


2026

University of
Kent

OUTREACH AND WIDENING PARTICIPATION IMPACT REPORT



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OUTREACH AT THE UNIVERSITY OF KENT

At the University of Kent, we are proud of our collaborative work with schools and colleges to support students from all backgrounds to access, succeed in and progress from higher education (HE).

This report, written in 2026, highlights the outreach work undertaken during the 2024/25 academic year. Due to the time required for data collection and analysis, 2024/25 is the most recent academic year for which complete data is available.

Our programmes are evidence-based by design, grounded in sound pedagogy and informed by impact data to ensure meaningful outcomes. For over 15 years, we have collected data from students participating in our outreach activities to monitor our work, evaluate outcomes and assess its impact on under-represented students.

We are founding members of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT), a collaboration of over 100 HE providers and third-sector organisations committed to monitoring and evaluating interventions to understand what works for equality of opportunity.

Since 2015, the University has:

Tracked over
45,000
outreach participants
who are now HE ready



Of which **36%**
progressed to
higher education





ACCESS AND PARTICIPATION PLAN

Our ambitious Access and Participation Plan (APP) took effect in September 2024 and will remain in place until August 2028. We are proud of our work to support students from all backgrounds to access, succeed in and progress from HE. We recognise the transformational power of an outstanding university experience and the value that a diverse student body brings to our institution.

The plan outlines the University's priorities for improving access to higher education, supporting student success and continuation during their studies at Kent, and enhancing progression to graduate employment or further study for students from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds.

In support of our access requirements, we are committed to working in partnership with schools and colleges that have KS4 results lower than the national average or contain a high percentage of pupils who experience socio-economic disadvantage. We are also committed to working with care-experienced students, in partnership with other local universities and partners, to ensure equality of opportunity for all students.

Visit our APP website here:



// Our mission is to provide our students with an experience that is inclusive, supportive and enables them to excel. //

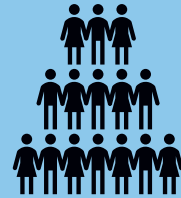
Clare Allison
Head of Outreach and Widening Participation

Our mission:

Increase the reading level ratio gain for a group of **25** students at Brompton Academy



Increase the percentage of TUNDRA Q1 first degree entrants to the University of Kent



Increase the percentage of IMD Q1 first degree entrants to the University of Kent



Increase the number of care experienced entrants to the University of Kent, Canterbury Christ Church University and The University for the Creative Arts



2024/25 IN NUMBERS

In 2024/25:

We engaged with over
5,650
students



Delivering more than
550
outreach activities



To more than **115**
institutions across
Kent and Medway



This equates to more
than **2,000**
hours of contact time



Driving equity in access to higher education

We remain steadfast in our commitment to supporting students who are underrepresented in higher education.

42% of
participants were
from socio-economically
disadvantaged areas
(IMD Quintiles 1 & 2)



45% came from
areas with historically
low higher education
progression
(TUNDRA Quintiles 1 & 2)



35% were
in receipt of
free school meals



47% would be
the first in their family
to go to university



SUSTAINED AND PROGRESSIVE APPROACH...

Evidence suggests more positive outcomes for those who participated in three to six hours of outreach per academic year (Equality of Opportunity – Office for Students). This approach improves learners’ confidence and knowledge of higher education. Sustained engagement is found to have a positive impact on long-term outcomes, including progression to higher education (OfS).

HEAT research has identified 11+ contact hours across the student lifecycle as a useful proxy for sustained engagement associated with improved HE participation for disadvantaged students.

In response, the University has developed a progressive curriculum which enables students to participate in a range of activities each academic year. Activities build upon the knowledge of each other to provide a well-rounded perspective on higher education and provide essential information to assist students in making informed decisions about their future. The progressive nature of the curriculum enables the University to track progress over multiple academic years.

In the first two years of our APP:

More than **1,600** students have participated in interventions across the two academic years



Two thirds of these students have participated in both a campus visit and a school/college activity



In 2024/2025:

Over **4,000** students participated in three or more hours of outreach. That is 72% of all learners engaged



More than **1,000** students completed 6+ hours of activity (1 in 5)



We offered **7** different programmes that were four weeks or more in duration



OUR PRE-16 WORK

The importance of early engagement

For our pre-16 work; we predominantly work in partnership with local schools that fall within the bottom 40% nationally for GCSE attainment, providing targeted support to help raise achievement and improve outcomes for students.

Research consistently shows that engaging students before the age of 16 is crucial for supporting long-term progression. Our own data reinforces this, which is why we begin working with learners from Year 7 onwards to lay the groundwork for future success.

We tracked over 6,000 HE-ready students (aged 18+) in 2023. Overall, 28% have progressed to higher education so far.

Progression rates varied by outreach engagement:

- 22.5% for those who participated in pre-16 only activities
- 29.5% for those who participated in post-16 only activities
- 33.1% for those who engaged both pre- and post-16

These findings highlight the impact of sustained outreach across key stages.

Wherever possible, we also involve parents and carers to strengthen the support network around each student.

HEAT (2020) research also shows that learners who attend on campus activities are more likely to enter HE than those attending off-campus activities. This is particularly pronounced among disadvantaged groups. Therefore, our pre-16 curriculum provides multiple opportunities for students to visit our campuses at different stages throughout their pre-16 journey.

// On the tour when we were walking around, I was actually in my head thinking, I could actually go here. //

Student (Year 7)

In 2024/25:

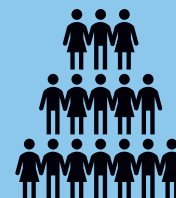
1,700+ pre-16 students:

Visited our Canterbury and Medway campuses



Including over 570 Year 7 students:

At the very start of their secondary school journey



25+ families welcomed to campus:

Opening doors for parents and carers to explore higher education alongside their children



Over **30** HE Subject Insight activities were delivered to pre-16 students

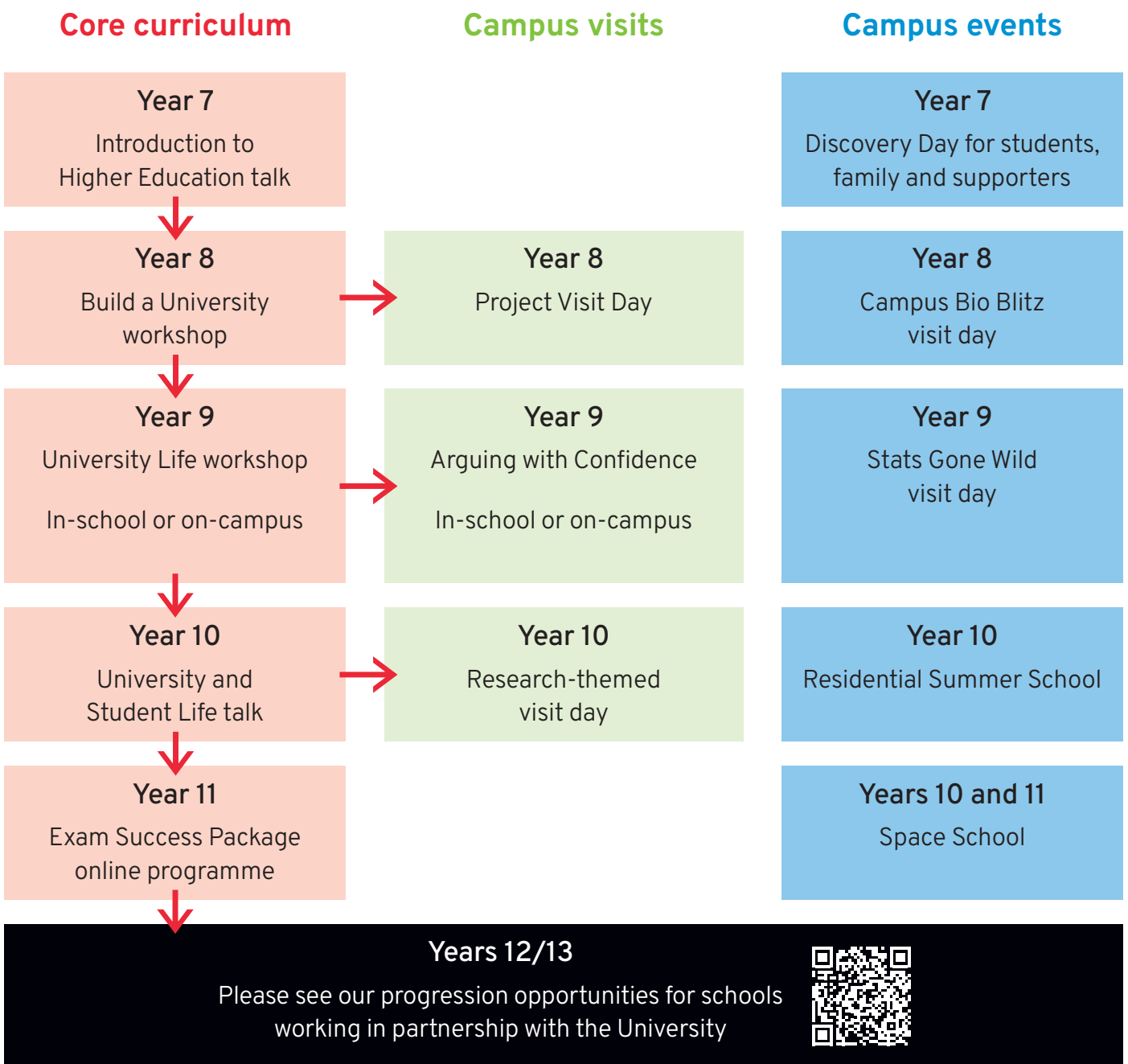


159 students joined us for our Festival of Languages & Culture



PRE-16 PROGRESSION ROUTE MAP*

Our curriculum has been designed to allow students opportunities to engage with university and our student ambassadors throughout their student journey. By following our core curriculum and adding optional visits, students will be provided with a unique opportunity to develop their understanding of HE.



*Please note this progression map is accurate for the 2024/2025 year and is updated annually. The offer is likely to be amended for future cohorts.

ATTAINMENT RAISING

In collaboration with our local schools, the University has developed 3 attainment raising programmes to support students in developing literacy and numeracy skills. Research suggests that these are key foundational skills that support access to the broader curriculum as well as supporting overall academic success.

Our reading programme

Our reading programme was first piloted in the 2023-2024 academic year. It is designed to increase reading confidence and support students with below-average reading age to increase their literacy scores.

To measure impact, we have used a mixed methods approach: Standardised tests track academic progress, with qualitative information gathered from pre and post programme surveys and mini interviews.

In 2024/25, 77 students took part. Of which 46% of students improved their reading age by 6 months or more. This equates to double the rate of expected progress over the course of the programme.

Students reported:

- Increased vocabulary
- Increased confidence in reading aloud
- Increased reading enjoyment

Schools reported:

- Increased uptake in books taken from a school library
- Increased reading attainment score in comparison to those who did not participate in the programme

Feedback said:

“ Helped my reading to get better and how to effectively [read] with full stops, commas. This programme has helped me.”

Student

“ I [liked] playing the reading games and reading the books aloud. I would not change anything.”

Student

Our oracy programme

Our oracy programme is a debating programme specifically designed to develop key learning skills linked to literacy with the aim of raising students' academic attainment, particularly their performance in KS4 English. This programme was delivered to 90 students across six schools.

Our results show:

- Average speaking time per student rose from 30 seconds to 93 seconds
- Greater confidence in speaking skills
- Increased confidence in critical thinking skills such as checking the credibility of sources
- Increased confidence to succeed in GCSE English
- Increased confidence to participate more in class

One participating school reported that 58% of participants increased their English grade by 1 level or more following the programme

Feedback said:

“ I couldn't do, like, the PEE paragraph, which is point, evidence, explain, I'd only be able to make a point, but the rest wouldn't, like, do it. But now, in here, everything I just said, it all goes together, and just makes a perfect, like, paragraph or sentence.”

Student

“ Where [we were also able to] have a tour of the university, also possibly gives me and others' ideas for maybe this is an option for where I want to maybe go in the future.”

Student

Our numeracy programme

We teamed up with Catch-Up to provide numeracy support to 48 students across two schools. The programme offered 1:1 sessions, with students working closely alongside mentors. The programme focuses on key foundational mathematics concepts.

Our results show:

- By the end of the programme the majority of students were achieving at least 79% in rounding, adding, subtracting and multiplying
- Increased enjoyment of maths
- Increased confidence in students' maths abilities
- Many students spoke positively about the 1:1 sessions

Feedback said:

// I like that the teacher does the questions with me and if I get the wrong answer I have help. //

Student

// One student in particular, I could see her confidence grow so much throughout quite a short period of time. //

Mentor

KS4 results

The latest KS4 results of our outreach participants are from the 2023 exam cohort. On average, students who participated in outreach activities designed to raise attainment – either generally or specifically in literacy or STEM – achieved better outcomes than their school's overall average.

General attainment raising activities

On average, students who took part in general attainment raising activities had a better Attainment 8 score (+3.28) and Progress 8 score (+0.23) than their school average. More outreach participants achieved 9-4 in English and Maths (by 1pp). Differences were even greater for those students in receipt of free school meals.

	Participants	School average
Average attainment 8 Score	41.04	37.76
Average progress 8 Score	-0.12	-0.35
Achieved 9-4 English and Maths	50%	49%

Literacy attainment raising activities

On average, students who took part in literacy attainment raising activities had a better Attainment 8 score (+11.37) and Progress 8 score (+0.43) than their school average. More outreach participants achieved 9-4 in English and Maths (by 23pp).

	Participants	School Average
Average attainment 8 Score	50.18	38.81
Average progress 8 Score	0.09	-0.34
Achieved 9-4 English and Maths	75%	52%

// Yeah, I've been more confident at school. Like, in English, I've answered a lot more questions, and I've been giving a lot more detailed answers. //

Student



Summer Schools

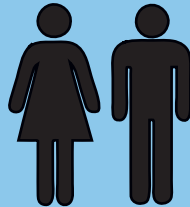
Summer schools offer an immersive experience that help attendees envision themselves as university students.

In July 2025, 53 Year 10 students took part in a residential experience at our Canterbury campus of which:

77% of students were eligible for free school meals



54% would be the first in their family to go to HE



46% of students were from TUNDRA Q1 areas



Our evaluation showed us:

- A reported increase in their knowledge of HE, sense of belonging and intention to apply
- Strong increases in their knowledge of what studying in HE would be like and how it is different to studying in school

Feedback said:

// I didn't want to come to uni at all. I was so against it... but I came here and I was like, after the tours and after the seminars and after everything, I felt comfortable. //

Summer school student

Read our Summer School report here:



Family and Supporter Discovery Days

Parents and supporters play a key role in shaping young people's decisions. We ensure they are well-informed and empowered to support their young person's journey to higher education.

These half-day visits to campus offer students, their family and supporters the opportunity to learn more about university life. In 2024/2025:

25 families joined us on campus



Feedback said:

// I attended today's open day for year 7 students with my daughter and we thoroughly enjoyed it and it was very informative and helpful and has made not only my daughter excited about her future but it also spoke to me as well. //

Parent

// Now that I have the idea of what a campus is like and stuff, I feel like I'd be more comfortable than I was before. //

Student


OUR SIXTH-FORM AND FE COLLEGE WORK

In 2024/25:

We engaged with over
2,100
students in sixth form
and FE colleges



Hosting **37**
campus visits with
1,100+ students
visiting our campuses



Delivering over
220 activities



Head Start

Our Head Start events provide resources; guidance and support throughout the summer, to ensure that students will be ready to go from the moment they arrive at Kent.



In 2024/25, the Outreach team:

Successfully supported
250+ students
transition to the University
of Kent through our
Head Start programme



Visit the Head Start webpages here:



Sixth Form Conference Series

We are expanding our on-campus conference series to offer multi-disciplinary events which allow students to engage with academic content and find out more about what studying these subjects at university really entails.

In 2024/25 we ran three sixth-form conferences:

Over **400** local
sixth form and college
students attended



They got an insight into:

- Languages
- Maths, Physics and Engineering
- Law, Psychology and Criminology

91% of Languages
Conference attendees said the
event made them more interested
in languages and cultures

84% of Languages Conference
attendees said the event made them
want to learn languages, more than
they did before

“ This event helped me see how much impact languages have in the real world and that it can interact with my preferred subjects in very surprising and fun ways. ”

Student

PROGRESSION ROUTE MAP*

Our activities are designed to inform, inspire and increase awareness of higher education. We have a range of talks and workshops within the themes below to support students at each step throughout their educational journey.

Our sessions are available in person or online. We also offer a series of livestream talks to support students and their parents/guardians through these decision-making moments.

The livestreams, placed at key points in the UCAS cycle, offer essential information, first-hand experience from our student ambassadors and a chance to have students' questions answered.

In-school/FE college

Considering university

Explore the decision-making process ensuring that students make the choice that's right for them.



Applying to university

From understanding the UCAS process; to writing a personal statement, preparing for interviews and understanding student finance, we can support your students every step of the way.



Preparing for university

Students planning to enter university often have many questions about how to best prepare. Help them feel fully prepared and confident in knowing what to expect next. These sessions include insights from current students and practical information on the transition to university.

Online

Value of HE



It's not too late to consider HE



A guide to finance



What can I expect at university

Meeting the Gatsby Benchmarks

We've mapped how each of our activities and events are aligned with the Benchmarks and how they can support schools and colleges to deliver on their Careers Strategy.



*Please note this progression map is accurate for the 2024/2025 year and is updated annually. The offer is likely to be amended for future cohorts.



// I think before Succeed, I wasn't as confident, and now I'll be in a lecture hall, calling out stuff. [...] They taught us so much about what uni life is and how you can get support. //

Focus Group Participant

AMBITION TO SUCCEED PROGRAMME

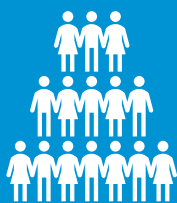
Ambition to Succeed is our flagship Level 3 progression scheme which is designed to support students to explore their options before applying to higher education. The programme takes place over six months with additional and optional support offered in Year 13 when making applications. Sessions include in-person visit days and online workshops, culminating in a four-day residential on our Canterbury campus. Students who complete the programme and progress to the University of Kent are also eligible for our Ambition to Succeed Scholarship.

As part of the programme; Year 12 students are introduced to a diverse range of academic subjects, many of which may be unfamiliar to them. Through immersive experiences such as university-style lectures, they are encouraged to explore new interests and gain a deeper understanding of the different subjects on offer at Kent. By the end of the year, students are equipped with the knowledge and confidence to make informed decisions about their future academic journeys. While we hope to welcome many of them to Kent, this experience provides valuable preparation for wherever they choose to progress. It also enhances their personal statements with evidence of curiosity, motivation and academic engagement.

The results:

Within the last seven years, we've had over

220 students complete the programme



57% of whom progressed into higher education



Our most recent cohort:

In 2025, **56** students finished the programme



57% of those have applied for a place at the University of Kent



17 students from the 2024 cohort have received the University's Ambition to Succeed Scholarship in 2025/2026



// I would definitely encourage, if I had a younger friend, to do it, because it does widen up what you think about university and it's quite helpful to see what it's like.//

Succeed Participant

// He got home feeling more confident on what to do... He is better informed and so am I.//

Succeed Participant Parent



UNIVERSITY OF KENT ACADEMIES TRUST

The University is the proud sponsor of the University of Kent Academies Trust (UKAT). The Trust comprises of two secondary schools in Medway – Brompton Academy and Chatham Grammar.

The University of Kent's relationship with the two schools goes well beyond formal governance roles. Strategic involvement as lead sponsor of the UKAT enables us to understand the needs and challenges faced by schools and multi-academy trusts. We contribute fully to the governance and education of learners in the Trust. We support the CPD of school staff and we pilot innovative attainment activities co-developed by teaching staff, outreach practitioners, UKAT students and University of Kent Student Ambassadors.

Our partnership has supported in improved attainment and increased progression to HE. As a result, Brompton Academy is currently the most oversubscribed non-selective secondary school in Medway.

Our work with UKAT was featured as a case-study for effective practice by the Office for Students (OfS).



// The University of Kent Outreach Team sets the benchmark for excellence in widening participation. Their unwavering commitment, innovation, and ability to inspire young people has a transformative impact on lives, families, and communities. UKAT is incredibly proud to work alongside a team whose dedication continues to open doors, raise aspirations, and create opportunities that will be felt for generations to come. //

Chief Executive Officer
University of Kent Academies Trust

In 2024/2025:

The university delivered
over **200** outreach
activities to students
in UKAT



This included over
640 hours
of contact time



In 2025, over **76%**
of all UKAT students who
completed Year 13
progressed to HE



In 2006 **only one**
student from Brompton
Academy applied to higher
education through UCAS



OUR WORK WITH TARGETED GROUPS

Care-experienced students

Care-experienced students are underrepresented in HE and have significantly poorer educational outcomes (OfS, 2022).

Published statistics show that progression to higher education has declined over the last few years: the Kent and Medway average was 8% in 2016/17, but decreased to 4% in 2020/21 (Department for Education, 2022).

We want to change the narrative.

Key highlights from our work in 2024/25:

9 insight visits delivered for care-experienced students, focused on supporting their application journey and transition into higher education



8 online CPD sessions were held for professionals, equipping them with tools to better support care-experienced learners.



Specialist sessions delivered to **45** foster carers offering guidance on applications to HE



12 care-experienced young people participated in our Spring School, gaining valuable exposure to university life and new aspirations



Opening Doors

Acknowledging the unique challenges faced by care-experienced students, we work in close partnership with Canterbury Christ Church University and the University for the Creative Arts through the Kent and Medway Progression Federation (KMPPF). Together, we deliver a broad range of opportunities designed to empower young people and provide vital support to those who guide them; including professionals and foster carers.

Our Opening Doors programme plays a central role in this mission; helping young people and their support networks make informed, confident decisions about their future.

Supporting care-experienced young people: Plan My Path and beyond


Plan My Path is a progressive programme for pre-16 children in care offering inspiring, interactive sessions both in school and on the University of Kent campus. Designed to help students explore their future and pathways to higher education, the programme is delivered in partnership with schools with higher numbers of children in care.

2024-25 Plan My Path highlights:

12 sessions delivered across **3** schools



78% of students reported increased knowledge in understanding what university study would be like



// I feel like it is an option in the future if I wanted to go to university. //

Plan My Path Participant



In addition...

We also worked with 24 ESOL learners – mostly unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people – at Broadstairs College, supporting them through tailored activities.

Our partnerships with Virtual School Kent and Kent County Council's 18+ Care Leaving Service allows us to connect with professionals and care leavers aged 18–25. We presented at VSK's annual conference, reaching around 150 professionals and took part in the 18+ Care Leaver Summer Event.

Co-creation

All of this work is supported by our Targeted Outreach Ambassadors – current University of Kent students with care experience. The ambassadors are consulted, invited to share ideas, review the content and support the delivery of sessions. Their lived expertise drives the impact of our outreach:

// **Being a Targeted Outreach Ambassador is empowering. I've been able to share my care experience and help young people overcome stereotypes.** //

// **This role has helped me understand my own story and use it to empower others – including the professionals who support care-experienced people.** //

Our work with targeted ambassadors was published in *Co-constructing Education for All* – read the article here:



Transition support

Our work with care experienced students extends beyond entry into higher education. Our targeted outreach team continue to support students transitioning into and succeeding within higher education.

To find out more about the full lifecycle support offered to care-experienced students, visit our case study:



Championing Boys

Research highlights persistent educational challenges for boys across all stages of the education lifecycle. Those from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds tend to experience lower GCSE attainment rates and lower progression to higher education than their female counterparts.

Championing Boys is a progressive programme designed to support boys who experience these educational challenges, through a series of modules aimed to explore potential identities and future educational opportunities, as well as giving a platform for their voices to be listened to.

In 2024/25:

76 students completed the programme



61% were eligible for Free School Meals



School data suggests that **48%** of students' attitude to learning scores increased by 1 grade or more following the programme

Student feedback said:

// It's made me change my thoughts about a lot of different things. Like, education, university and what university really is. Like, I didn't know what a university is. I thought it was just like a school like this, just bigger. //

Student

// It's just made me work harder. I don't know how. I don't know why. As I've mentioned maths and English already, in English I've been more focused, and I've written a lot more. //

Student

// I felt like it was sort of like a safe area to talk, as well, because there was no one that would really judge you. //

Student

Teacher feedback said:

// I can already see the foundations of what is going to grow over upcoming years thanks to the skilled way they work with our pupils. The pupils within the groups are developing strong bonds and friendships and developing a deeper understanding of who they are. //

Teacher

This work was accepted as part of a parliamentary enquiry into the attainment and progression of boys. Read the submission here:



COLLABORATION: A KEY TO SUCCESS

We know that significant collaboration is required to support pre-16 attainment in the region and progression to HE for student groups who face equality of opportunity risks.

The university has a long history of collaboration with other local HE providers, local authorities and third sector organisations to achieve our goals most effectively. As lead institution for our Uni Connect partnership (KaMCOP) and through established networks such as the Kent and Medway Progression Federation (KMPF), the East Kent Schools Together and the Care Leaver Progression Partnership (CLPP), we continue to work collaboratively to effect positive change within economically disadvantaged communities across the county and to ensure equality of opportunity for all students.

Kent and Medway Progression Federation

KMPF is a partnership between the University of Kent, Canterbury Christ Church University, the University for the Creative Arts, the University of Greenwich and over 50 schools and colleges in Kent and Medway.

KMPF was originally established in 2011. The partnership's longevity evidences our commitment towards ensuring that every young person in Kent & Medway has the potential to benefit from higher education.

An average of **1,500** activities per year have been delivered through the KMPF partnership



59% of students attending KMPF activities were from areas of low progression to higher education



In 2024/25, the University exceeded all of its Uni Connect delivery targets. Meaning the University reached substantially more learners than expected



KMPF Research suggests that students who have taken part in intensive outreach were **8.5 percentage points** more likely to enter higher education than a group of similar students who had not taken part in intensive outreach



Care Leaver Progression Partnership

The CLPP is a collaborative partnership that has been developed to better understand and remove barriers to post-16 education and training for local children in care and care leavers.

The Kent & Medway Boys' Impact Hub

Boys' Impact is a movement, dedicated to addressing the gap in educational outcomes for boys and young men who are or have been in receipt of free school meals. The network exists to create ecosystems in research, policy and practice which enable boys and young men who experience socio-economic inequality to flourish.

The University of Kent are proud to sit on the National Leads Network of Boys' Impact and in 2025, launched the Kent & Medway Boys' Impact Hub in collaboration with KMPF. The regional hub provides a collaborative forum for practitioners from across educational ecosystems to develop evidence-led approaches, exchange best practice, and generate evidence that informs strengths-based policy and practice within the local context.

In 2025, we welcomed over **130** practitioners from across the education sector to host the first Kent & Medway Boys' Impact Conference



In 2026, the Hub has delivered a three-part professional learning series, to support educators identify practical strategies to engage boys and young men meaningfully in education. So far, the series has brought together over 30 practitioners from across the education lifecycle


THE PROGRESSION AND SUCCESS

At the University of Kent, we are committed to increasing participation in higher education more broadly. Our goal is to empower students to choose the institution that is right for them – wherever that may be.


We're proud that many of these students choose Kent as their destination, and we are here to welcome and support them every step of the way.

Kent & Medway entrants and outreach participation

50% of University of Kent entrants from Kent and Medway in 25/26 engaged meaningfully in outreach from a KMPF partner (including Kent) prior to enrolling



Over **400** students participated in a University of Kent outreach activity before starting their course at Kent



Our data shows a strong link between the depth of engagement and progression into higher education:

- The more they engage, the further they go
 - **Minimal engagement**
Less than three contact hours
 - 30% progressed to higher education
 - **Deeper engagement**
three or more contact hours
 - 38% progressed to higher education

That's an eight percentage point increase in progression for students who engage more intensively with our programmes!

Why it matters

Even though these may sound like modest figures, it's important to remember:

- Many of the students we work with often haven't considered higher education as an option
- These outcomes represent real and meaningful progress
- We're not just preparing students for university – we're helping them to see that it's possible.

Long-term success of outreach participants

Once they're in, they thrive

86% of our Outreach participants continued into stage 2.



72.3% achieved a 2:1 or above at degree level



Why it matters

This shows that when given the opportunity and support, students from underrepresented backgrounds can – and do – achieve just as highly.

KENT FINANCIAL SUPPORT PACKAGE

As part of the APP, key changes were made to the Kent Financial Support Package (KFSP).

From 2024/25, the KFSP is available to home undergraduate students (UG) whose household income is £35,000 or below and meets one additional eligibility criteria:

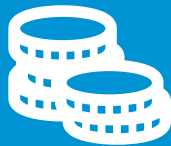
- IMD Quintile 1 or 2
- TUNDRA Quintile 1
- IDACI Quintile 1
- Mature students (over 21 on entry)
- In receipt of Disabled Students Allowance

Students receive £1,000 for each stage of their degree programme.

This model was developed in collaboration with our WP Student Advisory Panel who consulted on different financial models to help the University design a model which benefited as many students as possible.

In 2024-2025:

Over **550** UG students were awarded the KFSP in 2024/2025



Our research found that students who benefited from this package were less likely to drop out, resit or repeat and more likely to:

Achieve their **degree** within the intended three year period



Attain a **good degree**



Even when accounting for factors known to affect success rates, including entry qualifications and ethnicity, KFSP beneficiaries achieved higher success rates than the comparator group.



STUDENT VOICE

Student voice shapes everything we do, from programme design to informing our Widening Participation strategy.

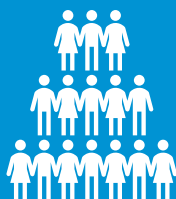
We employ a diverse team of student ambassadors who co-create and evaluate our activities and deliver sessions in schools and FE colleges. Their lived experience and insight ensure our work remains relevant and impactful.

As relatable role models, our ambassadors play a vital role in helping young people recognise their potential, raise their aspirations, and imagine future pathways that may previously have seemed out of reach.

In 2024-2025:

300+

student ambassadors were employed by the University



25%

of ambassadors were outreach participants themselves before joining us



Ambassadors undertook almost **20,000** hours of paid work in the 2024/25 academic year



WP Student Advisory Panel

We recognise that widening participation extends beyond access – it must also support student success and progression.

To help shape our strategy, provide meaningful insight and ensure accountability; we have established a Widening Participation Student Advisory Panel. This panel plays a key role in guiding our work and ensuring it reflects the real experiences and needs of students.

- Made up of students underrepresented in higher education
- Bring lived experience of barriers and shared strategies to enable access to HE
- Diverse group of students, from different academic schools
- Help shape our strategy and hold us accountable

The WPSAP helped to cocreate and develop our new ambitious Access and Participation Plan which launched in 2024/2025



“ The ambassador scheme is a beautiful way for students to learn a little bit about taking responsibility and understanding that their work has an impact on something other than themselves. It also opens their eyes to what a lot of people from different backgrounds have to go through, even at a young age and helps to really broaden perspectives.”

Student ambassador

“ And the ambassadors, they’re so welcoming. There have been quite a few ambassadors that I’ve spoken to that are on a level with us. You can talk to them and you can have a laugh with them and that’s really good.”

Summer school attendee, talking about student ambassadors

IMPACT AND EVALUATION

We rigorously evaluate our interventions to ensure they are effective and deliver measurable impact. To achieve this; we are committed to continuously assessing and refining our programmes, using evidence to drive real change.

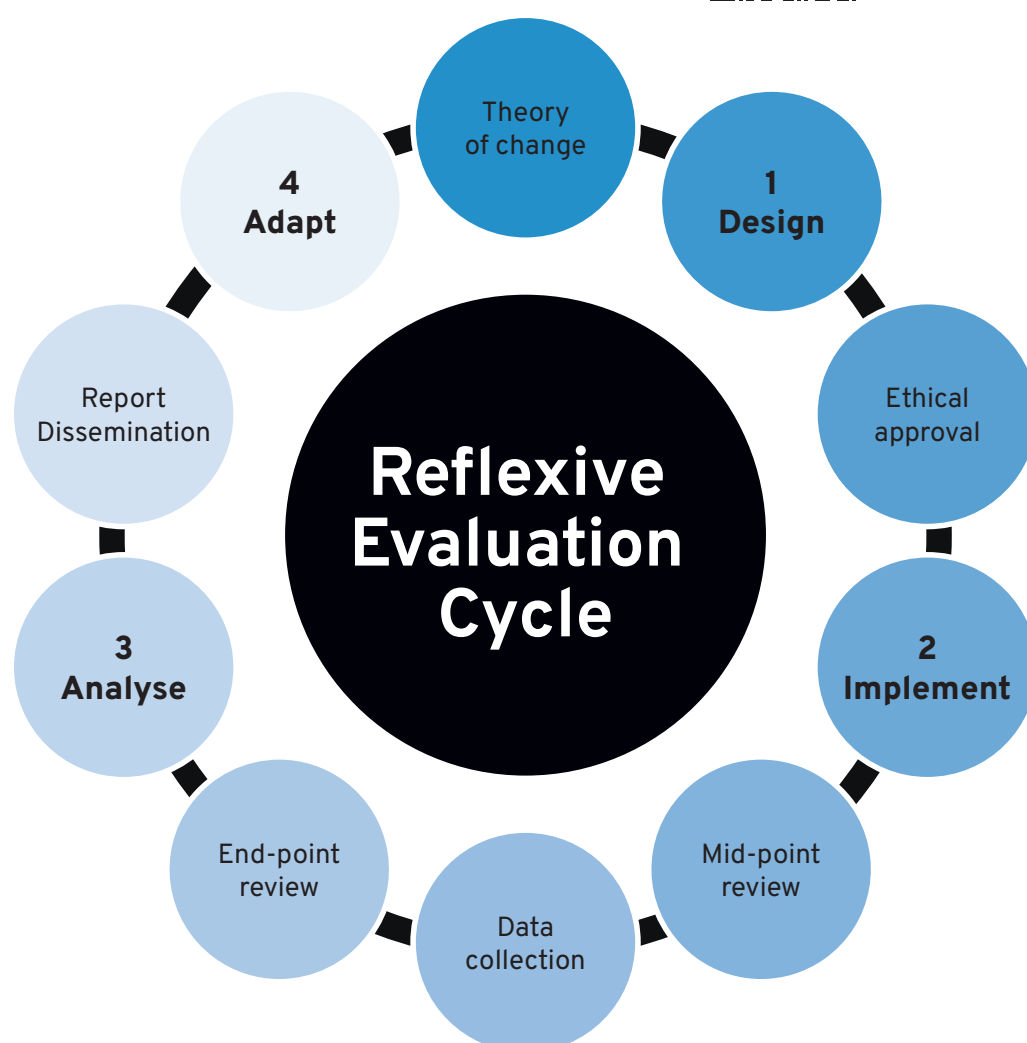
Every intervention we deliver is built on a robust Theory of Change (TOC) framework. Each strand is strategically aligned with our aims and objectives, with clear outputs and intended outcomes. These outcomes are systematically mapped against our evaluation framework to ensure impact.

This TOC is used as an essential part of a reflexive evaluation cycle. This framework has been developed to ensure that evaluation is embedded at every stage of our interventions and ensures a collaborative approach to evidence-based interventions.

Higher Education Access Tracker

The University is a founding member of the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT) and hosts HEAT; which provides higher education providers with data and intelligence to effectively target, monitor and evaluate their outreach activities. Through the HEAT national community, we collaborate on the development of knowledge, skills, tools, resources and methodologies required for robust evaluation. The HEAT membership therefore supports our delivery of robust evaluation which aids the University in producing high quality evidence of what works and what does not work within our particular context.

Read our evaluation reports here:





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