Multiple Intervention Programme (MIP)

Impact and Learning 22/23

University of Sheffield

Sheffield Hallam University

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Executive Summary

- 38 Year 8 to Year 10 cohorts, from 18 schools across South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire took part in Hepp's Multiple Intervention Programme pilot in 22/23 academic year – with over 3,000 learners participating.

- Hepp's Multiple Intervention Programme aims to provide participants with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to make informed decisions about higher education progression.

- Participants undertook three engagements over the course of the year as part of the programme.

- A pre- and post-programme survey was used to test the impact of the programme across 12 outcomes, using 28 Likert scale questions for quantitative analysis. Additionally, qualitative analysis was carried out via an open question and a focus group

- The programme was delivered in a variety of ways across different schools in terms of cohort size, delivery mechanisms and delivery timeframes.

- Programme evaluation and findings highlighted both significant learning, which will feed directly into programme design for 23/24 academic year, and positive impact against programme aims – specifically in relation to improving participant's knowledge and confidence around university and their future choices.

Introduction

In 2022/23 academic year Hepp piloted a sustained and targeted multiple intervention programme (MIP). Aimed at Year 8, 9, and 10 learners, this programme sought to establish repeat and incremental interventions, which would provide participants with the **knowledge, skills, and confidence** to make informed decisions about higher education progression.

38 cohorts, from **18 schools** across South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire completed the programme – with **over 3,000 learners** participating.

Project Overview

Hepp's Multiple Intervention Programme was developed to address two key issues relating to the effectiveness of Hepp's pre-existing delivery model:

1. Inefficient use of delivery resource/capacity.
2. Limited impact of "one off" activities.

Historically, Hepp allocated all schools within our region a set number of engagements annually, with schools offered between 2 and 5 engagements each per year depending on where they ranked within a categorisation model. Take up of the offer was inconsistent, with many schools not utilising their full entitlement, some not booking in any activity at all, and other schools wanting more activity than Hepp could provide. This resulted in a significant number of allocated days going unused; only 31.8% of the highest-category schools taking up their full entitlement of activity, meaning engagement opportunities with other schools were missed.

Additionally, the engagements Hepp historically offered to schools were singular activities; not facilitated or delivered as part of any broader programme. Research suggests that "one off"

engagements such as these have limited impact[1], whereas sustained and repeat interventions are significantly more impactful in achieving longer term aims of changing perceptions and behaviours.

Programme Design

Hepp used a Theory of Change model to inform the design of the Multiple Intervention Programme. This model supported the team in clarifying the problems Hepp were attempting to solve in developing this programme; the inputs and activities which needed creating in order to develop and deliver the programme, and the expected outputs. The Theory of Change also supported the team in ensuring the programme (and the rationale behind it) was evidence based and that any assumptions the team had regarding the programme, its aims, target audience and evaluation methodology, were acknowledged and fed into programme design. Finally, the Theory of Change aided Hepp in understanding the programme's intended/expected impact and how this could be measured. This can be found in Appendix A.

Programme Structure

In order to meet the programme aims (*sustained/incremental engagements which provide knowledge, skills and confidence of HE decision making*) the programme was designed with the following structure and parameters:

- The programme is targeted at Year 8 to Year 10 cohorts, with participants receiving three engagements per academic year.
- The programme is delivered using a range of modes, including lecture style presentations, seminar style interactive workshops and university campus visits.
- The programme consists of activities from Hepp's four strands ('*Decide', 'Belong', 'Understand' and 'Achieve'*), all of which were developed using problem statements to address recognised barriers young people face in relation to considering and accessing higher education.

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[1] E.g. see Thornton et al. 2014, in Whitty et al., 2015, 'Who you know, what you know and knowing the ropes: a review of evidence about access to higher education institutions in England', *Review of Education* 3 (1); p54, and Harding and Bowes, *Fourth independent review of impact evaluation evidence submitted by Uni Connect partnerships* (2022: p2).

The programme was developed with flexibility in mind, acknowledging that all schools are different and Hepp would need to be able tailor the programme to meet the individual needs and contexts of participating schools, namely:

1) Cohort size: Some schools wanted to work with smaller, targeted groups of learners, whereas others wanted to engage whole year groups.
2) Delivery mechanisms: Some programmes consisted of more intensive elements such as campus visits and interactive workshops, whereas some schools needed to utilise presentations and virtual presentations within their programmes.
3) Calendar restrictions/considerations: Some schools were able to neatly schedule one engagement per term whereas others had a shorter delivery window or even had to deliver two of the three engagements on the same day to complete the programme.

School/Cohort Targeting

Hepp used five year averaged Free School Meals (FSM) percentage to rank and prioritise schools for participation in the programme. Hepp's Regional Activities Coordinator team approached the top 30 schools using this measure[2], 25 of which registered an interest. Of those schools 22 commenced the programme, and 18 completed all three engagements for each participating cohort. The list of schools, rankings and activities can be found in Appendix B.

In terms of cohort or student level targeting, Hepp provided guidance to schools on which students schools should prioritise to participate; referencing groups of learners who are currently underrepresented in higher education and/or who face additional barriers as cited within the Office for Students Equality of Opportunity Risk Register (EORR) e.g. due to socioeconomic status, disabled students, care experienced, young carers, no family experience of HE etc. Ultimately, schools were given autonomy to pick which students should participate on the basis that they are best placed to know their own learners and to decide which would be most appropriate or would most benefit from participation.

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[2] One school outside the top 30 (#35) was approached due to an existing strong relationship with the school.

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All participating schools were required to sign and return a programme agreement. This agreement articulated the aims and structure of the programme, outlined what their school/learners would receive from the programme and Hepp's expectations of schools, namely:

- Schools identify the target learners and ensure they attend all three MIP sessions per year.
- Schools provide participant level data for all learners taking part in the programme.
- Schools ensure all participants complete a pre and post programme evaluation.

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Evaluation methods

The programme aims to influence participants in three broad areas:
1. Increasing knowledge of higher education (including routes into higher education, costs and benefits, and student finance)
2. Increasing soft skills, to enable participants to make an informed decision about HE and future options
3. Increasing confidence and changes in self-conception around fitting and belonging in HE

The expected outcomes of the programme and the methods used to measure them, as set out in the theory of change, can be found in Appendix C.

The methods of evaluation include a pre-/post- survey delivered before and after the activities for the year; focus groups to be held at the conclusion of activities for the year, to test students' self-conceptions and experience of the programme; and monitoring data, including data on student progression to HE via HESA/HEAT figures.

Only the survey and the focus group will be discussed in the evaluation process below, as the monitoring data is longer-term and requires comparison across multiple years. The survey will also be carried out over multiple iterations of the programme, which will allow us to conduct a longitudinal analysis of the changes in students' outcomes.

Evaluation Process

Survey:
Following the Theory of Change, the broad outcome areas above were refined into distinct, measurable intermediate outcomes. This was based on discussions with team members and consideration of the outcomes within the existing Hepp universal offer (from which the activities of the MIP programme would be drawn). These outcomes as separated into the broader knowledge / skills / confidence & self-conception can be seen below:

Knowledge	Skills	Confidence
Financial / career benefits[3]	Self-efficacy	Fit and belonging
Social / academic benefits	Motivation	Academic confidence
Knowledge of student life	Problem solving	
Student finance		
Choices and pathways		

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[3] It is important to note that the knowledge and skills questions are proxy questions – i.e. participants are reporting their perception of their knowledge or skills levels, rather than being tested directly. The methodological reasoning and implications of this are discussed in the next section.

Pre-validated questions were selected from these outcome areas using the NERUPI question bank, for the relevant Key Stage groups (KS3-4).

Additionally, two questions on aspirations and expectations for HE progression were added, to give some indication of the intermediate programme effect on participants' perceptions of their HE choices and likelihood of applying to HE.

The survey contained 28 5-point Likert scale questions relating to these outcomes. Participants were given 28 statements and asked to indicate their level of agreement (strongly agree… strongly disagree). A copy of the survey can be seen in Appendix D.

Questions were kept identical for the post-programme survey, with the addition of two open questions asking for feedback on student experiences of the programme. These qualitative responses were then coded, allowing for a content analysis to be conducted and for relationships between qualitative categories and quantitative question scores to be analysed.

840 baseline surveys were matched to exit surveys (although not all individual questions were matched up in every case due to non-responses).

For the analysis of pre- and post- programme differences, Wilcoxon's signed rank test was chosen. This method allows us to compare two measurements of the same dependent variable taken at different time points and to measure the distance travelled across the different questions and outcome areas.

In this report the effect size is estimated using the r statistic, interpreted as:
- a score >0.1 being a small effect
- >0.3 being a moderate effect
- >0.5 being a large effect

We also provide the proportion of positive changes between pre- and post-test scores, which can be interpreted as the probability that a randomly chosen case would have a higher post-test score than pre-test.

Two significant constraints of the survey methodology are important to note here. Firstly, we do not have a true control group to act as a comparison – i.e. a sample of students who did not receive the programme.

Secondly, there is a well-documented 'ceiling problem' with survey scales, whereby respondents answer close to the upper limits of a survey scale and therefore there is little or no room for them to improve on future iterations of the survey. This can be particularly problematic as we are considering within-subject differences, rather than within-group.   The use of composite variables (variables combined from multiple survey questions) partly mitigates this.

Validity testing was carried out on similar variable groupings of questions and one additional composite variable was created. This resulted overall in composite variables for fit and belonging, self-efficacy, problem solving, academic confidence, and choices and pathways.

Focus Group:
Due to the desired large-scale analysis of the survey and its closed questions, focus groups were planned as part of the evaluation design. By incorporating qualitative methods into the evaluation design, we hope to be able to reach a more in-depth understanding of students' experiences and opinions – including on topics and phenomena which are not included or cannot be accounted for in the closed survey.

With the assistance of a student researcher from the SETL Research Bursary programme, the focus group structure was planned and produced with a focus on exploring and understanding students' experience of the programme. In particular, the focus groups were planned as a way of understanding students' self-conception and identity, and exploring their intersubjective/group identities, particularly within the context of 'widening access' initiatives.

With this in mind, a loose structure was planned, to allow for group interactions that can co-construct perspectives and responses. Students were asked their experiences of being part of a programme; the experiences of the sessions themselves; whether and how the programme had influenced their thinking about their future; the accessibility of university; and whether there was anything they would change about the programme.

Organisational constraints, including staff absence, meant that only one focus group took place.

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Findings

Overall, there were significant improvements in post-test scores for fit and belonging, self-efficacy, academic confidence, choices and pathways, and expectations for progression, and for some questions testing financial and career benefits, and social/academic benefits.

The largest increases seen were in knowledge and attitudes around student finance. There was a moderate increase in understanding of financial support (r=0.3, 48% of students seeing a positive change in responses to this question) and a small-to-moderate increase for confidence in being able to afford higher education (r=0.19, 40% of students seeing a positive change).

There were no significant effects at a programme level for motivation, problem-solving skills, aspirations for progression or knowledge of student life. However, there were some effects at a school level, which are illustrated in the case study below. The full results can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1 – programme level effects

r is an estimate of effect size, understood as <0.1 – very small effect, >0.1 small, >0.3 moderate. These results are colour-coded from light to dark green accordingly. The latter two columns indicate the proportion of post-scores showing no or positive change and positive change respectively.

* result is significant as the *p*-value is <0.05. Effect sizes and proportional changes are shown only for significant results.

Question	Outcome	*p*-value	*r*	Same / positive change	Positive change
Q1 I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself	Self-efficacy	0*	0.087	82%	26%
Q2 In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me	Self-efficacy	0.282			
Q3 I am motivated to do well in my studies	Motivation	0.99			
Q4 I feel confident about taking on challenges	Problem-solving	0.966			
Q5 I feel confident about solving problems	Problem-solving	0.134			
Q6 Going to university can open a broader range of careers/jobs for me	Financial / career benefits	0.177			
Q7 You can succeed in life without going to university	Financial / career benefits	0*	0.128	79%	36%
Q8 I understand how university / higher education leads to careers I'm interested in	Financial / career benefits	0.027*	0.055	76%	28%
Q9 Higher education could enable me to earn more in my future career	Student finance	0.263			
Q10 I understand the reasons people go to university beyond studying	Social/academic benefits	0.054			
Q11 Studying in higher education gives you more skills or knowledge	Social/academic benefits	0.285			
Q12 I know lots about what student life is actually like	Student life	0.263			
Q13 I'll make new friends at university	Social/academic benefits	0.011*	0.064	74%	33%
Q14 I understand what financial support is available for university students	Student finance	0*	0.3	82%	48%
Q15 I am confident about how I'd be able to afford university	Student finance	0*	0.194	79%	40%
Q16 I understand the link between my school subjects and courses that I could study	Choices & pathways	0*	0.120	78%	35%
Q17 I am aware of the wide range of courses available at university	Choices & pathways	0*	0.166	79%	38%
Q18 I understand the range of options available to me after I leave school	Financial / career benefits	0*	0.105	76%	34%
Q19 I know the steps to take to get a job I'm interested in	Financial / career benefits	0.081			
Q20 I am confident in my capability to make decisions about my future	Choices & pathways	0.532			
Q21 Higher education is for people like me	Fit & belonging	0.016*	0.062	75%	28%
Q22 I would fit in well at higher education	Fit & belonging	0.003*	0.076	77%	31%
Q23 I believe I could go to higher education if I wanted to	Fit & belonging	0*	0.122	79%	33%
Q24 If I went to higher education, I am confident that I would succeed	Fit & belonging	0.01*	0.066	77%	29%
Q25 I have the academic ability to succeed at university	Academic confidence	0.009*	0.067	78%	29%
Q26 I could cope with the level of study required at university	Academic confidence	0.084			
Q27 How likely are you to apply to higher education aged 18 or 19?	Aspirations for HE progression	0.844			
Q28 How likely do you think it is that if you do apply to higher education aged 18 or 19, you will get in?	Expectations for HE progression	0.004*	0.076	82%	26%
Fit and belonging		0*	0.111	66%	47%
Self-efficacy		0.017*	0.059	73%	33%
Problem-solving		0.363			
Academic confidence		0.017*	0.062	69%	37%
Choices and pathways (Q16-20)		0*	0.136	65%	49%

Qualitative responses were solicited in the exit surveys with two questions. Participants were asked what they thought they had gained from taking part in the programme – once "don't knows" were excluded, 496 out of 840 matched respondents answered this question. Some answers included multiple codes, giving an overall number of codings of 553.

Participants were also given the opportunity to provide other comments or suggestions, and there were 60 responses once "don't knows" were excluded.

Compared to our universal offer, we received a slightly lower response rate to the qualitative questions (59% versus 66%). The answers were of limited length and depth when compared to similar questions asked of our universal offer in post-event surveys (avg. length 45 characters vs. 54) – it is likely that this is indicative of a lack of time or of survey fatigue (the MIP survey contained 28 items plus one open question, whereas the universal surveys have 4-5 questions).

An analysis of the coded qualitative responses shows that HE knowledge was referenced the most, followed by knowledge general (2nd) future options (3rd), university options (4th) student life (5th) and confidence (6th).

It is interesting to note that although knowledge and skills were well-represented in the responses, there were relatively few answers that mentioned accessibility or that referred to fit and belonging. However, this is in line with the findings from Hepp's universal offer evaluation, and the use of focus groups was intended to explore this topic area further. There may also be scope for reviewing qualitative questions in future iterations which would give us more responses on the topic of fit and belonging.

Table 2 & 3 – qualitative responses

Q1 - What do you think you've gained from taking part in this programme?

Code	Respondents
Knowledge (overall)	239
Knowledge of HE	177
Knowledge – general	62
Future options (overall)	115
Future options – general	55
Options at university	33
Career options	16
FE options	11
Soft skills (overall)	46
Confidence	29
Decision making	13
General	3
Problem solving	1
Student life	33
Student finance	25
Accessibility	21
Benefits (overall)	20
Benefits – general	17
Benefits – careers	2
Benefits – academic	1
Support at uni	17
Applying to HE	14
Positive impression	9
About session or activity	3
Other	11
Total	**553**

Q2 – Do you have any other comments or suggestions for us?

Code	Respondents
Positive impression	20
Specific future option (jobs or courses)	11
Delivery suggestion	8
Finance	5
University experience	4
Careers	3
Student support/accessibility	4
Negative impression	2
Other	3
Total	**60**

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Focus Group

A focus group was carried out with a group of 11 Y8 students, after completing the three activities in the programme. The students had received activities from the Understand, Decide and Belong strands, which focused on improving knowledge, soft skills and decision making, and fit and belonging respectively.

Most significantly, students did not know they were on a programme and struggled to distinguish Hepp activities from other interventions they had participated in.

Students demonstrated a good level of understanding of university and how it differs from school, and their future options including college and apprenticeships. They demonstrated an awareness of decision-making processes, noting the importance of making your own decisions and picking a subject that they enjoyed and were good at, as well as knowing where to seek advice when making decisions on their future options (e.g. GCSE subjects). Students had thought about their future options and suggested a variety of plans, such as gap years, travelling, apprenticeships, and college/sixth form.

The students described their campus visit as of middling interest; they enjoyed the campus tour and being out of the classroom. Notably, the students indicated that they felt like they belonged at the university visited, saying it felt "normal", like "my school", and that they could "be [themselves] there".

For future iterations of the programme, students suggested they would like to hear more from current students and graduates, on their experiences and past and future choices – in particular, future career paths and the student experience (what an average day or week looks like for a student). Students also wanted to hear more about which options which would allow them to pursue a certain career – e.g. which qualifications could allow them to pursue a career in hair & beauty. Overall, the group agreed they would like to take part in the activities again.

Case Study

As an illustrative example of school-level effects, the results of the Wilcoxon's signed rank test for a particular school (Yewlands Academy) are set out below.

Yewlands Academy were identified as a model of best practice for MIP as they delivered the programme largely in line with our intentions/programme parameters, namely the school had small cohorts of 35 pupils each in Y8 & Y9, with 53 matched cases overall; the students received a campus visit and a workshop, as well as a virtual assembly; and we had a strong working relationship with the school with a well-engaged key point of contact who helped us to schedule the programme throughout the academic year.

As Table 4 illustrates, there was a moderate impact on fit and belonging and choices and pathways, and on aspects of student finance. There was a small impact on self-efficacy, academic confidence, expectations for progression, and aspects of social/academic benefits. Notably, the effect size was larger in these areas than in the overall results.

It is important to note that overall, testing for school-level effects is difficult because of the large reduction in sample size reducing likelihood of significant effects. Significantly, the amount of variability in how the programme was delivered makes it difficult to test for the effect of different configurations.

Table 4- Yewlands Academy results

r is an estimate of effect size, understood as <0.1 – very small effect, >0.1 small, >0.3 moderate. These results are colour-coded from light to dark green accordingly. The latter two columns indicate the proportion of post-scores showing no or positive change and positive change respectively.

* result is significant as the *p*-value is <0.05. Effect sizes and proportional changes are shown only for significant results.

Question	Outcome	*p*	*r*	Same / Positive change	Positive change
Q1 I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself	Self-efficacy	0.044*	0.196	87%	32%
Q2 In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me	Self-efficacy	0.175			
Q3 I am motivated to do well in my studies	Motivation	0.551			
Q4 I feel confident about taking on challenges	Problem-solving	0.452			
Q5 I feel confident about solving problems	Problem-solving	0.565			
Q6 Going to university can open a broader range of careers/jobs for me	Financial / career benefits	0.454			
Q7 You can succeed in life without going to university	Financial / career benefits	0.502			
Q8 I understand how university / higher education leads to careers I'm interested in	Financial / career benefits	0.139			
Q9 Higher education could enable me to earn more in my future career	Student finance	0.845			
Q10 I understand the reasons people go to university beyond studying	Social / academic benefits	0.545			
Q11 Studying in higher education gives you more skills or knowledge	Social / academic benefits	0.977			
Q12 I know lots about what student life is actually like	Student life	0.369			
Q13 I'll make new friends at university	Social / academic benefits	0.014*	0.242	79%	44%
Q14 I understand what financial support is available for university students	Student finance	0*	0.468	92%	62%
Q15 I am confident about how I'd be able to afford university	Student finance	0*	0.434	92%	60%
Q16 I understand the link between my school subjects and courses that I could study	Choices & pathways	0.001*	0.353	88%	54%
Q17 I am aware of the wide range of courses available at university	Choices & pathways	0.005*	0.279	80%	52%
Q18 I understand the range of options available to me after I leave school	Financial / career benefits	0.02*	0.235	82%	39%
Q19 I know the steps to take to get a job I'm interested in	Financial / career benefits	0.027*	0.220	80%	43%
Q20 I am confident in my capability to make decisions about my future	Choices & pathways	0.56			
Q21 Higher education is for people like me	Fit & belonging	0.383			
Q22 I would fit in well at higher education	Fit & belonging	0.051			
Q23 I believe I could go to higher education if I wanted to	Fit & belonging	0.002*	0.310	83%	46%
Q24 If I went to higher education, I am confident that I would succeed	Fit & belonging	0*	0.361	90%	53%
Q25 I have the academic ability to succeed at university	Academic confidence	0.018*	0.235	86%	43%
Q26 I could cope with the level of study required at university	Academic confidence	0.193			
Q27 How likely are you to apply to higher education aged 18 or 19?	Aspirations for HE progression	0.115			
Q28 How likely do you think it is that if you do apply to higher education aged 18 or 19, you will get in?	Expectations for HE progression	0.006*	0.292	93%	32%
Fit and belonging		0.002*	0.316	78%	57%
Self-efficacy		0.032*	0.215	84%	44%
Problem-solving		0.934			
Academic confidence		0.02*	0.235	84%	47%
Choices and pathways (Q16-20)		0.002*	0.304	71%	59%

Conclusions

Interest in / take up of the Multiple Intervention Programme
There was significant appetite amongst our region's schools for a programme of this nature; with take up of the programme higher than anticipated. This is encouraging considering the time and resource requirements of school staff in order to participate.

Programme evaluations indicate a positive impact
The overall learning from this pilot year is incredibly valuable, with numerous developments already feeding into improvements for year 2. However, it was important that the programme has been able to demonstrate a positive impact, in a number of key areas this year.

Compromising delivery parameters to secure school buy-in impacted quality
A key reflection of the team surrounded the programme parameters we initially set, and the extent to which we compromised on some of those parameters in our eagerness to sign schools up. For example, allowing some schools to have whole year groups on programme rather than targeted groups, offering some schools multiple assemblies and virtually delivered assemblies as part of the programme and delivering activity before we had received student data – all compromised the quality of the programme and the quality of the data/evaluation we were able to produce.

Varied delivery across different schools was problematic
We initially believed that delivering MIP in a variety of ways would be beneficial as it would allow us to evaluate the impact of these different delivery types and establish what works best in relation to things like cohort size, delivery mechanisms and content. However, it was that variety which made it particularly difficult to evaluate the programme as a whole and to understand why a particular school or cohort had the outcomes they did.

A significant number of schools didn't understand or comply with our data and evaluation requirements
For a variety of reasons, a significant number of schools failed to provide participant level data sets and/or registers (Hepp received data sets for 33% of participating schools). This makes it extremely difficult for us to understand the characteristics of our MIP cohort and to know if we are working with the right learners. To a lesser extent some schools failed to either ensure baseline surveys were conducted prior to the first Hepp engagement, exit surveys were conducted after the final engagement, or provide Hepp with the necessary detail to match the baseline and exit surveys for each participant.

Of the 3,000 learners who participated in the programme we were able to match 840 baseline and return surveys. Although still an impressive number this means we did not receive, or were unable to match the responses of over 2,000 participants.

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Did learners know they were on a programme?

Pre/Post evaluation responses and school focus group feedback indicates that although participants recalled particular elements of the Multiple Intervention, many were unaware they were on 'a programme'. If we want to deliver a series of activities as a cohesive programme, and we want to be able to evaluate the impact of these interactions as a programme, then it is imperative that those participating know they are on a programme.

Recommendations

Reflecting upon our Theory of Change, pilot evaluation/findings and programme debrief, the following recommendations were made to the Hepp Board for implementation in 2023/24 academic year:

<u>Ensuring quality over quantity</u> - To ensure the programme is sustainable and delivered in a way that maximises quality and impact, we will:

- Reduce the number of participating schools from 20+ to 12-15.
- Introduce a maximum cohort size of 70 per year group.
- Establish stricter programme parameters:
    - First and final engagements must be workshops or campus visits.
    - Ideally, all three engagements will be workshops or campus visits, with a maximum of one assembly style presentation per cohort.
    - No virtually delivered activity.
    - Each engagement must take place on a separate date, ideally one per term.

<u>Clarifying requirements of participating schools</u> - To ensure schools understand and meet our expectations of them, we will:

- Write into our programme agreements and reinforce in all planning meetings the requirement of participating schools to identify target learners and provide us with the data set prior to their first engagement.
- Write into our programme agreements and reinforce in all planning meetings the requirement of participating schools that the same learners attend all three engagements per year.
- Ensure participating schools dedicate sufficient time to ensure our pre and post programme evaluation forms are completed.
- Ensure participating schools provide us with contact details for their school or Trust Data Manager
- Stipulate the stricter programme parameters to all schools wishing to participate.

<u>Participants need to understand that they are on a programme!</u>
- School staff to ensure they are reinforcing this message to their learners before and after each session.
- Hepp delivery team need to reinforce this message during their sessions, for example by introducing each session in the context of the wider programme e.g. for session 1, explaining we will be returning to deliver session 2 and 3 later in the year. For session 2 and 3, reminding them of what we covered in previous sessions.
- Hepp should develop a MIP logo and bespoke presentation slide for all MIP sessions which reinforces these key messages prior to each session taking place.

<u>Understanding and demonstrating impact</u>

Making it as simple as possible for participants to complete our evaluation will improve both the quantity of completed responses we receive and the accuracy of those responses.
 to ensure that our evaluation tests the correct outcomes.

- Streamline baseline/return survey – fewer number of questions / questions more closely aligned with our programme outcomes
- Greater emphasis on focus groups – we will aim to conduct a minimum of three focus groups post programme in the summer of 2024.

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Appendices

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Context

Situation

Hepp (Higher Education Progression Partnership) is a jointly funded initiative by Sheffield Hallam University and the University of Sheffield that provides impartial advice and guidance across South Yorkshire and North East Derbyshire. Hepp aims to increase engagement with higher education from anyone in our region with personal, systemic or cultural barriers to access through our evidence-based universal and targeted offers.

As part of Hepp's core offer to the region's secondary schools, we will be delivering activity in two distinct ways:

1) Universal provision: All schools will be entitled to receive x2 engagements per year. These engagements will be delivered and evaluated as single 'one-off' activities.

2) Multiple Intervention Programme: A targeted, incremental programme, delivered to 15-20 schools across one to three years. These engagements will be delivered and evaluated as a sustained programme of activity.

Rationale

Note – numbers in brackets refer to Hepp's strategic theory of change.

Hepp's main goal (40) – "HEPP's evidence-based, universal and targeted offers are increasing engagement with HE from anyone in our region with personal, systemic, or cultural barriers to access, as directed by the two universities through the HEPP board".

As part of Hepp's strategy (50) to achieve this goal, we have reviewed which groupings should be a priority for tailored intervention (90) and decided on a targeting measure based on average access rates of free school meals over the past 6 years.

The multiple intervention programme and associated planning aims to fulfil (110) of the strategic theory of change – "Hepp has worked out how it will measure success of its interventions and when and why it can claim a relationship if and when access numbers rise. There is an evaluative framework to measure the relationship between the engagement activities and the number of people accessing HE from target groups", as well as continuing to fulfil (100) by furthering the creation of tailored offers to reach specific audiences with specific content (i.e. the delivery and evaluation of a programme of multiple interventions, as distinct from one-off interventions).

The rationale behind development and delivery of a Multiple Intervention Programme within Hepp is twofold:

1) Delivering a multiple intervention programme is more impactful than delivering isolated "one off" activities in terms of changing attitudes towards higher education (see evidence).

2) Transitioning towards a multiple intervention programme where participating schools take up an agreed amount of activity per year group/per year will be a much more effective use of Hepp resource and delivery capacity than our current method of offering schools a set amount of activity which many do not take up (in 21/22 31.8% of our Category A schools took up their full entitlement

of activity). We will still run a universal offer concurrent with the multiple-intervention programme, offering all target centres up to two activities in the 22/23 academic year.

Aim

This programme aims to engage with targeted secondary schools across the region **where the need is greatest**, and deliver a programme of multiple interventions, building incrementally from Year 8 through to Year 10. The overarching aim is to enable them to make informed decisions about progressing to higher education – in order to achieve this, we will aim to:

- Increase participants' **knowledge of higher education** – what higher education is; what choices and pathways are available; the costs and benefits of higher education; and student finance & student support.
- Increase participants' **academic confidence** – supporting 'soft skills' that are supportive of academic attainment, such as resilience, inspiration and motivation to achieve.
- Address misconceptions around participants' **fit and belonging** within higher education – showing students the value of HE, connecting them with positive role models and addressing concerns that HE is not 'for them'.

Underpinning Theory

Evidence

TASO evidence summary is on IAG in general, and suggests a mixed-to-small positive impact on students' aspirations and attitudes and HE participation. There are a small number of causal, UK-based studies.

The OfS has data showing that young people from disadvantaged areas are less likely to enter higher education. The proportion of 18 year olds in quintile 1 of the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) is 4.5 percentage points lower than the proportion of 18 year olds in the general population (2022). Free school meals, the measure which Hepp has used in our targeting (by calculating a six-year average for local schools and then targeting those with the highest proportions of their students receiving free school meals) is one measure that makes up the IMD.

Although it is difficult to conclusively rule on the effectiveness of multiple intervention outreach programmes due to the wide variety of activities which may be part of these programmes, there is some evidence that working in a sustained, multiple intervention way is more effective at changing behaviours and attitudes towards HE. Thornton et al. (2014, in Whitty et al., 2015: p54) found that a sustained approach was most effective at raising or maintaining aspirations, whereas Harding and Bowes found causal evidence to suggest that "a higher level of engagement in a multi-intervention programme is associated with a higher probability that a learner will be accepted onto a HE programme. This builds on the findings of previous causal studies that indicated learners who participate in a greater number of activities are more likely to apply and accept a place at HE." (2022: p2)

Barriers

- **Academic confidence/resilience:** There is some evidence on the impact of campus visits on HE knowledge, efficacy, and "grit" (Swanson et al., 2021). Furthermore, "[t]here is evidence to suggest that some interventions, particularly [...] **masterclasses/workshops**, can have a positive impact on these outcomes and are effective ways to develop **confidence, motivation and resilience."** (Harding and Bowes, 2022: p3)

- **Fit/Belonging:** Evidence suggests that students' identities are influenced by their previous experiences at school, their current HE experience and their social circumstances (Crozier & Ray, 2008). Archer et al. (2007: p232) note that, particularly for working class students, HE "does not appear to offer working-class young people the space to 'feel myself'… rather, it is seen as an alien space in which they will stand out and 'not belong' in a myriad of ways."
- **Higher education knowledge:** Although disadvantaged pupils often have high aspirations, they may not know how to achieve them – they may have poor knowledge of the choices they need to make to access higher education, and may have 'less developed capacities to realise [their ambitions]' (Whitty et al., 2015: pp43-44). Poor knowledge may directly result in "poor decision-making, inappropriate choices, and early withdrawal" (Thomas, 2011: p239). Evidence suggests that IAG can increase knowledge of HE choices and pathways, knowledge of student life, knowledge of HE cost and support, and increased confidence in decision-making ability (Harding and Bowes, 2022: p12), and can in turn impact on knowledge and expectations for application (McNally, 2016: p8). However, evidence on impact on behaviour is less apparent.

Assumptions

Schools' ability to participate in and support sustained outreach programmes (over and above one-off interventions).

One key assumption may be that low participation YPs / disadvantaged YPs are those who will benefit most from interventions – e.g. that demand for knowledge is high in these YPs in particular. That these low participation rates are mediated by need for knowledge or skills, rather than another factor.

That we will be able to reach out to the students most in need of intervention through our targeting model (FSM 6-year average, but also leaving it up to schools to select a representative sample of these students). In particular, if social and cultural capital are potentially more relevant than socioeconomic status in informing lower participation rates in HE, are measures of socioeconomic disadvantage effective enough proxies? (see Whitty et al., pp47-48)

There is little evidence that intervening pre-16 on fit and belonging is effective. It could potentially be counter-productive (i.e. othering or off-putting). Evidence tends to focus on retention and success, i.e. fit and belonging at university.
There is also some evidence to suggest that intervening *early* in fit and belonging is most effective (e.g. Whitty et al., p47) – our intervening in this space is a significant assumption that we can make a difference.

Outcomes
The outcomes of this intervention are focused on the impact it will have direct on participants in the programme and their engagement and understanding of higher education.
The expected change in participants is:

3) An increase in HE knowledge: What is Higher Education / Routes into Higher Education, The costs and benefits of Higher Education / Student Finance and Student Support
4) An increase in decision making skills, and knowledge of upcoming choices/decisions: Routes into HE, how to make an informed decision
5) An increase in confidence: Academic confidence/resilience / I could go to HE if I wanted to / HE is for people like me / If I went, I would fit in, enjoy it, succeed.

Long

In the long-term, we will be able to use HESA tracking via HEAT to demonstrate increased access/participation in higher education from target cohorts.

Medium
Medium-term change involves participants developing their knowledge, skills, and confidence in relation to higher education and their upcoming educational choices.

In the medium to long term Hepp also anticipate an increase in school take up of our new Multiple Intervention programme.

Short
In the short term, the interventions seek to develop participants knowledge of higher education and understanding that it is a viable option for them.

Programme Delivery
The Multiple Intervention Programme will consist of three engagements per year group per year, building incrementally from Year 8 through to Year 10.

Interventions will consist of Workshops, Presentations and Campus Visits. Activities within the programme have been developed to meet specific learning outcomes aligned to identified problem statements.

Individual activities within the programme have individual problem statements aligned to them, however the multiple intervention programme seeks to address a broader, overarching problem statement.
"Students lack the **knowledge, skills and confidence** to make informed decisions about higher education progression."

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Hepp Activity Strands for 22/23			
I can ACHIEVE...	**I BELONG in Higher Education...**	**I UNDERSTAND what Higher Education is...**	**I can make informed DECISIONS...**
To help students develop their academic confidence, mindset and their resilience to setbacks. This strand will support students to explore their inspiration and motivation to achieve.	To challenge stereotypes, address misconceptions about who goes to HE, and show students the power of role models and influencers. This strand will help students know <u>they</u> belong in Higher Education.	To help students understand the costs and benefits of higher education, to enable them to make an informed choice. Students will understand how to fund their Higher Education journey, the support they can access and what studying at Higher Education looks like. This strand shows students where Higher Education can take them.	To help students know their Higher Education options, plan their routes and make informed choices about next steps. This strand supports students making challenging decisions and planning their future.

Suggested programme:

Workshop: 'I can make informed decisions' strand (skills)

Campus Visit: 'I belong in HE' and/or "I can achieve" strand (confidence)

Presentation: 'I understand what HE is' strand (knowledge)

	Hepp & HeppSY Offer Review: Problem Statements Grid			
	I can ACHIEVE...	**I BELONG in Higher Education...**	**I UNDERSTAND what Higher Education is...**	**I can make informed DECISIONS...**
Y11	Students do not have the positive mindset to achieve or set goals.	Students do not understand the value of HE. Students do not have role models who have been to HE.	Students believe that attending HE is just for academic development. Students have limited understanding of how they might fund a HE journey. Students do not understand how Higher Education might support their career development.	Students do not know their post-16 options. Students do not have a clear understanding of where they want to go after post 16.
Y10	Students are not academically confident. Students are not academically resilient.			
Y9	Students are not motivated to achieve or do not know how to motivate themselves to achieve.	Students have misconceptions about fitting in at HE, making friends or whether HE is for them.	Students do not understand the general benefits of HE. Students may already believe they cannot afford to attend.	Students may never have made a big decision before. Students do not know how their KS4 choices will impact HE.
Y8	Students do not always understand the impact of not achieving at school. Students struggle with time management and basic goal setting to help them achieve.	Students don't understand what HE is or who goes to HE. Students don't interact with role models who have been to HE.	Students do not know what Higher Education is or why you would choose to attend Higher Education. Students do not know the difference between HE and school.	
Y7				Students struggle with good decision making and understanding the impact of their choices specifically, the impact of their choices on future education.

Inputs

The inputs into the programme fall into two categories: established **Hepp infrastructure** and specific **programme resources** for the intervention.

Infrastructure

The intervention will draw on existing Hepp staff, student ambassadors and graduate interns.

1. Our Regional Activities Coordinator team will be responsible for liaising with target schools and planning individual school programmes
2. Our Graduate Intern and Student Ambassador team will be responsible for delivering all activities within the programme

Programme Resources
Programme resources have been developed as part of a wider Hepp/HeppSY activity development programme for all activity in 22/23. Evaluation planning will also be built into the activity development programme, including staff training and data sharing agreements where necessary.

Activities

The programme will consist of three activities/engagements per year group, per year for each participating school – i.e. 9 activities in total across year 8, 9 and 10.

If 15 schools participate in the full programme for 22/23 that would equate to delivery of 135 activities in total.

Full details of activity have been referenced in "Programme Delivery".

Outputs

Attendance figures
Completed surveys – pre- and post-, teacher evaluation
HEAT data (HESA tracking)
Qualitative evaluation results
Retention and repeated booking from schools for subsequent years/cohorts

Appendix B: School rankings list & summary

Centre name	Region	Number of participants	Year Groups	No. Cohorts	Cohort types	FSM%	FSM Ranking
Sheffield Springs Academy	Sheffield	630	8 & 9 & 10	3	Whole cohorts (210)	46.6	2
Sheffield Park Academy	Sheffield	600	8 & 9 & 10	3	Whole cohorts (of 200)	42.34	7
Astrea Academy Sheffield	Sheffield	540	8 & 9 & 10	3	Whole cohorts (180)	41.45	8
Handsworth Grange Community Sports College	Sheffield	540	8 & 9	2	Whole cohorts (180)	24.74	35
Astrea Academy Dearne	Barnsley	473	8 & 9	2	Whole cohorts (Y8: 242, Y9: 231)	31.88	17
De Warenne Academy	Doncaster	289	8 & 9	2	Whole cohorts (y8: 151, y9: 138)	27.56	25
Outwood Academy Carlton	Barnsley	120	8 & 9	2	Targeted groups (Y8: 60, Y9:60)	29.22	21
Outwood Academy Shafton	Barnsley	120	8 & 9	2	Targeted Groups (Y8: 60, Y9: 60)	27.9	24
Chaucer School	Sheffield	100	8 & 9	2	Targeted groups (50)	43.08	4
Firth Park Academy	Sheffield	100	8 & 9	2	Targeted groups (50)	42.96	6
Parkwood E-Act Academy	Sheffield	100	8 & 9	2	Targeted groups (50)	43	5
Hinde House 2-16 Academy	Sheffield	72	8 & 9	2	Targeted (35)	36.4	11
Parkside Community School	NED	70	9 & 10	2	Targeted Groups (Y9: 25, Y10: 25)	37.54	10
Yewlands Academy	Sheffield	70	8 & 9	2	Targeted (35)	28.3	23

Centre name	Region	Number of participants	Year Groups	No. Cohorts	Cohort types	FSM%	FSM Ranking
Clifton Community School	Rotherham	60	8 & 9	2	Targeted groups (of 30)	40.56	9
Springwell Community College	NED	50	8	1	Targeted groups	28.54	22
Whittington Green School	NED	50	8 & 9 & 10	3	Targeted (Y8: 50, Y9: 30, Y10: 15)	31.32	18
Newfield Secondary School	Sheffield	20	9	1	Targeted group (20)	31.3	19
Ash Hill Academy	Doncaster	DNP				32.48	16
Astrea Academy Woodfields	Doncaster	DNP				32.62	15
Barnsley Academy	Barnsley	DNP				33.54	14
Don Valley Academy	Doncaster	DNP				27.14	27
Fir Vale School	Sheffield	DNP				49.12	1
Oasis Academy Don Valley	Sheffield	DNP				35.72	12
Outwood Academy Adwick	Doncaster	DNP				26.2	29
Outwood Academy City	Sheffield	DNP				29.48	20
Outwood Academy Danum	Doncaster	DNP				27.08	28
Shirebrook Academy	NED	DNP				27.38	26
The Laurel Academy	Doncaster	DNP				34.5	13
Thrybergh Academy	Rotherham	DNP				44.84	3
Trinity Academy St. Edwards	Barnsley	DNP				26.1	30

Appendix C: Outcomes and measures

Outcome	Short/medium/long term	Measure
Increased access to higher education for participants in the programme	Long-term; to be assessed after the conclusion of programme participation.	HESA tracking through HEAT shows an increase for MIP participants vs comparable students who did not receive the intervention
Participants develop their skills and confidence in relation to higher education and their upcoming educational/career choices	Medium-term; assessed throughout the programme but change expected to be slower than below (i.e. to take multiple iterations)	Pre-/post-survey data, from multiple iterations of the programme where possible. Focus group
School uptake of offer increases over multiple iterations of the programme	Medium-term – over multiple iterations	Tracking of school interest / uptake / participant levels over time
Participants develop greater knowledge of HE, its costs and benefits, choices and pathways, and student finance	Short-term – over the course of one iteration	Pre-/post-survey analysis showing an improvement in knowledge of these areas
Participants develop a greater sense of fit and belonging within HE (that HE is/could be for them)	Short-term – over the course of one iteration	Pre/post-survey analysis showing a positive change in attitudes towards HE

How much do you agree with the following statements about yourself?

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
In general, I think that I can obtain outcomes that are important to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am motivated to do well in my studies	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel confident about taking on challenges	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I feel confident about solving problems	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How much do you agree with the following statements about your future choices?

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Going to university can open a broader range of careers/jobs for me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
You can succeed in life without going to university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I understand how university / higher education leads to careers I'm interested in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Higher education could enable me to earn more in my future career	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I understand the reasons people go to university beyond studying	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Studying in higher education gives you more skills or knowledge	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know lots about what student life is actually like	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I'll make new friends at university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I understand what financial support is available for university students	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I am confident in being able to compare financial support options across universities	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am confident about how I'd be able to afford university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I understand the link between my GCSE subjects and courses that I could study at university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am aware of the wide range of courses available at university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I understand of the range of options available to me after I leave school	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I know the steps to take to get a job I'm interested in	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I am confident in my capability to make decisions about my future	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

How far do you agree with the following statements about higher education?

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Higher education is for people like me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I would fit in well at higher education	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe I could go to higher education if I wanted to	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
If I went to higher education, I am confident that I would succeed	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I have the academic ability to succeed at university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I could cope with the level of study required at university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Finally, please answer these questions on your expectations around higher education.

Statement	Very likely	Fairly likely	Fairly unlikely	Very unlikely
How likely are you to apply to higher education aged 18 or 19?	☐	☐	☐	☐
How likely do you think it is that if you do apply to higher education aged 18 or 19, you will get in?	☐	☐	☐	☐