schools-web.pdf

Evaluation approach

The evaluation consisted of the following qualitative activity:

- Two focus groups with the 12 BGU mentors; one in-person consisting of nine mentors and one over Teams with the remaining three mentors who were not able to make the in-person session.
- The reflective diaries of eight mentors.
- A focus group with three of the Year 10 mentee students that participated in the programme.
- Semi-structured interviews with the school's Careers Lead.
- Information gathered at project meetings from the BGU Futures Programme Lead.

In addition, data were obtained from pre- and post-programme surveys completed by four mentees. The baseline and follow-up assessments were also included in the evaluation to help assess the impact of the programme. Based on the CDI Framework the assessment asked the mentees to rate, on a scale of 1-5, their learning, aspirations, confidence, communication and people and support and contribution. Unfortunately, just four of the eight mentees completed both the baseline and follow up assessment, therefore the data they provide are limited. The assessment template is included in appendix A along with charts showing data from the four assessments that were fully completed.

Report structure

This short report is divided into two further sections. The first section explores how the programme went this year and the second draws together the findings and makes recommendations aimed at further enhancing the future delivery and effectiveness of the programme.

2. Findings

Setting up the programme

The setting up and running of the programme was reported to have been a lot 'smoother', 'organised' and 'calmer' this year than last. Both the school Careers Lead and the Programme Lead agreed that communication between them had been effective and neither reported any difficulties or challenges in setting the programme up. A date and time to run the programme was agreed without any difficulty and the Careers Lead particularly appreciated being sent programme documents in advance.

Recruitment of mentees

This year the programme was positively received by the mentees. Both the mentors and the school Careers Lead reported that the mentees were willing, engaged participants. This year the mentees volunteered for the programme, unlike last year when, according to the Careers Lead, the students were '*corralled*' into attending because they had a spare slot in their timetable. According to the Careers Lead this meant the students had '*no agency*' and were therefore not as engaged in the programme last year as they should have been. This year the main reason the mentees signed up was because they wanted to know what their post-16/18 options were and how to do interviews and write CVs.

The programme ran on a Thursday evening for one hour after school (3:15-4:15). This was felt to be the best time to schedule the sessions as it did not interfere with the school day and the majority of students at the school live in the local area and are therefore able to walk home. The Careers Lead actively recruited Year 10 students by going into assemblies and advertising the opportunity to take part in the programme to the whole year group.

I went in and did some notices and advertised the opportunity to the whole year group and said all they needed to do was come to the careers hub and speak to me and I would make a list based on the criteria that the Programme Lead had provided. I would then let them know if they had been selected to take part. We had nine people sign up for it. Eight were actually able to attend. The ninth unfortunately wasn't able to attend as they lived too far out, and the lack of an evening bus was a barrier to that.

All of the students that volunteered met at least one of the programmes selection criteria (see appendix B).

The mentors that had taken part in last year's programme commented on how much more engaged the mentees were this year because they wanted to be there. Mentors commented:

They actually knew what they were there for and weren't completely blind to what we were going to sit and talk to them about.

They were just very engaging and they just really wanted to listen, especially my mentee. She was just really going for it and she knew exactly what she wanted to learn.

My mentee was the kind of mentee every mentor would love to work with because the responsiveness was there. He wanted to learn; the eagerness to learn new things was there.

The mentees confirmed that they were willing participants and that the sessions were more interesting and engaging than they had first envisaged as this extract from the mentee focus group demonstrates:

Mentee 1: It wasn't what I thought it would be. It was a lot better than what I imagined.

Facilitator: In what way?

Mentee 1: Just everything was so much more like clearer. Like what I wanted to do when I was older, I could actually explore options.

Mentee 2: Yeah, when it was the first week I was planning on showing up and then probably not coming back because I thought it was gonna be boring, but I came to every session so it was a lot more interesting than I thought it was gonna be.

Mentee 1: Yeah.

Mentee 3: Yeah. I wasn't really hoping for much, honestly. I didn't know what to expect I just showed up with okay, I'm here to learn stuff about careers. That's what I'm gonna do. But suffice to say I learned quite a bit. The first week I found it quite fun. So I was, "I'll show up next week", and then I really started to learn the important stuff.

Mentor recruitment, training and support

A total of 15 mentors were initially recruited by the BGU Programme Lead, five of which had taken part in the programme last year. Twelve mentors were available for the programme. The mentors all received a full day of training at BGU the Saturday before delivery of the programme began. This year the mentors applied for their DBS checks to allow them to run

the sessions in the Programme Leader's absence, should this be necessary. The training day was described by the Programme Leader as '*...a great success*' stating, '*the training day was wonderful*'. The mentors all agreed that the training had gone well but that nothing could prepare them for actually delivering the sessions.

The mentors liked the fact that they were able to meet each other beforehand at the training day and get to know each other rather than '*doing it with a bunch of strangers*' as one mentor commented. They also found the training booklet, which had links to resources that they could point their mentee to, very useful.

Some of the mentors would have liked more time spent on planning sessions as part of the training. Whilst planning a session was included some mentors felt they would have liked more practice.

I think the only thing I would change about the training is to make it more focused on how to plan sessions. Because I thought when we first started like oh my god, how am I going to plan sessions because that was just kind of a rushed thing that we did. We did a practice one as a group that everyone made the same. So, it was great we had one session planned as a group, but it was only one session. I think if we had a bit more practical experience of how to plan sessions that would be more useful.

The mentors found the reflective diaries useful and reported that they generally worked well. Some mentors would have liked to have been able to check previous entries. They would also have liked to have had time after the session at school to complete the diaries whilst they were together. Comments from mentors included:

I think they worked well. It was nice. I think most people did keep them up to date. So you do the session, then you'd fill it in straight away. Maybe that would be a good activity to do after we meet back up at the uni. I'm just thinking so everyone then stays on track, because I know, one mentor fell behind on hers and then forgot what she did for each of the sessions. So, I think it's good to keep on top of them. But the notebook itself was really useful, like the questions they hinted.

I think the information is fresher when you have just completed the task. It's better we just sit together after visiting the school to all give our reflections rather than just letting everyone go home and do it.

It was good to reflect on what happened and if you've gained anything out of it. It was good to reflect on what I'd done what could have been better.

Overall, the mentors felt they were incredibly well supported by the Programme Lead throughout.

Mentor / Mentee relationship

The mentor/mentee pairings appeared to work well this year despite finding just one match using the Buzz Quiz at the introduction section. Instead, mentees paired up with the mentor whose name they could remember during the session. Both the mentors and the mentees were very happy with their pairing and no issues were reported with one mentor commenting:

It just seemed that everyone was getting on much better because when the groups were talking, there wasn't any big issues, whereas last year, there were lots of problems...There seemed to be no issues in the relationships between mentors and mentees, unlike last year.

One mentor explained how his relationship with his mentee has gone:

I was able to build trust, which I think is very important when dealing with young people. So he knew he could trust me so he was very free with me. And he was really sad to know that the programme was coming to an end because he wanted it to continue, so in my own case, everything went very well.

Sessions: delivery and resources

Delivery of sessions

In the main the sessions went well. However, few, if any, of the mentors followed the step-by-step weekly plan of activities. Instead, they delivered a bespoke programme tailored to their mentees needs. They were led by the mentee. Whilst they did cover all of the topics on the programme, they did not do so in order, as these mentors explained:

I did not follow that structure because I spoke to her about what she wanted to do. We stayed on similar things that she wanted to grow on, or I'd ask her which ones she'd rather do next.

We would follow it in the beginning, but then it's person centred, so it is what they're looking for and not really what we want them to know. So because they already had an idea, we just needed to follow them really and give them what they wanted.

It was good at the beginning to kind of know where they're lacking and where we could look into because maybe they didn't know that volunteering was useful, for example. So bringing that up and the work experience and stuff like that was useful because then they'll be like, "Oh, actually, I want to look into that".

Most weeks mentor/mentee pairings remained stable, unlike last year when there was a lot of swapping and non-attendance of mentees. Occasionally a mentee had two mentors which was said to be helpful especially if one mentor ran out of things to talk to the mentee about. On average seven of the eight mentees attended the sessions. This meant there was always spare mentors in case they were needed. Whilst the mentors felt this was helpful up to a point, they did comment that at times there were too many mentors in the session compared to the number of mentees with one mentor commenting:

The one thing I would say is that I think we had too many mentors to mentees. I think if we could align that a bit better we wouldn't have so many people loitering around just standing there.

The mentors preferred the sessions when they had two classrooms instead of one. This allowed them more space and made it easier to talk to their mentee as one mentor explained:

I think the classroom was big enough, but on our last session we had two classrooms available which seemed to be quite useful for everyone. We split up in the room and it was a lot more quieter. So, it was just a bit of a nicer atmosphere really.

The mentees were not prepared for their final session with their mentor and, according to the mentors, they were surprised to hear it was their last one. However, whilst it was their last session with the mentor it was not the last one in the programme, which meant that only three of the mentees attended the evaluation session the following week.

The mentors felt that the Year 10s were a good age group for the programme and that it worked much better than last year with year 12s. The mentees agreed. They felt Year 9 would be too young with one commenting:

...its beneficial now before we have all the stress of what's going to come. We get an overview of what's happening so we can get our options so that we know by Year 11 exactly what we want to do.

Resources

The mentors found the resources available to them useful and easy to use. They particularly liked the Strength Cards finding them a helpful tool if they ran out of things to talk about with their mentee, particularly if they were standing in for an absent mentor as it gave them an idea of where the mentee was. Mentor comments regarding the cards included:

They're very useful especially with this age. They seem to think they had no strengths at all, so it was quite nice to be able to show them that they did actually have some strengths.

I think the strength cards are incredibly helpful in learning about your mentee like the things they like, the things they do. So, I think that's like a really helpful thing to do earlier on in the mentoring process.

However, the mentees were divided over the usefulness of the Strength Cards, with one really liking them and one not. The third mentee said they had been absent the week they were used.

The mentors were frustrated that the STEPs booklet had been given to the mentees in advance of the programme and that they had completed it on their own. Some of the mentors had sessions built around the booklet that they could not deliver. The mentees did not find the booklet very helpful. One mentee described the booklet as '*the most pointless thing I've ever seen*'.

The mentors thought the baseline assessment worked well and felt it showed improvement in most cases. However, this was not demonstrated in the results. Just one of the same four mentees that completed both baseline and follow-up assessments showed considerable improvement across three of the areas rated: learning, communication and people and support. There may have been some confusion over the scale used for the baseline and follow-up assessments, one mentee reversed the scale and wrote it directly on the chart, another did not use the chart and wrote a score next to each of the six items being assessed. Last year the charts included the scores on the chart as well as in the key, this year the numbers were missing, which may explain why the results do not reflect how well the mentors thought they had worked. Some mentors felt it would be better if the mentees filled in the end of the programme assessment without them as they may be tempted to tell the mentor what they want to hear.

The only thing I would say is I think most of the mentees felt obliged to say they improved especially with the mentor hanging over them. But I think to the first one, it makes sense to do it with the mentor. So you can see where they need to improve. But the second one, we don't need to see it. I think they'd be more honest if they did it on their own the second time.

Pre- and post-programme survey

Four mentees completed both the pre- and post-programme survey therefore, as mentioned earlier in the report, the findings from the survey, whilst valid, are limited. Mentees were asked to what extent they agreed with six statements, the first five questions were asked on a five-point Likert scale and the final question was asked using a five star rating scale. The survey

was taken before the mentees took part in the programme and was repeated after the final session. The questions on the survey were:

1. Going to university would give me more career options.
2. I have a good understanding of the education routes available to me to support my future career.
3. I feel confident to make positive choices about my future.
4. I have the general study/academic skills I need to succeed in the future.
5. I have a good understanding of the subjects/course I need to take and how they link to careers I may be interested in.
6. Please tell us how resilient you feel you are.

The table below details the results, individual charts for each of the four mentees are included in appendix C. Mentees feeling of resilience was the most improved with a positive shift for all four responses. This was followed by their understanding of the education routes available where there was a positive shift for three of the four mentees. In the pre-programme survey, all agreed or strongly agreed going to university would give them more career options. However, in the post- survey two mentees changed their minds and were either neutral or disagreed with the statement. This could be due to mentees exploring alternative post-16/18 options with their mentor that they were previously unaware of.

Statement	Positive differences	Negative differences	Same response
Going to university would give me more career options	0	2	2
Good understanding of the education routes	3	1	0
Confidence to make positive choices for the future	1	1	2
Study/academic skills to succeed	2	1	1
Subjects/course and how they link to careers	2	1	1
Feeling of resilience	4	0	0

Impact

This year the programme was reported to have been beneficial to all parties involved.

Benefits for the mentees:

Benefits for the mentees that attended the programme included: increased confidence; a greater awareness of their post-16 options; how to go about writing a CV and how to prepare for interviews. The mentees particularly appreciated having someone to talk to about their future career options and work. As one mentee explained:

I found it really helpful, there was somebody by my side that's been through it all and knows all the answers and it kind of felt like you were cheating the system almost. You just had somebody there with all the answers.

One of the mentors had also noticed that the mentees appreciated having someone to talk to and listen to them commenting:

...just having someone to listen to them. Because a lot of the time students don't have somebody who will listen. They're having everybody tell them you need to do this. You

need to do that. So to actually have someone listening to them, I think was really important.

The following quotes are examples of the impact the programme had on mentees as noted by the mentors:

...She said she was okay speaking to people but she felt a lot more confident in her own skills and what she wanted to do even if she wasn't fully cemented the career she wanted to go into. She knew the kind of thing she had to proactively look for, rather than not doing anything at all for it.

It improved the confidence of my mentee. I think that was very, very evident. He was not confident about the future. He didn't know what he wanted. He didn't even understand how to approach interviews or create a CV or what the professional world looks like but during the course of the programme, his confidence really went up and he was happy that he took the decision to take part in this programme. So, I would say confidence is the major thing.

We feel like he's got a stronger idea of how to become an architect now. We found a volunteer job for him and he's already started doing a lot more art for his portfolio. I think he's got a firmer grasp of how to get what he wants.

We showed her where she could find CV examples and new formats, and she just started doing her own CV as well. She wanted to have an interview experience, so we did a play experience role and she was really good. Actually, I was like, "how can she be better at interviews than me? I have the experience". She was really good. And she knew what to say... I think that made her more confident to apply and actually go for the interviews and gets the sort of jobs she wants.

Some mentees had taken on voluntary roles in their area of interest whilst attending the programme as one mentor explained:

Especially with the volunteering. I mean, we told her about volunteering and the next week she comes so she's already Oh, I did research I found a place to send that. And that was very positive because that means, you know, we made an impact on her.

The Careers Lead also reported seeing a visible impact on some of the mentees that took part in the programme. Some mentees had increased in confidence, and some had been pushed outside of their comfort zone and thrived. As a result of attending the programme one mentee had subsequently joined the Cadets, a significant step for the student as the Careers Lead explained:

She has been successful in doing that and she has been talking to her friends about this is what I'm going to do in the future. That's a huge step. Because she was extremely anxious about meeting people outside of the school, extremely anxious even about coming to see me in my office to sign up for it. And so, the fact she now rocks up, waves at me and says I'm going upstairs and just takes stuff up to the room to meet the mentor...job done.

Benefits to the school:

The Careers Lead felt that if 'something benefits the pupil it also benefits the school. I think they go hand in hand'. As a result of running the programme the Careers Lead reported that the school now has a '...really good connection with the BGU mentors'. He also felt the school benefitted by having '...people who are interested in what we're doing, who have seen what

we do, particularly as those people are going into education settings at some point in the future'.

Benefits for the mentors:

The mentors also gained a lot out of taking part in the programme. The reported improved communication skills, confidence, the ability to be flexible and learning how to improvise. For some mentors it '*cemented*' what they wanted to do after they graduate from university, for example confirming it was or was not the age group that they wanted to work with in the future. One mentor said it had helped them '*feel a lot more comfortable in a professional setting*'. Overall, the mentors felt it was a good experience, they found it rewarding and felt they had really made a difference to their mentee commenting:

I was jealous, because I never had the opportunity these mentees had and probably if I'd had the opportunity they had I think I would be in a better place now. So it was a good experience for me. I was very happy with myself because I've been able to impact something significant in the life of a mentee. And I'm sure he will always remember that programme because it really helped him and changed his confidence level and took a lot his of fears away. I think we are like first points of contact to these mentees in terms of career goals. So we have actually played a very important role in the lives of these mentees. So I'm really happy with myself.

I think being a mentor just helps you to develop communication skills. At its most basic level it's just really good at helping you chat and talk and learn how to help. It's really rewarding. Like when my mentee was saying how I've genuinely helped...

Suggestions for improving the programme further

Everyone involved in the programme would like to see it run again next year. The mentors would be happy to be involved and the school Careers Lead would like to run it with more students if capacity allows.

The Careers Lead felt that this year the programme had lived up to and exceeded his expectations. The mentees commented that it was a '*very well thought out programme*'. The mentors and Programme Lead were also happy with how well the programme had been delivered and received.

However, there were a few suggestions, especially from the mentors, of how the programme could be improved further or the experience enhanced for mentees. Mentors felt strongly that students should have some form of reward or validation for taking part in the programme on completion, a certificate of achievement or similar. Mentors also felt schools could make it clearer to students what the programme entails to encourage them to sign up. Another suggestion was that the school could use the current mentees as Careers Ambassadors to promote the programme next year. The mentors would like to have extra time during their debriefing session where they could jointly plan their next session. They suggested half an hour would be sufficient. This would allow them to pool ideas and gain insights from each other of where to go the following week with their mentee.

So, for the next week we could help each other if we got stuck on anything or there was something that a mentee said to you that you don't really know how to progress on this, to get insight from each other. We could all help each other further.

Some of the mentees would have liked a few more group activities, specifically time at the end of each session to share with the group what they have been learning with their mentor and give them ideas of what they would like to cover in the future.

Because we all I'm pretty sure asked how to write a CV. And if we had done it as one group we probably would have, like because all the things that he said he asked his mentor, I should have asked my mentor.

One mentee suggested giving them a list of topics at the start of the programme that could be covered, for example writing a CV, and if they all said one specific thing, they could have covered it as a group.

The final suggestion, which comes from both the mentees and the mentors, was to run at least two more sessions. Both groups felt the programme was a little short and that they had not quite finished things off as they would have liked. One of the mentees commented: *'I wish it could have gone on for a bit longer.'*

3. Conclusions and recommendations

What worked well:

- The programme this year was a great improvement on last year. By all accounts it ran more smoothly, the mentees wanted to be there, and they were engaged when they did attend. The mentees were reported to be the right age group for the programme and they all knew why they were there and wanted to listen.
- The mentor / mentee relationships were reported by all parties to have been good and more stable than last year.
- The programme seems to have had a positive effect on the mentees. Improved confidence and knowledge of CVs and interviews were reported as the main benefits. The mentees enjoyed the sessions, especially having someone to talk to about their future plans.
- The mentors liked the Strength Cards and found them a useful resource. However, the students were divided on how useful the cards were; one did not find them at all useful, one mentee did and one was not in the session the week they were used.
- Whilst the mentors felt the baseline assessment worked well and that it showed improvement in most cases this is not borne out in the results.
- The mentors felt fully supported by the Programme Lead throughout the programme.

What did not work so well

- The Buzz Quiz did not really work, there was only one match in the room. Alternative ways to match up were used that were successful.
- There was an issue with the STEPs Booklet – the mentees had been given it to complete before the programme started by the school Careers Lead as a separate activity. The mentors were unaware of this. One of the mentees felt the booklet was 'pointless'.
- Some mentors felt there were, at times, too many mentors in the room. Whilst understanding that they needed to have some floating to fill in any gaps they still felt there could have been a few less. However, some mentors found it useful to have 2:1 with the mentee; someone to keep the conversation going at times.
- None of the mentors followed the weekly plan. Instead, they were guided by the interests and needs of their mentee and covered topics in their own time, sometimes discreetly sometimes mixing several themes in one session.

- There was a slight miscommunication at the end of the programme. The mentors told the mentees that it was their last session – understandably they wanted to say goodbye – but unfortunately the Careers Lead was unaware of this which resulted in only three of the mentees turning up for the evaluation session.

Suggested improvements

- In terms of training, some mentors would like more of a focus on planning sessions. Planning one was useful, but they would have liked more time on this.
- The mentors would like to have a joint planning session each week at the end of each session. They would also like to fill in the reflective diaries at the same time. They found the reflective diaries useful.
- The mentors preferred it when they had two classrooms rather than one.
- Mentees would have liked a few minutes together as a group at the end of every session to share what each had been learning to get an idea of what topics could be covered.
- Both mentees and mentors said they would have liked the programme to have run for two or three more sessions. The programme was in fact two sessions short. It was scheduled to run for eight weeks – week 1: introduction, week 8: evaluation and six sessions in between. However, only four of the six sessions were delivered. One session was cancelled due to the teachers strike the other was used for the evaluation to be carried out before the end of term instead of afterwards due to timetabling constraints at the school.

Recommendations for the Future Focus Mentoring Programme

LiNCHigher:

- When marketing the programme to schools, consider providing them with a programme outlining the topics or areas to be covered rather than with a step-by-step week-by-week breakdown. This will give the mentors more flexibility in how they deliver the programme to mentees and make it a more personalised, tailored experience.

BGU:

- Limit the number of excess mentors that attend a session. Having one or two floating mentors can be advantageous but more than this can be intimidating for the mentees and is not the best use of a mentors time.
- Consider in advance different methods that can be used to pair mentors and mentees, especially when numbers are small, to avoid the mentors having to think 'on the hoof' of how the pairing can take place.
- Have more of an emphasis on how to plan sessions during the training.
- At the end of each session schedule a joint mentoring planning session if funding allows, lasting approximately half an hour.
- Continue with the reflective diaries as the mentors found these to be useful.
- Use numbers on the baseline and follow-up charts as well as in the key in order to avoid confusion or consider an alternative method of collecting the data.

- Allow for 5-10 minutes at the end of a session for everyone to come together and share with the group an overview of what they have been talking about in the session.

Schools:

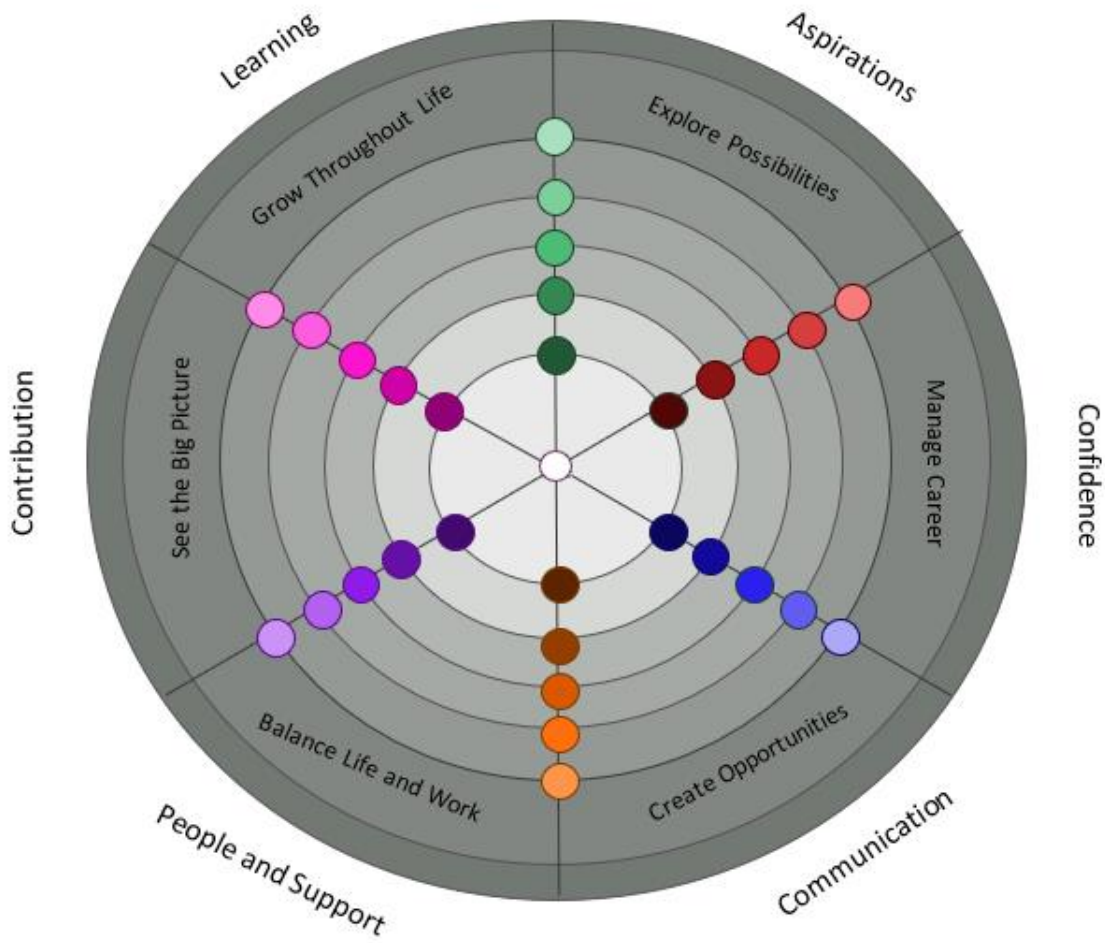
- Where mentoring resources such as the STEPs booklet are used with student mentees beforehand this should clearly be communicated to the mentors to ensure they are aware this is the case.
- Where possible, have two classrooms available for each session rather than one. Mentors felt this would provide a little more privacy for the mentees and make it easier for them to engage.
- The evaluation session should be informal and carried out by the school. It should be seen as an opportunity for the school, and the BGU Programme Lead, to gain feedback from the mentees about how well the programme has gone.

All parties:

- The end of the programme needs carefully managing with better communication between all parties to ensure the mentees are both aware of when their last session with their mentor is and of any planned evaluation activity.
- Ensure a minimum of six 1:1 sessions are delivered excluding the introduction and evaluation sessions.

Appendix A: Baseline and follow-up assessments

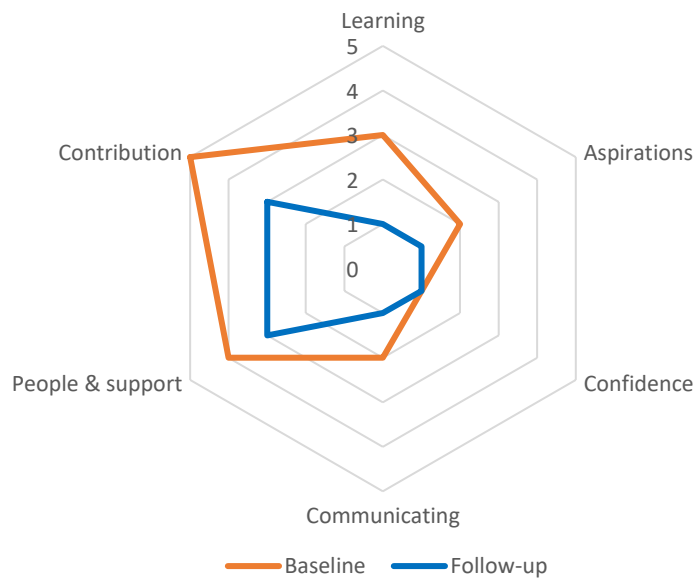
Assessment template:



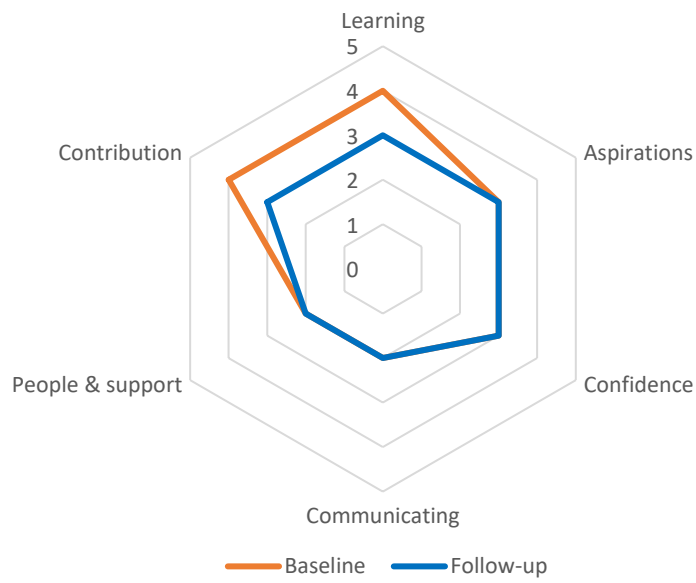
KEY (dark to light)

- 5 Positive strengths
- 4 No issues identified
- 3 General issues identified
- 2 Significant and/or specific issues identified
- 1 Critical and/or complex issues identified

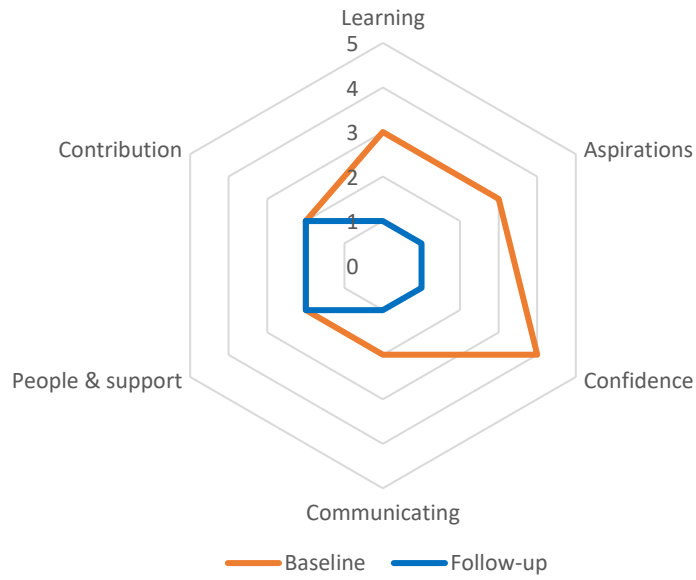
Mentee 1



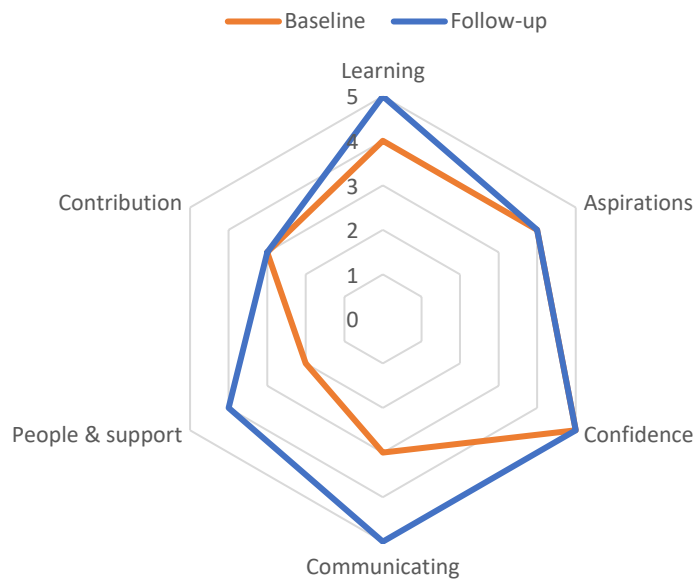
Mentee 2



Mentee 3



Mentee 4



Appendix B: Criteria for participation

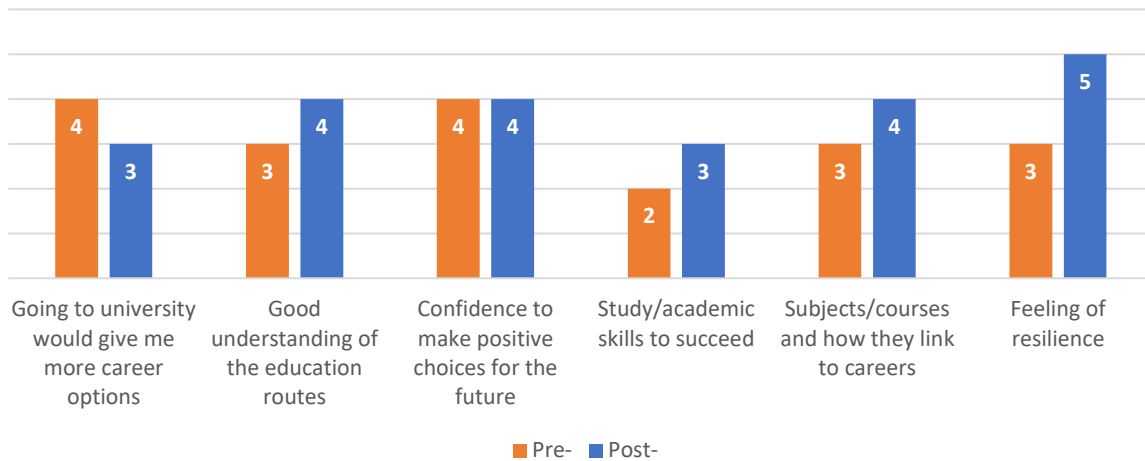
Schools have access to 10 places and are advised that the programme is accessible to students with specific characteristics considered to be underrepresented in Higher Education by the Office for Students, including:

- Students from areas of low Higher Education participation, low household income or low socioeconomic status
- Black, Asian and minority ethnic students
- Disabled students
- Care Experienced
- Young Carers
- Estranged students
- Students from Gypsy, Roma and Traveller communities
- Refugees
- Children from an Armed Forces family

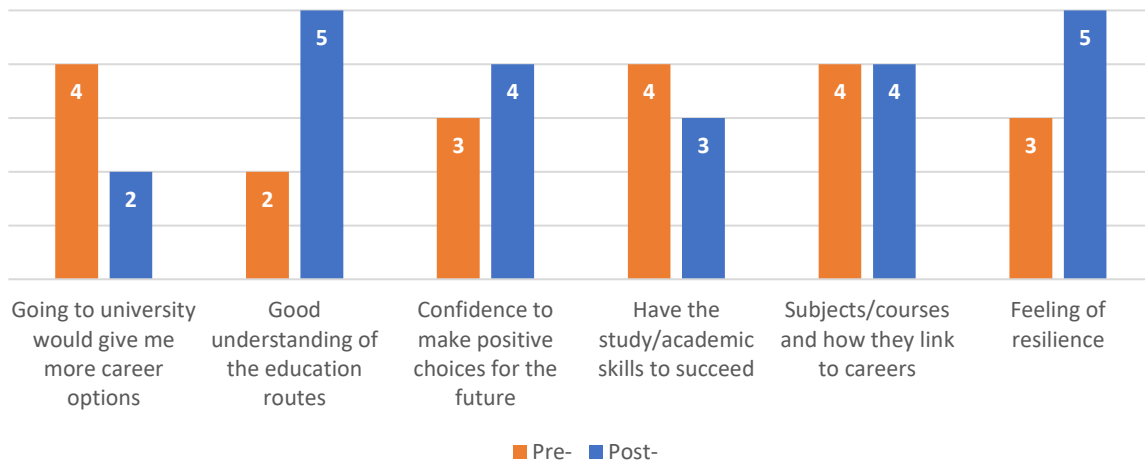
Appendix C: Pre- and post-programme survey results

The results show the scores for the pre- and post-programme survey questions where 1 = strongly disagree and 5 = strongly agree. The feeling of resilience questions was rated using a five star rating scale.

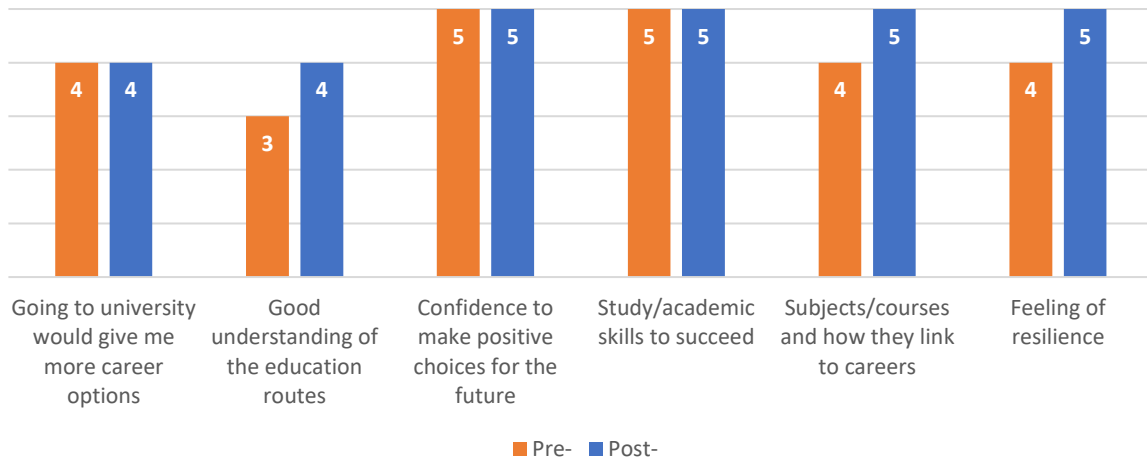
Mentee 1



Mentee 2



Mentee 3



Mentee 4

