

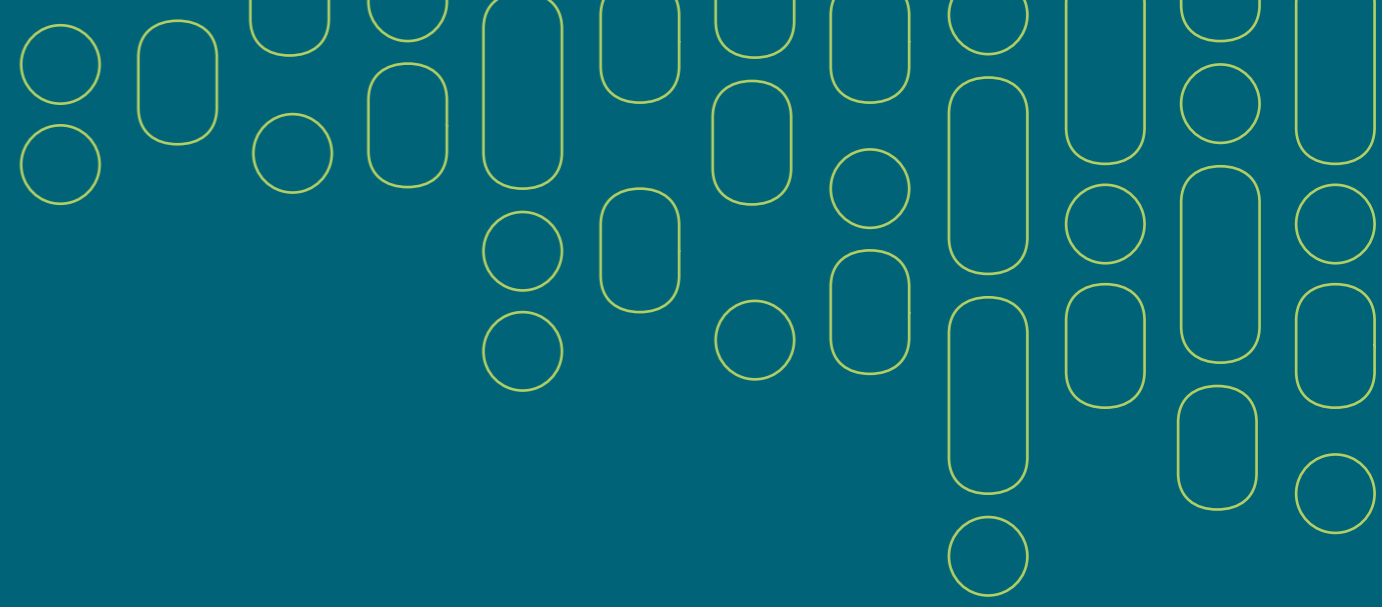
SHAPING FUTURES

The Merseyside Collaborative
Outreach Programme



SHAPING FUTURES PROGRESSION FRAMEWORK

2021 – 2025



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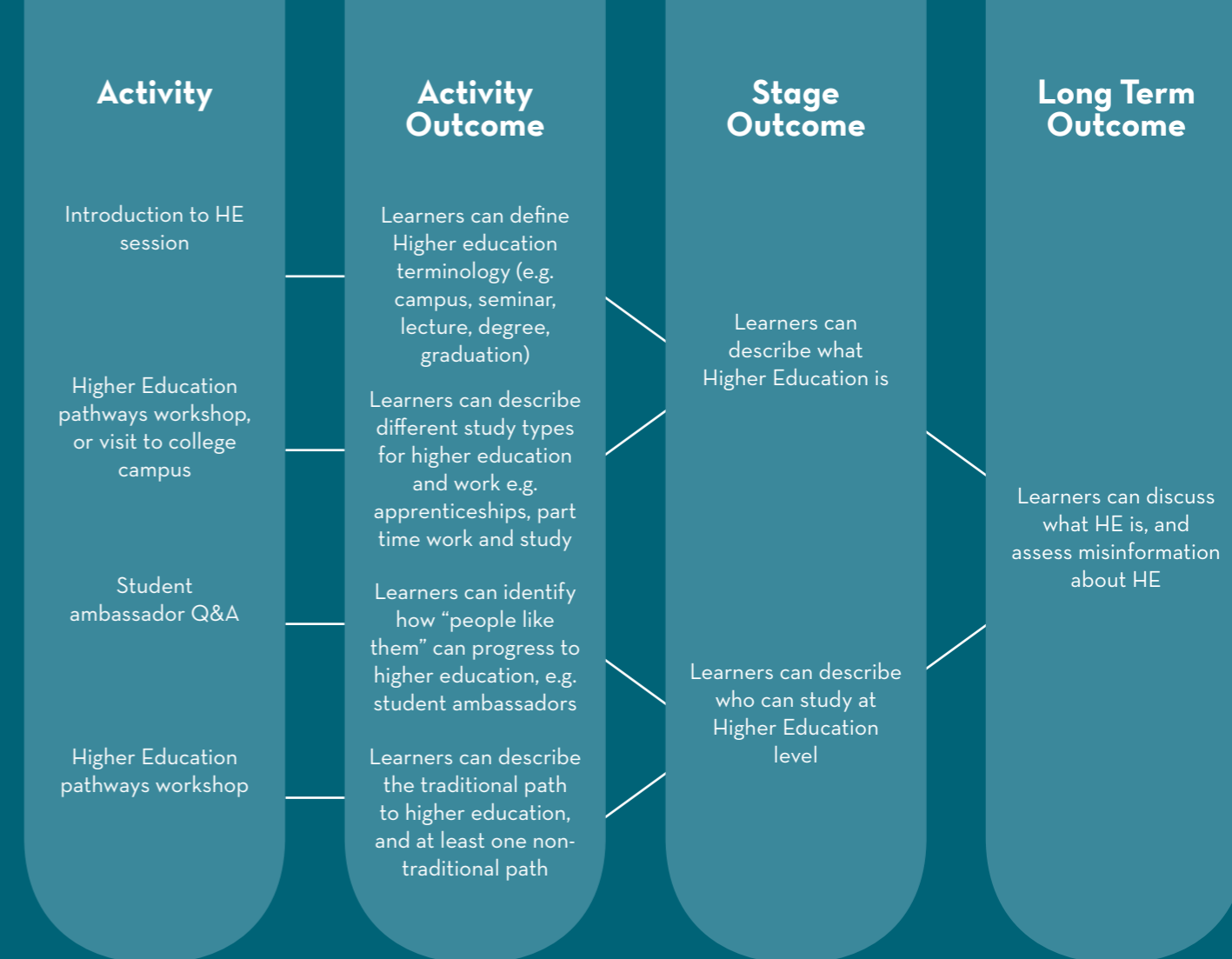
INTRODUCTION

The aim of this progression framework is to provide structure for activity design and planning by the Shaping Futures team and partners. It provides an outline of the intended outcomes of activities delivered by Shaping Futures.

All of these outcomes and activities have been designed in order to meet the aims of the Uni Connect programme:

- Contribute to reducing the gap in Higher Education participation between the most and least represented groups.
- Equip young and adult learners from underrepresented groups to make an informed choice about their options in relation to the full range of routes into and through Higher Education and to minimise the barriers they may face when choosing the option that will unlock their potential.
- Support a strategic local infrastructure of universities, colleges and other partners that can cut through competitive barriers, offer an efficient and low-burden route for schools and colleges to engage, and address outreach 'cold spots' for underrepresented groups.
- Contribute to a stronger evidence base around 'what works' in Higher Education outreach and strengthen evaluation practice across the sector.

This framework was developed by Shaping Futures staff. We utilised our professional experiences of working with learners in the Liverpool City Region, combined with academic research, to identify the barriers learners face and the interventions that can support learners to overcome these challenges. This progression framework is used alongside a more detailed evaluation toolkit that Shaping Futures staff use to identify specific and measurable outcomes for each intervention we deliver in your school or college. It is these smaller outcomes, when added together over time, that allow for our long-term ambitions for learners' development to be realised. The diagram on page 5 shows how outcomes build on each other to lead to long term impact. Full details of the long-term outcomes we are aiming for and the indicators we will use to assess these can be seen in the [appendix](#).



By using this progression framework and our evaluation toolkit, Shaping Futures staff, alongside our contacts in schools and colleges, can identify outcomes that your learners specifically may be struggling with and therefore where we should focus our support. Equally, it supports us all to see where Shaping Futures provision may overlap with what is already being provided, so that we can avoid duplication. All activities funded by Shaping Futures, whether delivered by core team or our partners, will be aligned to this framework.

Summary of the three stages

The three stages in this framework build on one another, as a learner progresses through their journey with Shaping Futures. Shaping Futures will work with school and college staff to assess which stage your learners are at and therefore what level of intervention we should provide. Individual learners within a cohort will be at different points in their journey and need different support - the cohorts indicated in each stage here are to be used as a guideline only, and adapted for specific groups.

Summary of the three themes

The three themes covered in this toolkit aim to cover the career development support learners need, with a particular focus on Higher Education. The themes are:

- Know what Higher Education is - this theme is about increasing learners' understanding of what Higher Education is and how it can benefit them. This theme also covers the different pathways that can be taken to access Higher Education, including higher and degree apprenticeships and Higher Education in Further Education.
- Make informed decisions - decisions people make throughout their educational journey often have knock-on effects to their future choices. This theme covers what to consider when making a career decision, the options learners have in terms of post-16 or level 2/3 options, and how different subjects can be beneficial in their future options.
- Skills to Succeed - learners can choose to undertake study or employment but may not have the skills to succeed in their choice. This theme is about helping learners gain these skills, and includes confidence and resilience; attainment; study skills; and transferable skills.



OUR APPROACH

Sustained and progressive

Evidence shows that outreach activities are most impactful when delivered as part of a sustained and progressive programme, and that one-off activities have low impact on Higher Education progression. Therefore, Shaping Futures will work with school and college staff to develop a sustained yearlong delivery plan for your learners, that involves multiple interactions, and by using this framework, all interactions will be connected and build on one another.

Blended delivery

The Covid-19 pandemic allowed all of us to discover new ways of working and learning. Throughout the pandemic Shaping Futures have seen how we can effectively deliver some of our support online. However, we acknowledge that not all activity can be run online effectively, and that there are interventions where face to face delivery, both in schools/colleges and on HE campuses, adds great value. Going forward, we will be offering a blended approach in our priority schools - with online delivery being the primary method, and face to face delivery where appropriate either in school/college or on a HE campus.

Targeted

The Office for Students determines the targeting methodology that Shaping Futures use. Our programme was developed to work with learners from 22 target wards, where there is a gap between historic attainment and progression to higher education. We can identify these target ward learners by their home postcode and prioritise schools with the highest number of these target learners. With our priority schools our focus will be on delivering targeted support in small to medium size groups of target ward learners.

Our strategic outreach activity looks more widely at under-representation in higher education and seeks to work collaboratively with local stakeholders to address these issues. This work is also targeted, although often not by postcode. Activity under this banner will target learners from particular underrepresented groups, such as those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and learners that are or have been in care.



HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT



Priority schools

In the transition year (2021/22), priority schools with high numbers of learners who live in Uni Connect target wards will have an assigned Higher Education Progression Advisor (HEPA), who will act as a point of contact for the school, and organise specific activities. HEPAs will work with schools to create a structured programme of events for each year group.

This will take place over several conversations, ideally at the start of the year:

- Needs of each cohort identified, recognising gaps in provision and areas where outcomes are already being met (by the school or other providers) to prevent duplication.
- HEPA reviews bank of activity outcomes to ensure best fit to meet school needs - including partner led activities.
- HEPA comes back to school with suggested activities and activity outcomes.
- Dates and activities confirmed for each cohort.
- Activities adapted into a programme and integrated within the school year.
- Activities delivered - adapting when necessary based on learner and teacher feedback and impact evaluation data.

Strategic Outreach schools

Strategic outreach secondary schools have low levels of target ward learners but relatively high levels of learners from low participation neighbourhoods or free school meals. These schools are not eligible for the intensive, bespoke activities that the priority schools receive, however can access support and activities which are targeted at specific underrepresented groups, for example SEND learners.

Special Schools, pupil referral units and alternative provision can also access this support. We acknowledge that many of the learners in these schools will be facing higher barriers to Higher Education access than those in mainstream schools, but are aware that it may not always be appropriate for these learners to receive outreach. We will work with schools to determine what support would be appropriate for their learners.

Schools in this category can access support through strategic outreach for specific groups; and can contact the strategic outreach HEPA. They can use this framework independently or in conjunction with COMPASS to identify which strategic outreach activities may be most beneficial to their learners.

Other schools in the region

These schools generally have low levels of learners from target wards and underrepresented groups. These schools can use this framework independently or in conjunction with COMPASS to identify if any Shaping Futures activity which is available to anyone it may be beneficial to their learners. These schools can contact Shaping Futures for signposting to Higher Education providers.

Further Education colleges

The majority of Further Education colleges in the region are Shaping Futures partners and have been consulted on the development of this framework. There will be one HEPA focussing on Further Education colleges. We will work with colleges to identify activities beneficial to their learners, to identify cohorts where there is the greatest need for SF interventions.



INTRODUCTORY STAGE

In schools, the introductory stage typically takes place in year 9 and the early part of year 10. It aims to give learners a basic understanding of their options going forward at 16 and 18, and equip them with the skills for Key Stage 4 study.

In colleges, the introductory stage is likely to be more variable, but is targeted at level 1 and 2 learners. It aims to give them an understanding of the options available to them after their current course, and equip them with the skills for the next level.

Outcomes for the introductory stage:

Know what Higher Education is

- Learners can describe what Higher Education is
- Learners can describe who can study at Higher Education level
- Learners can identify some benefits of Higher Education

Making informed decisions

- Learners can describe the career decisions they have to make over the next few years e.g. GCSE option choices, post-16 pathways, Higher Education/work pathways
- Learners can discuss the job opportunities in the Liverpool City Region and how these have changed over time
- Learners can discuss what factors they need to consider when making career/education decisions
- Learners can explain how school or college subjects link to future careers/Further Education/Higher Education

Skills for success

- Learners can identify study techniques that could be helpful in different situations
- Learners can describe what mental health is and where they can access support if needed
- Learners can describe what skills and strengths they have and how they might develop these

Example delivery plans:

School Example	College Example
<p>September Introduction to Shaping Futures and Higher Education</p>	<p>September Introduction to Shaping Futures and study skills</p>
<p>November Workshops on decision making and GCSEs</p>	<p>January Class-based subject links to level 3 options</p>
<p>January Student ambassador subject insight sessions</p>	<p>March Follow up study skills workshops</p>
<p>May Campus visit with a session on apprenticeships and Higher Education in Further Education</p>	<p>June Campus visit with focus on wellbeing and resilience, including student support</p>

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE

In schools, the developmental stage typically takes place in years 10 and 11. During this stage, learners should develop a deeper understanding of their options after GCSE study and how choices made now will affect their options in future education.

In colleges, the developmental stage typically takes place in level 2 and early level 3. During this stage, learners will develop their understanding of how progressing to level 4/Higher Education could benefit them, and what support is available in colleges and universities.

Outcomes for the developmental stage:

Know what Higher Education is

- Learners can compare the different types of courses and providers of Higher Education
- Learners can describe the financial support available to study at Higher Education
- Learners can discuss the different aspects of Higher Education, including teaching, opportunities, support and accommodation
- Learners can explain how Higher Education could benefit them

Making informed decisions

- Learners can analyse careers information and guidance to inform their decision on their next step
- Learners can evaluate which post-16/Level 3 pathway is best for them and take steps to access it
- Learners can explain how their choice of subjects or course links to their career plan

Skills for success

- Learners can demonstrate study skills that allow them to attain qualifications to progress to their next step
- Learners can complete an application for their next step
- Learners can demonstrate the essential skills for their next stage, whether Higher Education, apprenticeship or workplace
- Learners undertake relevant work experience for their career plan
- Learners can evaluate what may cause them stress and how they might become more resilient

Example delivery plans:

School Example	College Example
<p>September Pathways to Higher Education and careers workshops</p>	<p>September How your course links to HE workshops</p>
<p>December Decision making – action planning workshops</p>	<p>October 121 support for target ward learners to support decisions about next steps</p>
<p>March Follow-up careers 121s with target ward learners</p>	<p>February Campus visit to understand the different aspects to HE</p>
<p>June Campus visit with HE life and learning and study skills workshops</p>	<p>June Reflecting your skills for your next step workshop</p>

CONSOLIDATION STAGE

Learners in this stage are typically in years 12 and 13, and have decided that they want to progress to Higher Education. In colleges, this phase will be targeted at those on Access to Higher Education courses, and those in the second half of other level 3 courses.

Outcomes for the consolidation stage:

Know what Higher Education is

- Learners can explain how to access information on different Higher Education courses
- Learners are able to successfully transition into Higher Education
- Learners can explain what they need to do to succeed in Higher Education
- Learners can plan what they need to do after receiving an offer in order to transition into Higher Education

Making informed decisions

- Learners have made an informed choice about their Higher Education pathway and course

Skills for success

- Learners submit a UCAS application

Other skills outcomes in the consolidation level are the same as in the developmental level, however the expected level of skill is higher e.g. increased time management skills as the learning required becomes more autonomous.

Example delivery plans:

School Example	College Example
<p>September Introduction to UCAS and personal statements workshop</p>	<p>September Workshop about the different types of HE provider (college provides information about UCAS/applications)</p>
<p>October 121 personal statement reviews for target ward learners</p>	<p>January Decision making and confidence building workshops</p>
<p>March Student finance application workshop and drop in</p>	<p>May Student support for a successful transition workshop to aid transition</p>
<p>May/June Online resources about HE transition and support, including what to do on results day</p>	

ACTIVITIES AVAILABLE

There are a range of activities that Shaping Futures can deliver, whether by the core team or one of our partner institutions. Not all activities will be available to all schools, and not all outcomes can be met by all activity types.

Activity Type	Activity Description
Classroom based workshops	These interactive workshops provide the opportunity to learn about a range of topics within our 3 themes. Learners will participate in activities linking these topics to their future pathways.
Online resources	A package of information, videos, workbooks, and lesson plans which can be accessed by our priority schools and colleges.
Subject skills session	Connecting current studies to future pathways, these sessions link subject skills to further study and employment options. Current students will share their experiences of using the skills gained through this subject in their own route to Higher Education.
Campus visits	An opportunity for learners to explore a university campus, meet current students and immerse themselves in the life of an undergraduate through HE talks, workshops and activities, tailored to your learners needs.
Mentoring	An opportunity for learners to connect with current Further and Higher Education Students who have similar experiences to themselves.
1-2-1 support with an advisor	Our advisors will provide impartial information, advice and guidance tailored to an individual's stage in education, helping them to make informed decisions about their future.
Assemblies	These information giving sessions provide learners with an overview of a topic. These can be followed up with more intensive workshops or 121's, providing the opportunity for tailoring content and activities.



LINKS TO THE GATSBY BENCHMARKS & MATRIX STANDARD

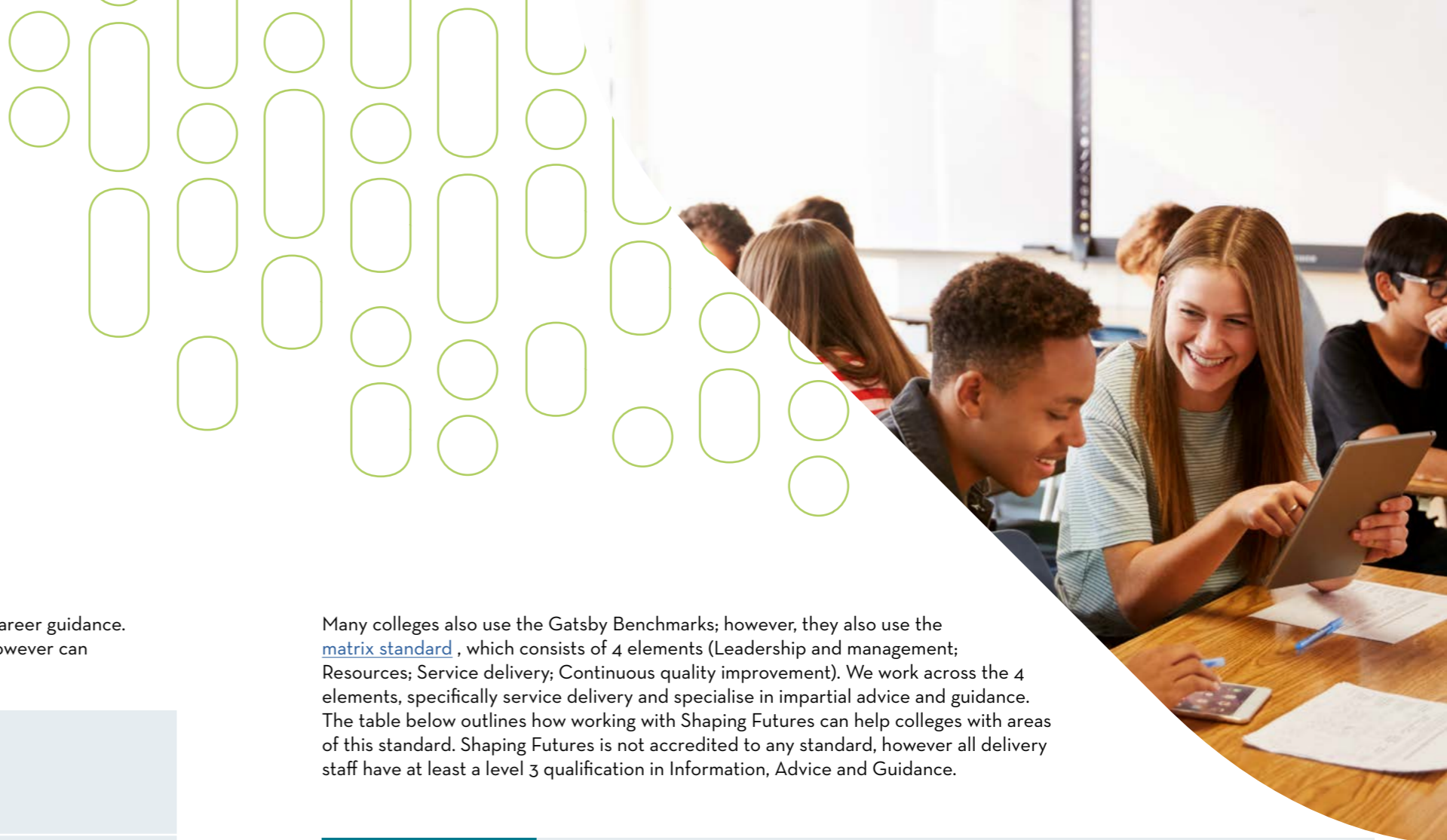
As of December 2020, all schools are required to meet the Gatsby Benchmarks of best practice in their career guidance. Shaping Futures, as a targeted programme, will not be able to support schools to reach all benchmarks, however can facilitate some learners reaching a selection:

Gatsby Benchmark	How Shaping Futures can link
A stable career programme	Your linked HEPA can work with you to identify gaps in your careers programme. We will support you to fill these gaps using our own delivery and linking with our partners and third-party organisations. Our sustained approach of working allows stability, and our robust evaluation methods will be shared with you to evidence our work in your own reporting
Learning from career and labour market information	We have a suite of resources covering Making Informed Decisions which includes sessions focusing on Labour Market Information, implementing the use of The Pay Index to support learners to understand the significance of LMI in their decision making.
Addressing the needs of each pupil	Our approach is organised into stages, allowing us to assess the level of knowledge your learners have and plan an intervention appropriately. We also provide 1-2-1 support, offering an opportunity for tailored support for each eligible individual.
Linking curriculum learning to careers	We have a bank of Subject Insight Sessions, linking a student's current studies to their future options in FE, HE and the workplace.
Encounters with Further and Higher Education	All of our sessions link to future options, including FE and HE. We can also include current university students in our sessions where appropriate. There is also an option to host our sessions on a university campus to provide learners with an opportunity to explore what learning at HE looks like.

Many colleges also use the Gatsby Benchmarks; however, they also use the [matrix standard](#), which consists of 4 elements (Leadership and management; Resources; Service delivery; Continuous quality improvement). We work across the 4 elements, specifically service delivery and specialise in impartial advice and guidance. The table below outlines how working with Shaping Futures can help colleges with areas of this standard. Shaping Futures is not accredited to any standard, however all delivery staff have at least a level 3 qualification in Information, Advice and Guidance.

Matrix Element	How Shaping Futures can link
Leadership and management	As outlined in this framework, all Shaping Futures activities are linked together and can be linked to college outcomes, where appropriate. Strong evaluation will allow us to measure the effectiveness of activity in terms of reaching the outcomes outlined in this document. As a partnership organisation, we help establish effective links with other partnerships and providers to supplement the colleges' career provision.
Resources	We are continually working to ensure our information is up to date, and relevant to all types of learner, and delivery staff are qualified IAG practitioners.
Service Delivery	As an impartial service, Shaping Futures provides up to date, clear information about Higher Education options for learners. We aim for learners to understand the options available to them, and to have the resources to make informed decisions at all stages in our framework. We also signpost to other outreach providers where relevant and appropriate.
Continuous quality improvement	Shaping Futures continually monitors and evaluates our activities and provides schools and colleges with reports outlining what we have done and how we are helping learners meet the outcomes identified in the framework. Evaluation data is used to make improvements to activities and to build on good practice.

¹ Matrix is mentioned on the website of 5 out of 6 Further Education partners - Riverside, St. Helens, Wirral Met, City of Liverpool College, Carmel. Gatsby is mentioned in 4 out of 6 partners - St. Helens, Wirral Met, Hugh Baird, and City of Liverpool College





ACTIVITY PLAN

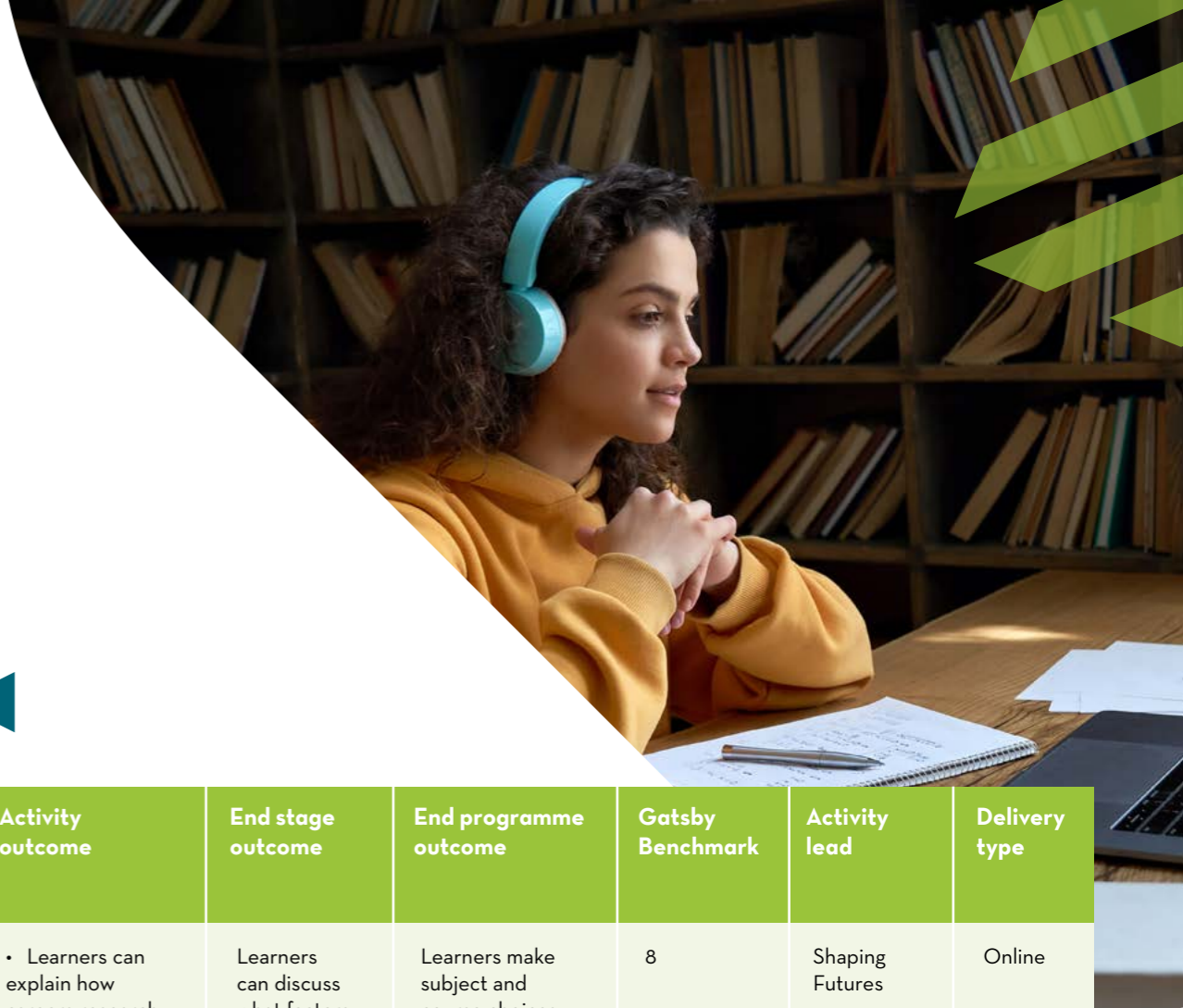
EXAMPLE FOR A SCHOOL

This example is based off a programme of activities that may be offered to year 9 learners in a priority school. It does not indicate that all schools will be eligible for this level of activity. All priority schools will be asked to work with their allocated Higher Education Progression Advisor to come up with a programme of support that works for their learners and school year. These activities should supplement the careers work that the school will already be doing, and can contribute to the school's Gatsby benchmarks. An activity plan template will be available to facilitate conversations between HEPAs and schools/colleges.

Activity	Activity outcome	End stage outcome	End programme outcome	Gatsby Benchmark	Activity lead	Delivery type
Decision making workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can recognise what influences them - positives and negatives Learners can explain how they would use tools to make a decision 	Learners can describe the career decisions they have to make and what they need to consider for these decisions	Learners make subject and course choices based off career and education plans		Shaping Futures	Face to face
Subject insight campus visit - learners choose History, Business or Chemistry insight sessions, as well as a campus tour and student panel	What studying a subject at HE would involve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can explain that careers often need a wealth of different subjects Learners can define Higher education terminology (e.g. campus, seminar, lecture, degree, graduation) Learners can describe how studying at higher education is different to school/college 	Learners can explain how school subjects link to future careers/Further Education/Higher Education	Learners make subject and course choices based off career and education plans	7, 4	Shaping Futures Partner	Face to face



Activity	Activity outcome	End stage outcome	End programme outcome	Gatsby Benchmark	Activity lead	Delivery type
1 to 1 support for target ward learners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can explain how careers research and finding out the facts is important Learners can reflect on past decisions and how they might approach this differently now 	Learners can discuss what factors they need to consider when making career/ education decisions	Learners make subject and course choices based off career and education plans	8	Shaping Futures	Online
Preparing for GCSE study online resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learners can describe what study skills are Learners can identify what study techniques may work well for them Learners can describe different study techniques e.g. mind maps, lists, pomodoro 	Learners can identify study techniques that could be helpful in different situations	Learners can achieve appropriate qualifications at level 2 and 3	7	Shaping Futures - with current students' testimonials	Online





MONITORING & EVALUATION

We are required to report on our activities and learners we deliver to, as well as contributing to an evidence base on what works in the sector. To do this, we collect information on our activities and from the learners who attend.

Monitoring

Shaping Futures collects information under the legal basis of public task. More information can be found on our privacy policy: <https://shaping-futures.org.uk/privacy-policy/>

Priority schools and colleges are required to share a data sharing agreement in order to take part in the activities provided to these schools. Once complete, the school or college provides information on who attended each activity.

Strategic outreach schools may choose to complete a data sharing agreement if they are taking part in multiple activities led by Shaping Futures. If not completed, the delivery partner needs to acquire consent from each learner to process their data.

Regardless of how their data is collected, learners need to be informed that their data is being processed. To do this, Shaping Futures has a short video explaining who we are and the data we collect. Once collected, learner data is associated with activity data. This allows us to see how many activities each learner has attended, identify outcomes that they have not received activities for and provide schools and colleges with summary reports on their engagement.



Evaluation

Where possible, Shaping Futures will collect information on the impact of our activities. Generally, this is through pre- and post-activity surveys. This allows us to see any changes in learners' knowledge or attitudes that took place over the course of a session. To ensure this process is as engaging as possible for learners, Shaping Futures has designed activities that collect information on learners' knowledge in a more interactive way, for example quizzes during sessions and polls in webinars. When it is not possible or appropriate to collect information from the learners directly, we ask teachers for feedback on the session, including asking whether they felt the learners achieved the outcomes.

As the research indicates that multiple sustained interventions have the greatest impact, Shaping Futures will also carry out annual surveys with learners from a selection of priority schools (in collaboration with any national surveys taking place). This will allow us to see the wider, cumulative impact our support is having. Appendix 1 outlines how the stage level outcomes in this framework link to longer term outcomes and how we aim to measure these long-term impacts.

Collecting qualitative data, or learner voice, will be done throughout our programme, via a variety of methods, including focus groups and creative evaluation methods. We are particularly keen to hear from our Further Education colleges and adult learners, to ensure our work is developing well in this area and meeting these learners needs.





APPENDIX 1

LINKED LONG AND MEDIUM-TERM OUTCOMES

The table below outlines the long-term outcomes associated with each outcome described above, and what the indicator of success will be for these long-term outcomes. More information on evaluation and indicators can be found in the evaluation section.

Theme	Level	Stage outcome	Long Term outcome	Long term Indicator		
Know what Higher Education is	Introductory	Learners can describe what Higher Education is	Learners can discuss what Higher Education is, and assess misinformation about Higher Education	Increase in target ward learners understanding what Higher Education is, and reduction of misinformation about Higher Education (survey data)		
		Learners can describe who can study at Higher Education level				
		Learners can identify some benefits of Higher Education				
	Developmental	Learners can compare the different types of courses and providers of Higher Education				
		Learners can describe the financial support available to study at Higher Education				
		Learners can discuss the different aspects of Higher Education, including teaching, opportunities, support and accommodation				
		Learners can explain how Higher Education could benefit them				
	Consolidation	Learners can explain how to access information on different Higher Education courses			Learners apply to Higher Education	Increase in number of target ward learners applying to Higher Education (UCAS/HESA)
		Learners are able to successfully transition into Higher Education			Learners transition into and succeed at Higher Education	Increase in number of target ward learners transitioning into and succeeding at Higher Education (HESA)
	Consolidation	Learners can explain what they need to do to succeed in Higher Education				
Learners can plan what they need to do after receiving an offer in order to transition into Higher Education						

Theme	Level	Stage outcome	Long Term outcome	Long term Indicator	
Make informed decisions	Introductory	Learners can describe the career decisions they have to make over the next few years e.g. GCSE option choices, post-16 pathways, Higher Education/work pathways	Learners make subject and course choices based off career and education plans	Reduction of course changes within year from target students e.g. switching from A-level to BTEC after a few weeks (data from colleges/HESA)	
		Learners can discuss the job opportunities in the Liverpool City Region and how these have changed over time			
		Learners can discuss what factors they need to consider when making career/education decisions			
		Learners can explain how school or college subjects link to future careers/Further Education/Higher Education			
	Developmental	Learners can analyse careers information and guidance to inform their decision on their next step			
		Learners can evaluate which post-16/Level 3 pathway is best for them and take steps to access it			
Consolidation	Learners can explain how their choice of subjects or course links to their career plan				
	Learners have made an informed choice about their Higher Education pathway and course				
	Learners can explain how their choice of subjects or course links to their career plan				
Skills to succeed	Introductory	Learners can identify study techniques that could be helpful in different situations	Learners can achieve appropriate qualifications at level 2 and 3	Increase in GCSE and KS5 attainment for learners from deprived wards (HEAT/DfE)	
		Learners can demonstrate study skills that allow them to attain qualifications to progress to their next step			
	Introductory	Learners can describe what mental health is and where they can access support if they need it	Learners successfully transition to further/Higher Education and employment	Increase in proportion of learners in sustained destination post-16 and level 3 (DfE at school level)	
		Learners can describe what skills and strengths they have and how they might develop these			
		Developmental			Learners can complete an application for their next step
					Learners can demonstrate the essential skills for their next stage, whether Higher Education, apprenticeship or workplace
	Developmental	Learners undertake relevant work experience for their career plan			
		Learners can evaluate what may cause them stress and how they might become more resilient			
		Learners submit a UCAS application	Learners apply to Higher Education	Increase in number of target ward learners applying to Higher Education (UCAS/HESA)	

