



# **Evaluation of the Careerpilot/Wessex Inspiration Network's Careers Guidance Intervention Programme 2018-19**

**June 2019**

**Dr Alison Rouncefield-Swales**

**Rouncefield-Swales Consulting**

## Table of Contents

Tables and Figures .....	3
1 Introduction and Methodology .....	4
1.1 Introduction .....	4
1.1.1 Local delivery partnership .....	4
1.1.2 WIN Careerpilot Collaboration .....	4
1.1.3 The focus for the WIN Careerpilot work in 2018-19 .....	5
1.2 Research questions.....	5
1.3 Method.....	6
1.3.1 Phases of study.....	6
1.4 Report structure and content.....	8
2 The WIN Careerpilot model of support .....	9
2.1 The WIN Careerpilot model.....	9
2.2 The effectiveness of the WIN Careerpilot Guidance model.....	9
2.2.1 Pre-guidance session .....	10
2.2.2 Careerpilot Guidance session .....	10
2.2.3 Follow-up.....	11
2.2.4 Relationship with the Careers Adviser and HE WIN Adviser .....	12
2.2.5 Improving communication .....	15
2.3 Careerpilot resources and tools .....	16
2.3.1 Skills Map.....	17
2.3.2 Job Sectors.....	17
2.3.3 Bookmarks, My qualifications and My Providers .....	17
3 Young people's future education and career plans.....	18
3.1 Impact on anticipated future career and education plans.....	18
3.2 Action planning.....	19
3.2.1 Students on-going action.....	20
3.3 The personal impact of participation .....	21
3.3.1 Increasing understanding of the importance of exploring opportunities and forward planning 23	
3.3.2 Broadening knowledge and understanding of educational pathways and higher education ..	23
3.3.3 Increasing understanding of future career ideas and graduate employment .....	25
3.3.4 Developed confidence in self and future ideas .....	26
4 Conclusions and recommendations.....	29
4.1 Conclusions.....	29
4.1.1 How does Careerpilot contribute to young people's awareness and understanding of the range of career choices and their accessibility? .....	29

4.1.2	Does the Careerpilot Guidance process influence young people to consider progression to higher education? .....	29
4.1.3	How do the one-to-one guidance sessions support exploration, decision-making and forward-planning towards career and course progression? .....	29
4.1.4	How effective is the 2018/19 staged model of delivering pre-guidance, guidance and follow-up? .....	30
4.1.5	Do the young people who participate in the Careerpilot Guidance process feel better informed and more confident about their next steps as a result of the support?.....	30
4.2	Recommendations for improvements to the Guidance model.....	30
4.2.1	Model structure and content .....	30
4.2.2	Careerpilot resources and information .....	31
4.2.3	Further development of the WIN Advisor role.....	31

## Tables and Figures

Table 1 Year group and family higher education experience of first survey respondents .....	6
Table 2 Year group and family higher education experience of second survey respondents .....	7
Table 3 School focus groups .....	7
Table 4 School interviews .....	8
Table 5 How prepared you felt to take part in the session? .....	15
Table 6 Extent that the Careerpilot Guidance Sessions encouraged you to consider Higher Education.....	18
Table 7 What are you thinking of doing once you reach 18? (Please tick more than one if you are considering several options) .....	19
Table 8 To what extent have the Careerpilot Guidance sessions helped you set out a clear plan of action for your future?.....	19
Figure 1: Spectrum of coordination.....	9
Figure 2 Focus group ranking of WIN Careerpilot activities .....	10
Figure 3 Focus group ranking of WIN Careerpilot activities .....	10
Figure 4 Feedback on support from the Careers Adviser.....	13
Figure 5 Impact of support given by the Careers Adviser .....	13
Figure 6 Usefulness of the guidance session.....	14
Figure 7 Usefulness of the different Careerpilot activities.....	16
Figure 8 Information and Usefulness of the different Careerpilot activities by Year Group .....	16
Figure 9 Rating of Careerpilot tools.....	17
Figure 10 Rating of Careerpilot tools.....	17
Figure 11 Plans for Post-16 education and work.....	18
Figure 12 As a result of the Careerpilot session, will you do any of the following? (First survey).....	20
Figure 13 Action since taking part in the Careerpilot Guidance Sessions (Second survey) .....	20
Figure 14 Thinking about how you feel since taking part in the Careerpilot Guidance Sessions, how much do you agree with the following statements. ....	22
Figure 15 Overall, how helpful have the Careerpilot Guidance Sessions been to you? .....	22
Figure 16 Information learnt about qualification, providers and higher education .....	24
Figure 17 Information learnt about jobs and jobs sectors .....	25
Figure 18 How confident do you now feel about making an informed decision about your future education and career? .....	27

# 1 Introduction and Methodology

*This chapter outlines the WIN Careerpilot guidance support model and sets the context for the delivery of the programme throughout 2018/19. The chapter goes on to detail the methodological approach taken, the research questions which have guided this evaluation and the structure of the report.*

## 1.1 Introduction

Careerpilot is a free careers website which aims to help 13-19 year olds make an informed decision about their future careers. The site includes one-stop information about choices available to young people, including the many routes to higher level study, up-to-date job sector information alongside Career Tools to enable students to personalise their choices. Careerpilot also includes an Adviser, Parent and Reporting Zone.

Careerpilot was developed by the Western Vocational Progression Consortium (WVPC) in 2011, with funding from twelve universities it is hosted at the University of Bath. It is now jointly funded by twenty university partners and six National Collaborative Outreach Programmes (NCOPS)<sup>1</sup> and has expanded to become a well-regarded and well-used careers site for 13-19 year-olds across the South of England. The website provides impartial and inspirational information about qualifications and career choices available at 14, 16 and 18, including job sectors and links to hundreds of providers. In 2018 Careerpilot was given a prestigious award by the Careers Development Institute (CDI), the national careers professional body, in the category 'Providing Careers and Job Information'.

### 1.1.1 Local delivery partnership

The Wessex Inspiration Network (WIN)<sup>2</sup> NCOP is one of 26 NCOPs across England. The WIN has fostered collaboration between the Universities of Bath and Bath Spa along with Bath, Weston and Wiltshire Colleges and local schools. The consortium is measured by its success in improving progression rates to higher education; it is not about enhancing progression to a single institution.

The NCOPs work in targeted wards where research evidence shows that young people have the capacity, based on GCSE results, to go into higher education, but where there is a lower than expected subsequent take-up of higher education (HE)<sup>3</sup>. These are termed GAP wards and GAP students as there is a 'gap' with the national average of the number expected to progress to higher education. The WIN NCOP aims to increase progression to higher level study and is working intensively with at least 20% of the identified NCOP students on a sustained and progressive programme. These are students aged 13 to 19 years old, from a target ward, with actual or predicted good GCSE grades and who are not currently considering higher education.

### 1.1.2 WIN Careerpilot Collaboration

The WIN has commissioned the Careerpilot team to provide one-to-one careers guidance sessions with targeted WIN NCOP students using Careerpilot and a focused guidance process to help young people make informed decisions about their future courses and jobs. The delivery model is arranged to offer a sequential, comprehensive and personalised programme of support:

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/national-collaborative-outreach-programme-ncop/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.won.ac.uk/win/what-is-the-win>

<sup>3</sup> It is important to note that HE is not just three year degrees at traditional Universities; it is Foundation degrees, Higher and Degree Apprenticeships and Higher National Diplomas and Higher National Certificates, much of which is also College based.

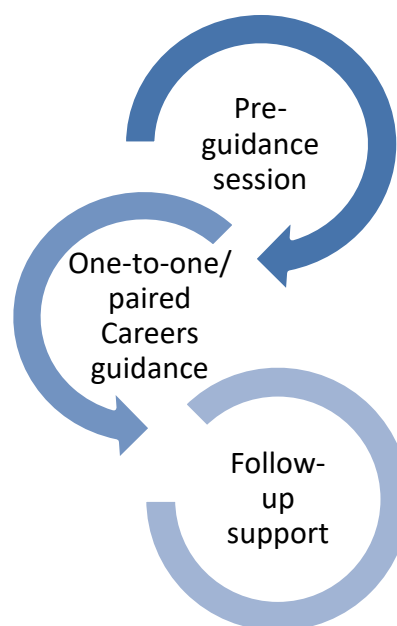
**Step 1:** Each student meets with the WIN HE Adviser and is introduced to the project, the Careerpivot Guidance model and registers on the Careerpivot website and completes some introductory activities on the site

**Step 2:** Careerpivot Qualified Careers Adviser provides:

- Y10 students with a one-hour session in pairs with another Y10 student.
- Y11-13 students with a one-hour personal one-to-one session in each academic year of the project.

These personal sessions enable the students to identify the qualifications and careers of interests to them as they receive impartial guidance, which includes accessing Careerpivot information and using some Careerpivot Career Tools. After the paired/one-to-one guidance session, the student receives a report outlining the discussion with agreed action points.

**Step 3:** The Careerpivot guidance and action points are followed up by a WIN HE Adviser based in a school cluster.



### 1.1.3 The focus for the WIN Careerpivot work in 2018-19

In 2018-19, the WIN Careerpivot collaboration will work in 13 schools:

- Ten schools in Wiltshire
- Two schools in Bath and North East Somerset
- One school in North Somerset

These collaborations aim to deliver:

- Up to 172 paired one-hour sessions with Y10 students
- Up to 176 one-hour sessions with Y11 students
- Up to 76 one-hour sessions with Y12 students
- Up to 65 one-hour sessions with Y13 students

In addition to the personal sessions, several one-hour group activities for approximately 30 students will be delivered across whole Y10-Y13 year groups. Furthermore, free Careerpivot staff training and sessions for parents of WIN students are offered to WIN schools and colleges.

## 1.2 Research questions

This research study aims to help ensure that the Careerpivot guidance model is robustly evaluated and to ensure that lessons are contextualised and disseminated to a broader audience.

This study aims to provide evidence of the impact the Careerpivot website and the Careerpivot guidance model has on young people's awareness of their career choices, their future decision-making and progression to higher level study. The study will enable recommendations to be made to aid the dissemination and replication of effective practice. The study's research questions reflect that the review is taking both an evaluative and a formative approach.

- How does Careerpivot contribute to young people's awareness and understanding of the range of career choices and their accessibility?

- How do the one-to-one guidance sessions support exploration, decision-making and forward-planning towards career and course progression?
- Do the young people who participate in the Careerpivot Guidance process feel better informed and more confident about their next steps as a result of the support?
- Does the Careerpivot Guidance process influence young people to consider progression to higher education?
- How effective is the 2018/19 staged model of delivering pre-guidance, guidance and follow-up?

### 1.3 Method

The approach has been developed based on discussions with the partnership coupled with a broader appreciation of the issues in undertaking other widening participation research. The WIN Careerpivot partnership recognises that there are a variety of NCOP delivery models and considers this evaluation an excellent opportunity to understand the model's effectiveness in working in a targeted, personalised manner with a group of disadvantaged students. It recognises that the findings could be of interest to the partnership and beyond.

The study has primarily focused on student voice and understanding the impact of the project on the students regarding their learner identity, aspirations, future career planning, and how they have moved towards their goals.

#### 1.3.1 Phases of study

There were two distinct yet complementary phases to the evaluation. The first phase has been to gain the students' views immediately after their Careerpivot guidance session through a short online survey. The second phase took place up to several months after the initial guidance session and focused on the longer-term impact. Taking a phased approach ensured that the design and development of research tools throughout the successive phases reflected emerging issues.

##### 1.3.1.1 Phase 1

A short online student questionnaire using SurveyMonkey sought feedback on the Careerpivot website, the guidance model and views of career planning and higher education. Most students completed this survey at the end of their Careerpivot Guidance session.

A total of 155 participants from eleven secondary schools responded to the first online survey. The sample comprised 74 Year 10 students (48.4%), 50 Year 11 students (32.7%), 15 Year 12 students (9.8%) and 14 Year 13 students (9.2%). One hundred nine respondents to the first survey gave their email address for a follow-up survey.

Table 1 Year group and family higher education experience of first survey respondents

	Percentage	Number
<b>Year Group</b>		
Year 10	48.4%	74
Year 11	32.6%	50
Year 12	9.8%	15
Year 13	9.2%	14
<b>Family HE participation</b>		
Yes, one or both parents	20.8%	32
Yes, a sister or brother	22.7%	35
None	56.5%	87

In line with the project targeting over half (56.5%) of the students responding to the survey had no family history of higher education participation and a further 22.7% only had a sibling who had participated in higher education. The remaining 20.8% had a parent who had experienced higher education, although not all students have a thorough understanding of higher education which may account for any response error.

### 1.3.1.2 Phase 2

Phase 2 commenced by emailing all students, who had agreed to be contacted, with the follow-up survey. It was conducted up to several months<sup>4</sup> after the original survey and focused on action planning, longer-term feedback and changes in behaviour. The survey reflected the focus group discussion guide and free text questions provided space for the young people to share their thoughts and views.

Table 2 Year group and family higher education experience of second survey respondents

	Percentage	Number
<b>Year Group</b>		
Year 10	25.0%	6
Year 11	54.2%	13
Year 12	12.5%	3
Year 13	8.3%	2
<b>Family HE participation</b>		
Yes, one or both parents	16.7%	4
Yes, a sister or brother	25.0%	6
None	58.3%	14

The follow-up survey commenced distribution in March 2019 and received 24 responses (22.8% response rate) (Table 2). Due to the small number of responses to this survey, particularly Post-16 students, caution is advised when interpreting these results.

### 1.3.1.3 School-based fieldwork

Schools involved in the WIN Careerpilot collaboration were approached to participate in the face-to-face fieldwork. Three schools hosted visits in March 2019 with the WIN HE Adviser leading on identifying students. Six student focus groups (Table 3) were conducted on school premises, during the school timetable with a total of 52 students participated in the sessions. Focus group participants were entered into a prize draw for a £10 voucher. Most focus groups were audio recorded but not fully transcribed. The researcher made notes of the discussion and used the recordings to provide depth and direct quotes.

Table 3 School focus groups

Group	School	Year Group	Gender	Number of participants
1	School A	Year 10	Female	8
2	School A	Year 11 and Year 13	Mixed	11
3	School B	Year 10, Year 11 and Year 12	Mixed	10
4	School C	Year 10	Mixed	8
5	School C	Year 12	Mixed	7
6	School C	Year 13	Mixed	8

<sup>4</sup> This is dependent on when the student had their guidance session. For some students the timescale may have been less than several months due to the timing of the guidance session.



The facilitated focus groups were interactive and engaging, drawing on visual techniques and participatory activities with follow-on discussions. These activities and discussion explored the softer outcomes of the guidance programme, including longer-term impact, views of higher education, impact upon confidence and learner identity. All the activities were planned to ensure students had the opportunity to provide anonymous individuals feedback alongside group discussions.

As part of the school visits, the researcher also conducted a semi-structured interview with the school's WIN HE Adviser and another staff member where this allowed to explore views on involvement. The discussions focused on project feedback, successes and challenges and where relevant sought to understand their perspective on the impact of the project on the students.

Table 4 School interviews

College	Interviews
School A	WIN HE Adviser and Assistant Headteacher
School B	WIN HE Adviser
School C	WIN HE Adviser and Head of Sixth Form

## 1.4 Report structure and content

This report draws together the findings from each strand of the research. Following this introduction to the study, the report has five subsequent chapters.

Chapter two explores the feedback on the WIN Careerpilot model of support and the young people's feedback on the Careerpilot resource.

Chapter three draws together the key findings from the evaluation to understand the impact of the programme on young people's future education and career planning.

Chapter four outlines the key findings from the evaluation to identify the emerging lessons and recommendations for the future delivery of the Careerpilot/WIN model.

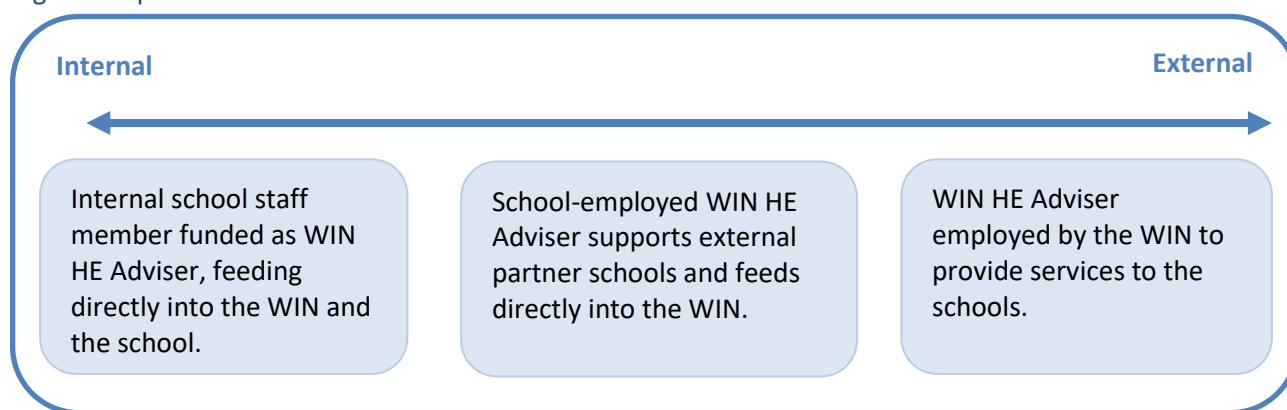
## 2 The WIN Careerpilot model of support

*This chapter explores the feedback on the WIN Careerpilot Guidance model of support followed by the young people's views of the Careerpilot resource and tools. It draws on the data from the focus groups and surveys with young people and the interviews with staff. The Guidance model is a developing programme; this chapter highlights areas of good practice alongside areas for future improvement.*

### 2.1 The WIN Careerpilot model

The WIN Careerpilot Guidance model takes an inclusive, personalised approach to work with targeted students. The evaluation data suggests that the three-stage guidance process is an effective model which has a significant personal impact on the young people who participate. The WIN Careerpilot Guidance model's integration within the school may be viewed as reflective of how the model is coordinated and supported within the school.

Figure 1: Spectrum of coordination



At the internal end of this spectrum, the WIN HE Adviser is an existing member of the school staff and fully integrating within the school and has been able to build on existing relationships with students and colleagues. Conversely, at the external end of this spectrum, the WIN directly employs the WIN HE Adviser to undertake the role and as such, they are external to all the schools. In between these two extremes, lies a model in which the WIN Adviser may be an internal staff member to one school but also provides support to external schools. WIN Advisers who have a role in external partner schools have needed to invest significantly in building solid working relationships with staff and students. Comparatively, where a school directly employs the WIN HE Adviser, there is a higher level of awareness and support for the role and a higher level of integration with the school's broader careers guidance work.

**Recommendation:** *To aim for a higher level of integration of the WIN Careerpilot guidance model with a school's broader careers and progression work to support the programme's sustainability.*

### 2.2 The effectiveness of the WIN Careerpilot Guidance model

As discussed in Section 1.1.3, the WIN Careerpilot Guidance model targets identified NCOP students through a sustained and progressive programme. They are students aged 13 to 19 years old, from a target ward, with actual or predicted good GCSE grades and who are not currently considering higher education. The programme involves receiving a pre-Guidance introductory activity with their school or college WIN HE Advisor, an individual or paired personalised Careerpilot guidance session with a Qualified Careers Adviser, and then a follow-up with the WIN HE Adviser.

The focus group participants completed an activity to rank the usefulness of the individual Careerpivot Guidance activities (see Figures 2 and 3 for examples of rankings). This activity aimed to initiate a discussion to explore how young people perceived the activities and how they fit into the wider model. Overall, the individual/paired Careerpivot Guidance sessions was ranked as the most useful aspect of the programme, with the follow-up activity ranked second and the pre-Guidance activity ranked third. The discussions are explored below.

### 2.2.1 Pre-guidance session

Feedback regarding the Pre-guidance session was the most variable. The students recognised the activity could provide a useful introduction; it helped them set up a Careerpivot account and become familiar with the Careerpivot site prior to the Guidance session.

**Key finding:** *The delivery of the pre-guidance was most effective when the session focused on introducing the young people to the Guidance model and how they would benefit, introducing them to the Careerpivot website, and completing the Careerpivot tools relevant to them.*

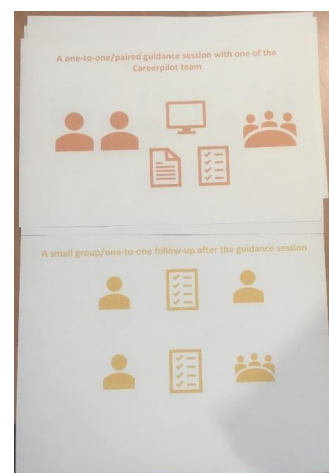


Figure 2 Focus group ranking of WIN Careerpivot activities

Following this process helped the young people understand their participation and enabled them to maximise taking part in the Guidance session. Recognising there are challenges with school timetabling, the young people expressed a preference for the pre-guidance and personal guidance session to take place within a few weeks.

**Recommendation:** *To schedule the pre-guidance and personal guidance session close together to have a more significant impact.*

One specific area of improvement is regarding the use of the iCould Buzz Quiz<sup>5</sup>, which was sometimes used as an icebreaker activity. However, some young people did not make the connection as a tool which could help them understand their strengths, values and personality type. The use of this quiz has a more significant impact when the HE Adviser takes time to fully explore the results with the young person and consider these in relation to improving their self-awareness.

**Recommendation:** *To review how the iCould quiz is utilised within the pre-guidance session and ensure the HE Adviser takes time to fully explore the results with the young person to help them develop self-awareness and understanding how it connects with their interests or skills.*



Figure 3 Focus group ranking of WIN Careerpivot activities

### 2.2.2 Careerpivot Guidance session

Overwhelmingly, the focus group discussion connected the high ranking of the Careerpivot Guidance sessions to the personalised nature of the discussion:

*Because it was directly about you. It was targeted and specific to you and what you wanted to do and make sure you are doing the right things. It has helped me picked the right qualifications at Post-16, so I have the best chance to get into a degree. (Focus Group 2)*

The Guidance session gave the young people sufficient time with the Qualified Careers Adviser to explore and learn about a range of information relating to careers, educational opportunities and routes into higher education. The young people valued the Careers Adviser's knowledge and understanding about job sectors

<sup>5</sup> The iCould Buzz quiz (<https://icould.com/buzz-embed/>) is based on an approach to personality developed by Carl Jung and popularised by Myers-Brigg. It recognises that people have preferred ways of behaving using their personality and that knowing your own style can help with making education and work decisions.

and how through this they had developed a broader awareness of the benefits and limitations of careers. The discussion and resulting action points were drafted into a comprehensive report and circulated to the young people and the HE Adviser. The purpose of this report and action plan is to encourage the young people to continue with their careers research and progression planning. It is also a document to help guide the follow-up discussion and activity.

*Recommendation: To explore providing information which young people could take away from the guidance session, for example, a discussion summary to show parents may be useful.*

*Key finding: The Post-16 students were most positive about the one-to-one time with the Careers Adviser.*

Some Pre-16 students found the paired sessions difficult as they did not feel confident enough to make a full contribution or conversely, felt they dominated the session over a quieter individual. In one school, the WIN HE Adviser and Careers Adviser ran the paired sessions together. The young people positively evaluated the one-to-one time with an Adviser and it is good practice to consider replicating. Where this is not feasible, the alternative practice to consider is whether young people could participate in the paired Guidance session with a friend. This may help to make the experience more enjoyable and comfortable and could give the young people an added benefit of a confidant to “talk about your career plans” (Year 11 student).

*Recommendation: To explore alternative means for delivering the Pre-16 paired student sessions, for example, conducted as friendship pairs.*

### 2.2.3 Follow-up

All the young people received a report and action plan written by the Careers Adviser to help them move forward. However, few young people acknowledge they had looked at their report due to not checking their emails or forgetting due to school pressures. The young people who had looked at their action plan felt it was a useful tool, but there was a consensus that on-going reminders would be beneficial (See section 3.2.1 for further discussion).

*Key finding: The report was extremely beneficial in enabling the WIN Adviser to understand the future needs of the young person and to use this to assess and respond to their needs during the follow-up phase.*

Due to the timing of the focus groups sessions, many of the participants were yet to receive a guidance session follow-up, but all recognised this would be beneficial. The follow-up activities varied by school, year group and, in some instances, the level of need as perceived by the WIN HE Adviser. For some young people, this meant a lighter and more informal follow-up. A formalised follow-up approach was viewed as the most beneficial and the best use of resources with the Post-16 students. Taking a responsive approach enabled the HE Adviser to prioritise those young people who needed help at specific points but in practice, some young people had felt overlooked.

*Recommendation: To consider how to continue the flexible and responsive follow-up approach, while ensuring all young people can access this support.*

The young people who had received a follow-up had developed a supportive relationship with the HE Adviser and found the additional support exceptionally beneficially. Some young people discussed having ad-hoc conversations with their HE Adviser that had led to more detailed conversations; some young people struck up an email conversation with their Adviser while others spoke of on-going face-to-face and email discussions. Some highly proactive young people had recognised the unique support of the HE Adviser and capitalised on this as a means to increase their capacity to make an informed decision. Students talked about working with the HE Adviser to arrange work experience placements, workplace visits, higher education visits, and one had successfully made an application to a Sutton Trust Summer School.

**Key finding:** *The WIN HE Adviser can play a significant role in helping the young people develop the resources and confidence to support them to progress onto education and work successfully.*

As one Post-16 student explained:

*The sessions have given me a direct contact through whom I can get opportunities which has been the most important and significant effect rather than just the one-to-one sessions. (Focus Group 3)*

However, some young people who were initially confident about their future actions subsequently found themselves needing additional support but were unaware of how they could activate this. As such, there is a need to ensure that follow-up is consistent and that the young people are aware they can request extra help.

**Recommendation:** *To consider how to ensure young people are aware of how to request extra help.*

Young people also suggested that the follow-up may take a range of approaches such as drop-in sessions, individual appointments and guided sessions on a range of career-related topics. The follow-up works best when it is integrated with the support on offer through the school's careers guidance programme.

**Recommendation:** *To consider the addition of small group follow-up activities to include drop-in sessions, individual appointments and guided sessions on a range of career-related topics.*

**Recommendation:** *To integrate the young people's follow-up actions into a school's broader programmes of support and development.*

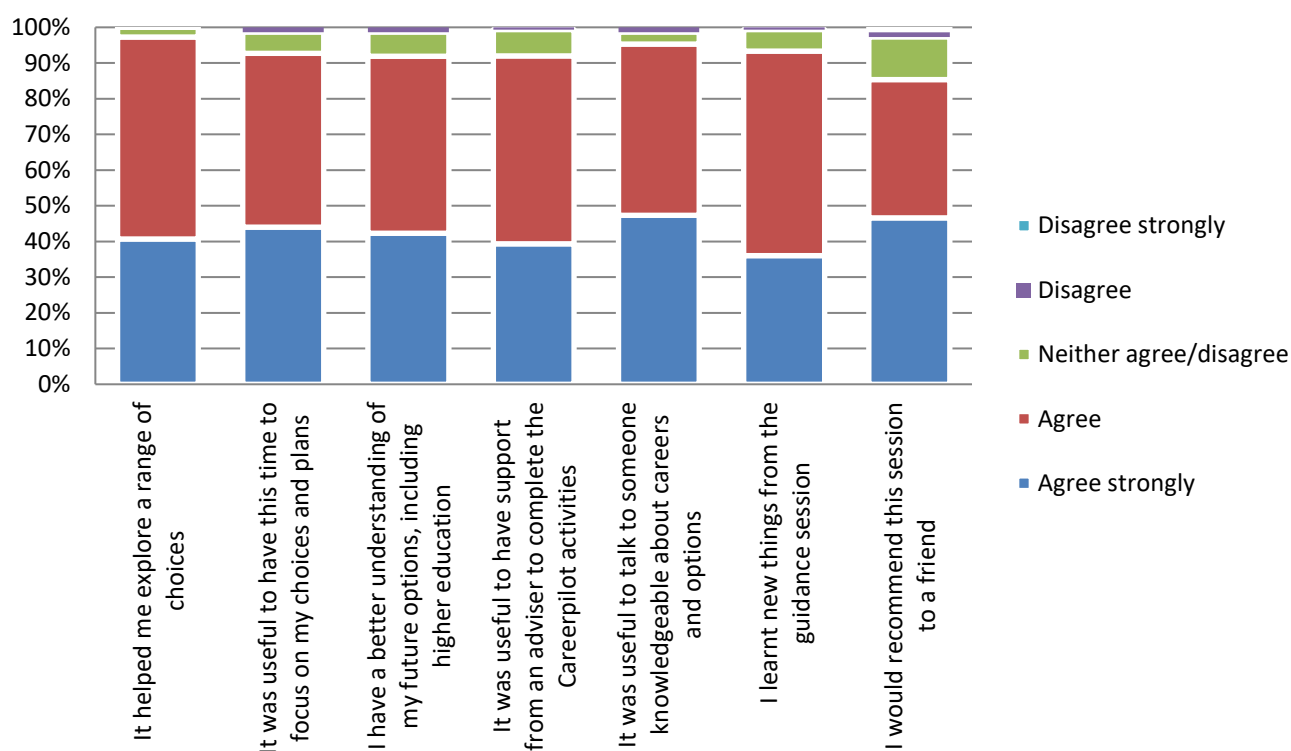
#### **2.2.4 Relationship with the Careers Adviser and HE WIN Adviser**

The first part of this section relates specifically to the feedback on the young people's perception of the support from the Qualified Careers Adviser during the Careerpilot Guidance sessions (Figure 4). They highly valued exploring a range of potential choices (97.3% of students agreed or strongly agreed) and being able to talk with someone knowledgeable about careers and opportunities (95.3% of students agreed or strongly agreed).

**Key finding:** *The young people highly valued learning about the range of potential choices and talking their options through with someone knowledgeable about careers and opportunities.*

Disaggregating the responses to the statements by year group; the Post-16 students were consistently more likely to agree strongly to the statements than Pre-16 students. 85.3% of the students agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend the session to a friend. The Pre-16 students skew this figure with 81.2% of Year 10 students and 86.0% of Year 11 students agreed or strongly agreed that they would recommend the session to a friend, yet this figure rises to 93.3% and 92.9% for Year 12 and Year 13 students respectively.

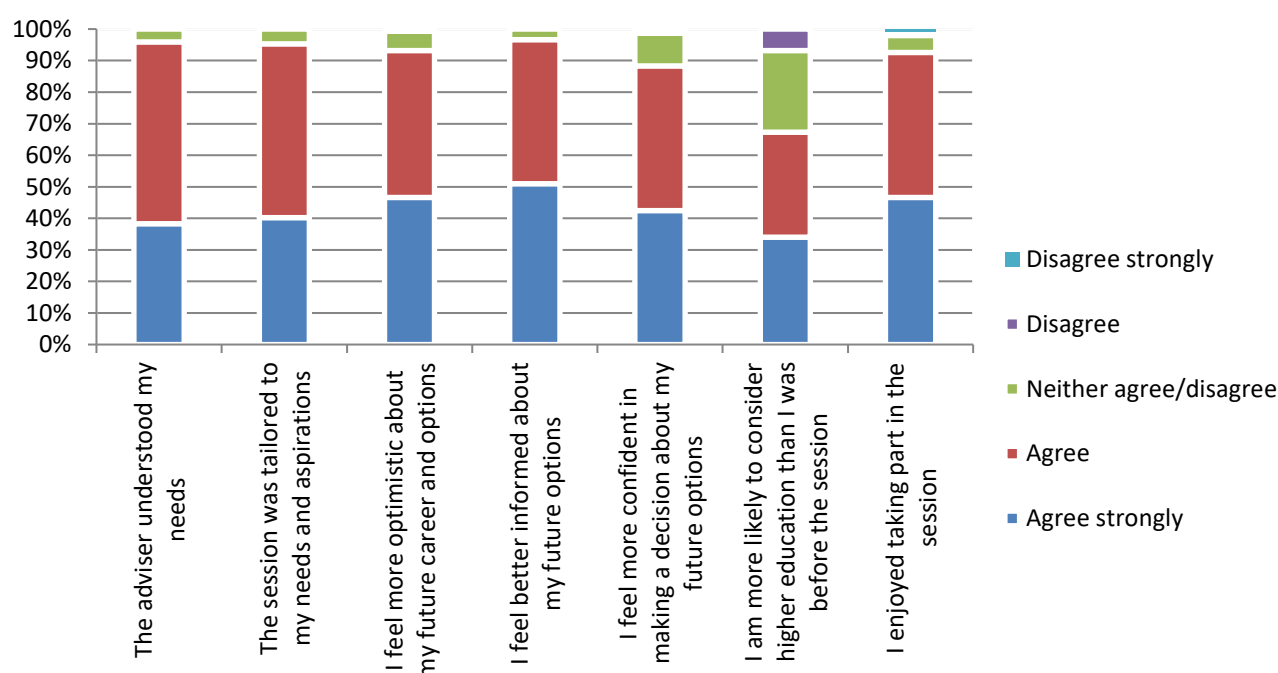
Figure 4 Feedback on support from the Careers Adviser



Respondents to the first survey were also asked to rate the impact of the support received from the Careers Adviser (Figure 5). Overall, 96.7% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they felt better informed about their future options, while 96.0% and 95.3% strongly agreed or agreed, respectively, that the Adviser understood their needs and the session was tailored to their needs and aspirations. Furthermore, 88.36% strongly agreed or agreed they felt more confident in deciding on their future options.

**Key finding:** *The young people feel more informed about their future options and more confident in deciding on their future options as a result of speaking with the Careers Adviser.*

Figure 5 Impact of support given by the Careers Adviser



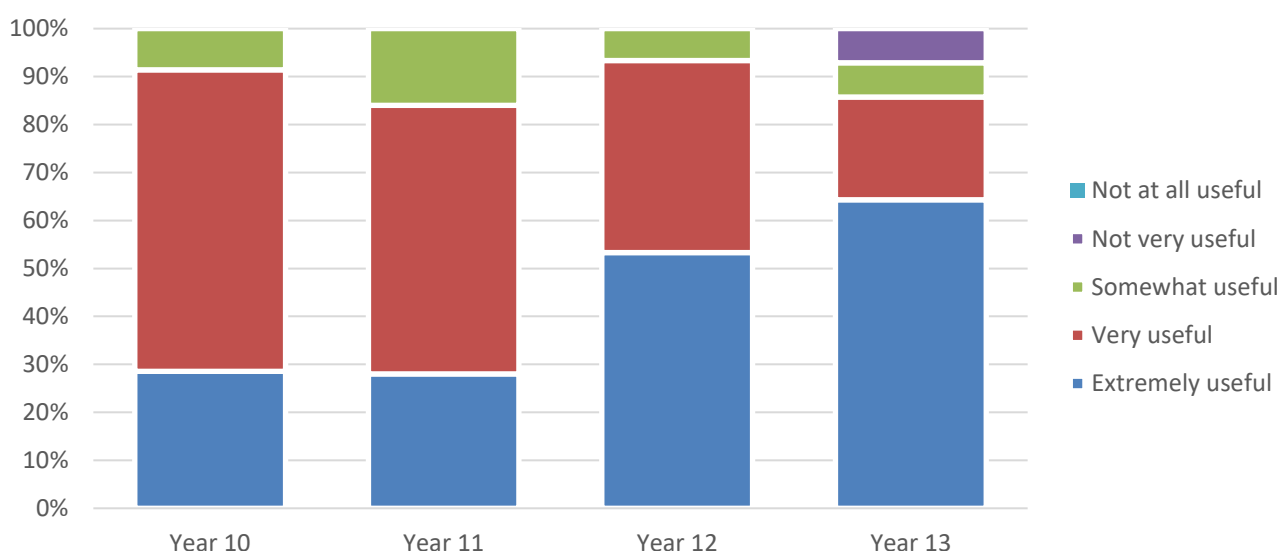
The activity initially appears to have had less of an impact on the student's likelihood to consider higher education (67.3% strongly agreed or agreed). However, it is essential to note that the intention to study in HE was already high for the Post-16 students (100% of Year 12s and 78.6% of Year 13s were already considering HE - see Figure 12 in Section 3.1).

**Key finding:** *The sessions had a more significant impact on the consideration of higher education for the Pre-16 students.*

74.2% of Year 10 and 68.0% of Year 11 students stated that they strongly agreed or agreed they were more likely to consider higher education since taking part in the Careers Guidance. Some students also reflected that while their intention to progress to HE was already present the support had enabled them to make better decisions about what and where to study and without the support they could have made a wrong decision.

Overall, 88.6% of respondents stated that they found the guidance session with the Careers Adviser to be extremely or very useful, and a further 10.7% found them somewhat useful. Breaking down these figures by year group highlights that Post-16 students were more likely to rate the support extremely useful than Pre-16 students (Figure 6).

Figure 6 Usefulness of the guidance session



It has been challenging to extrapolate whether the young people were referring to the Careers Adviser, the WIN HE Adviser or both during the focus groups. In general, the young people were full of praise towards the Advisers – they described feeling comfortable discussing their aspirations and career ideas, feeling listened to, having their questions answered and that the Advisers were knowledgeable, friendly and approachable.

**Key finding:** *The personalisation was highly valued, and the young people recognised this as different from other activities in which they had participated.*

The neutrality of the guidance and information was also discussed. While some of the young people felt pressed by the Careers Adviser to consider higher education, they recognised the real nature of the encouragement and the reflection of their educational potential.

**Key finding:** *The young people felt motivated by the discussions and left the session with a sense of focus on their future.*

They relate this to understanding more about their skills and interests and making the connection to possible courses and careers. As one young person described:



*It made me feel a lot more calm and positive. Before the session, I was really stressed, but I became aware of the skills I have and that I had things to write in my personal statement [for a university application]. (Focus Group 2)*

Some young people suggested they would have benefited from exploring aspects in further depth, which suggests that greater coordination between the guidance and follow-up session to pick-up any gaps would ensure the programme has a more significant impact.

**Recommendation:** *To consider how to better coordinate between the guidance and follow-up session to identify the gaps in the young people's knowledge and understanding, which will ensure the programme has a greater impact.*

### 2.2.5 Improving communication

One of the key criticisms was the young people did not feel sufficiently informed in advance of the career guidance session (Table 5). Some young people did not understand why they had been selected and what they may gain from participating. They suggested it would be useful to have pre-programme information which outlined participant selection, programme aims and content, and the potential impact.

**Recommendation:** *To consider developing a pre-programme information pack which outlines participant selection, programme aims, programme structure, and the potential impact to ensure young people are prepared to participate and maximise the support. Pre-programme information may provide a positive means to involve parents.*

The pre-guidance session should ensure it is focused on enabling young people to access the careers guidance session with a full understanding of their involvement in the programme of support.

**Recommendation:** *To consider the structure of the pre-guidance to ensure it is linked to the Guidance session and helps the young people prepare to participate in the programme meaningfully.*

Table 5 How prepared you felt to take part in the session?

	Very well prepared	Somewhat prepared	Somewhat unprepared	Completely unprepared
<b>Year 10</b>	16.67%	83.33%	0.00%	27.27%
<b>Year 11</b>	18.18%	54.55%	27.27%	50.00%
<b>Year 12</b>	0.00%	66.67%	33.33%	13.64%
<b>Year 13</b>	50.00%	50.00%	0.00%	9.09%

When the young people had a good understanding of the programme and their involvement they were able to direct the discussion and maximise the benefits of taking part.

**Recommendation:** *To develop a short proforma which is completed during the pre-guidance session to help the young people think about the career guidance meeting.*

The young people also requested to be informed in advance, the time and date of their meeting with the Qualified Careers Advisor to ensure they have time to prepare:

*Allowing some time for me to prepare some topics to discuss would enable me to get more out of the sessions. (Year 12 student)*

*Tell us before the day that the meeting is so we can bring along ideas and stuff also able to come up with questions if we have any. (Year 11 student)*

*Knowing about it [the session] beforehand I would have been able to focus on what I wanted to talk about when I went in. (Focus Group 4)*

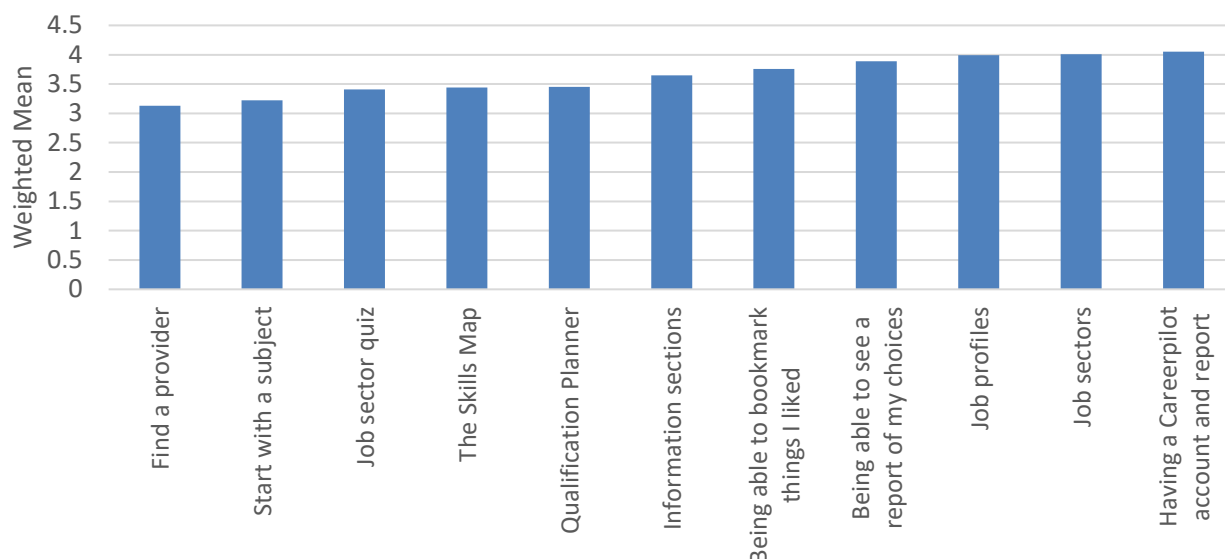


Furthermore, some of the young people suggested that preparation activity or information may provide a positive means to involve parents.

## 2.3 Careerpilot resources and tools

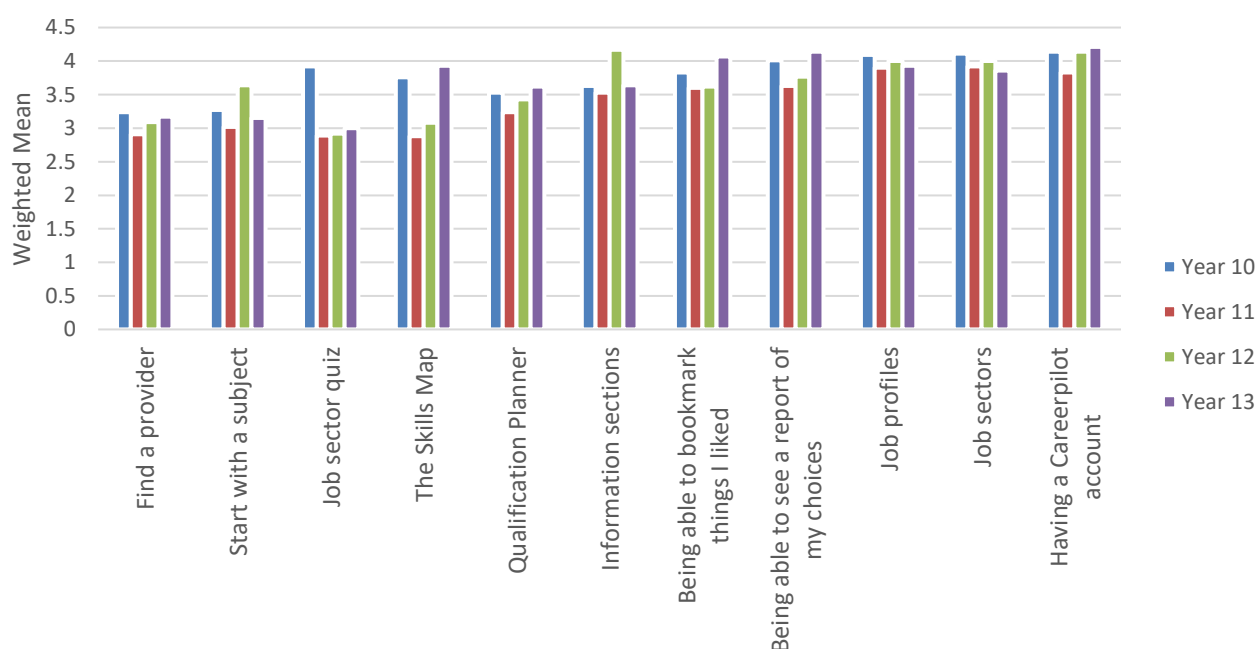
The first survey asked respondents to grade a range of Careerpilot tools and sections on a five-point scale from Extremely Useful (5) to Not at all useful (1) with the weighted means highlighted in Figure 7. The most useful tools and parts of the Careerpilot site were Having a Careerpilot account (Mean=4.05), Job sector information (M=4.01), Job profiles (M=3.99) and Being able to see a report (M=3.89).

Figure 7 Usefulness of the different Careerpilot activities



There were some notable differences in the rating of the website tools and sections by year group as can be seen in Figure 8. Year 10 students rated the Job Sector quiz as more useful than other year groups, Year 12 students rated the Information sections as more useful, while Year 10 and Year 13 students rated the Skills Map as more useful than other year groups.

Figure 8 Information and Usefulness of the different Careerpilot activities by Year Group



The second survey and the focus groups (see Figures 9 and 10) also explored the students' perceptions of the Careerpivot resource, and these qualitative aspects are explored further below.

### 2.3.1 Skills Map

The Skills Map tool was highly praised yet viewed with a slightly different purpose across the year groups. For the Post-16 students, the Skills Map helped them realise they possess a broad range of skills, introduced them to language to construct a UCAS personal statement and helped them connect their skills to potential careers:

*It helped me realise I have a lot more skills than I thought. It helped me write my personal statement... I realised that I have a lot more skills than I thought... It helped me discover myself basically. (Focus Group 2)*

*I didn't know I had so many skills, so many different types of skills. There was a lot more that I didn't know that I can do. I learnt more about myself. I didn't really think about skills that weren't academic. I can match up these with what kind of jobs I might do. (Focus Group 3)*

### 2.3.2 Job Sectors

The Job Sector information and tools were viewed as highly informative for showcasing a range of careers alongside the progression pathways into those careers. The young people enjoyed exploring a range of jobs within a sector and found it beneficial to compare roles, salaries, potential future job opportunities and growth sectors. The young people considered the Labour Market Information (LMI) information to be highly reliable. Furthermore, some young people suggested that through making the connection between job roles and higher education they had begun to understand that HE-level qualifications can often lead into far broader career areas than they had initially anticipated.

*I wasn't sure about the other jobs I could do after this management course [Degree], but this told me the exact qualifications I need, work experience and gave me loads of other jobs, descriptions and how much you can earn from them. (Focus Group 2)*

### 2.3.3 Bookmarks, My qualifications and My Providers

These tools were viewed as beneficial for revisits to the Careerpivot website to continue careers research and enable the young people to locate information quickly. They liked the ease of keeping track of qualifications and matching entry qualifications with courses. Similarly, My Providers was used to keep track of providers and course offerings.

Some students commented on the accessibility of Careerpivot and had encountered difficulties in locating information due to the size of the resource. However, students recognised having a personal profile and Bookmark function provided a means to manage the information.

**Recommendation:** To consider how Careerpivot could connect to profiles of graduates to help young people gain a greater insight into future careers and working life.

**Recommendation:** To explore developing some simple video tutorials to help guide young people through the website.

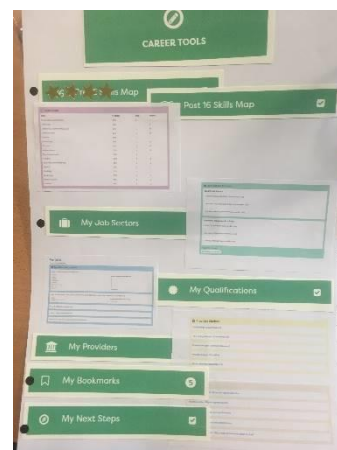


Figure 9 Rating of Careerpivot tools



Figure 10 Rating of Careerpivot tools

### 3 Young people's future education and career plans

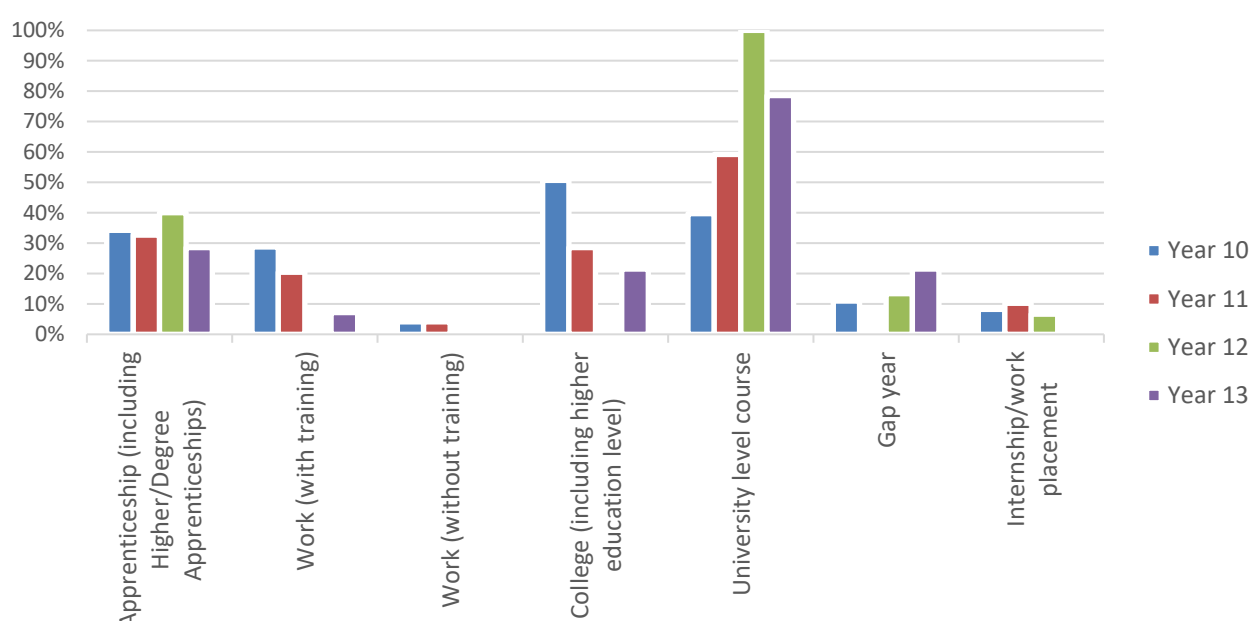
*This chapter draws together the key findings from the evaluation to understand the impact of the Careerpivot Guidance model on young people's future education and career planning.*

#### 3.1 Impact on anticipated future career and education plans

In the first survey, the young people were asked about their anticipated education and career plans and could select several options. Over half (55.6%) were considering a university level course, followed by studying at college (including studying at higher education level) (35.3%) or an Apprenticeship (34.0%). Interesting, the responses differ when the students are split by year group (See Figure 11 below).

**Key finding:** *There was a general upward trend towards studying a university level course and taking a gap year, the higher the year group. Entering the workforce (both with and without training) steadily decreases the higher the year group.*

Figure 11 Plans for Post-16 education and work



One hundred and twenty-six students completed the open text box to explain if the Careers Guidance Session had influenced their future choices. Most comments reflect a positive influence, and many reflect the positive impact on the consideration of higher education:

*Yes, I have considered university more now. (Year 11 student)*

*Yes, they have made me rethink not going to university. (Year 12 student)*

*Yes, as I now know that to get the job I want I need to do to a college to get the degree I need. (Year 11 student)*

The second survey explored whether participating in the programme had encouraged young people to consider Higher Education. The responses (Table 6) suggest that all the students had felt the sessions had encouraged them to consider higher education and 90.5% having been encouraged, a moderate amount to a great deal.

Table 6 Extent that the Careerpivot Guidance Sessions encouraged you to consider Higher Education

A great deal	A lot	A moderate amount	A little	Not at all
19.1%	38.1%	33.3%	9.5%	0%

Matching the twenty-four respondents that completed both the first and follow-up survey highlights an increase in the number of young people considering higher education several months after the Careerpivot guidance session (Table 7).

Table 7 What are you thinking of doing once you reach 18? (Please tick more than one if you are considering several options)

	Apprentice ship	Work	College	University level course	Gap year	Intern/ work placement
1st survey	5	4	9	13	4	1
Follow-up survey	7	3	9	16	2	1

**Key finding:** *There was a general agreement that the Careerpivot Guidance sessions had helped the young people explore the positive aspects of higher education and had led some to open their minds to the possibility of higher education study.*

The young people suggested they had a better understanding of the benefits of higher education, such as how it could lead to a better career and a higher salary.

**Key finding:** *The Pre-16 students suggested that taking part in the Careerpivot guidance had given them a much clearer understanding of their Post-16 study opportunities, qualifications and providers, which would help them make informed decisions.*

Several Pre-16 students suggested they had changed their A Level subject preferences as a direct result of the guidance and as a result of an awareness of the subjects that would support their entry to higher education.

Furthermore, Post-16 students' discussions reflected a broader understanding of higher education courses. The young people discussed understanding more about what it would be like to study in higher education, and this was coupled with a perception that higher education would be achievable. Importantly, the young people did not feel that they were pressurised to consider higher education but recognised the encouragement as connected to them being perceived as able to enter higher education.

**Key finding:** *The sessions supported Post-16 students to better understanding the intricacies of choosing higher education courses and institutions.*

## 3.2 Action planning

The majority of students were very positive regarding the role of the guidance activities in helping them formulate a clear action plan for their future (Table 8). However, recognising that the action plan only provides a snapshot, the young people need on-going support to help them work towards their action plan and is where the follow-up work of the HE Advisers can have an on-going impact.

Table 8 To what extent have the Careerpivot Guidance sessions helped you set out a clear plan of action for your future?

A great deal	A lot	A moderate amount	A little	None at all
13.6%	40.9%	36.4%	4.6%	4.6%

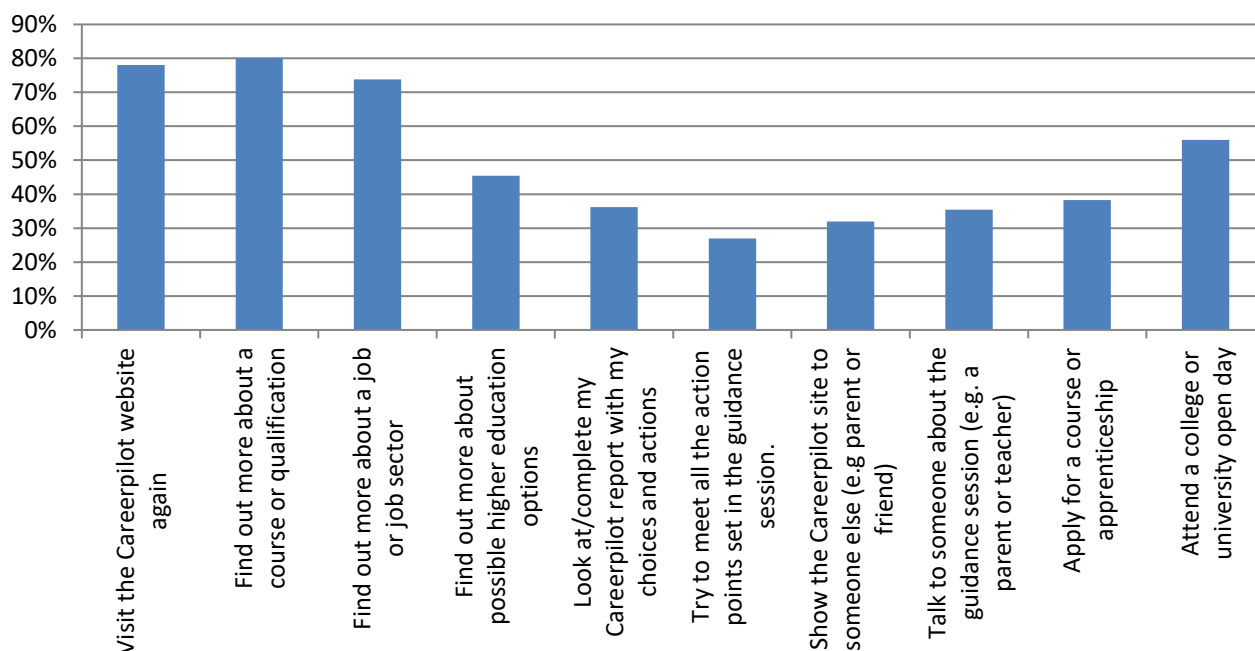
The young people suggested that on-going, virtual reminders for example, through messages and social media may help remind them to return to the Careerpivot site and continue to think about their future plans. The young people suggested these reminders could refer to their action plan and alert them to information such as application dates, open days and website updates.

**Recommendation:** *To explore how best to communicate the action points more succinctly to encourage young people to follow-up and return to the Careerpivot website, for example, virtual reminders or alerts regarding action plans, open days and website updates.*

### 3.2.1 Students on-going action

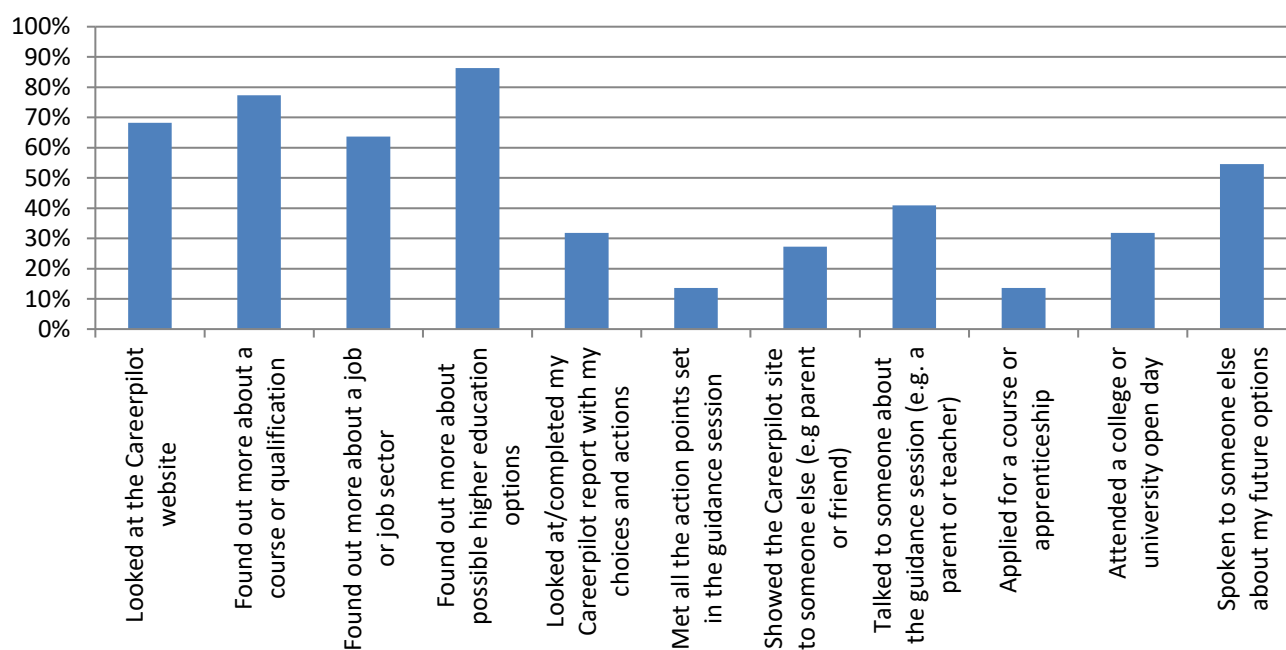
The respondents to the first survey were hugely positive regarding the steps they would take to help them move their career ideas forward (Figure 12). For example, 80.1% said they would try to find out more information about a course or qualification and 73.8% said they would find out more about a job or job sector.

Figure 12 As a result of the Careerpivot session, will you do any of the following? (First survey)



The follow-up survey asked the question 'Since taking part in the Careerpivot Guidance Sessions have you done any of the following to help you decide on your future career and education?' (Figure 13). Comparing, with caution, highlights broadly similar responses to the first survey: 77.3% of respondents had found out more information about a course or qualification and 63.6% had found out more about a job or job sector.

Figure 13 Action since taking part in the Careerpivot Guidance Sessions (Second survey)



However, there are other areas with a more significant difference in responses: 86.4% of respondents to the second survey had found out more about higher education when only 45.4% of respondents to the first survey suggested that they would take this action. Furthermore, 68.2% of respondents to the second survey had revisited the Careerpivot website when 78.0% of respondents to the first survey had anticipated that they would do this.. Despite the proportion of students returning to the Careerpivot website after their initial Guidance Session, few had made attempts to complete the personalised sections or meet the action points. Students were less likely to return to the Careerpivot site to complete/look at their report (36.2% suggested they would in the first survey only 31.8% did) or meet the action points (26.9% indicated they would in the first survey and only 13.6% did).

**Key finding:** *In the focus groups, all the young people had completed some action to move their career ideas forward, despite few having explored their formal report or action plan.*

Most commonly, the young people had explored information about courses, universities and careers online. Some had looked further at the careers information on the Careerpivot website while others had explored UCAS and institutional websites to find out information about higher education courses, including looking at modules and entry requirements. Several Pre-16 students had participated in work experience and used this as an opportunity to speak to working professionals about their careers and pathways. Several young people had attended college, apprenticeship and university open days with some using the opportunity to ask about work and university life. Many of the young people stated that they had talked to their parents about careers and educational pathways. However, some young people did not find this helpful as their parents did not understand current information about careers and qualifications.

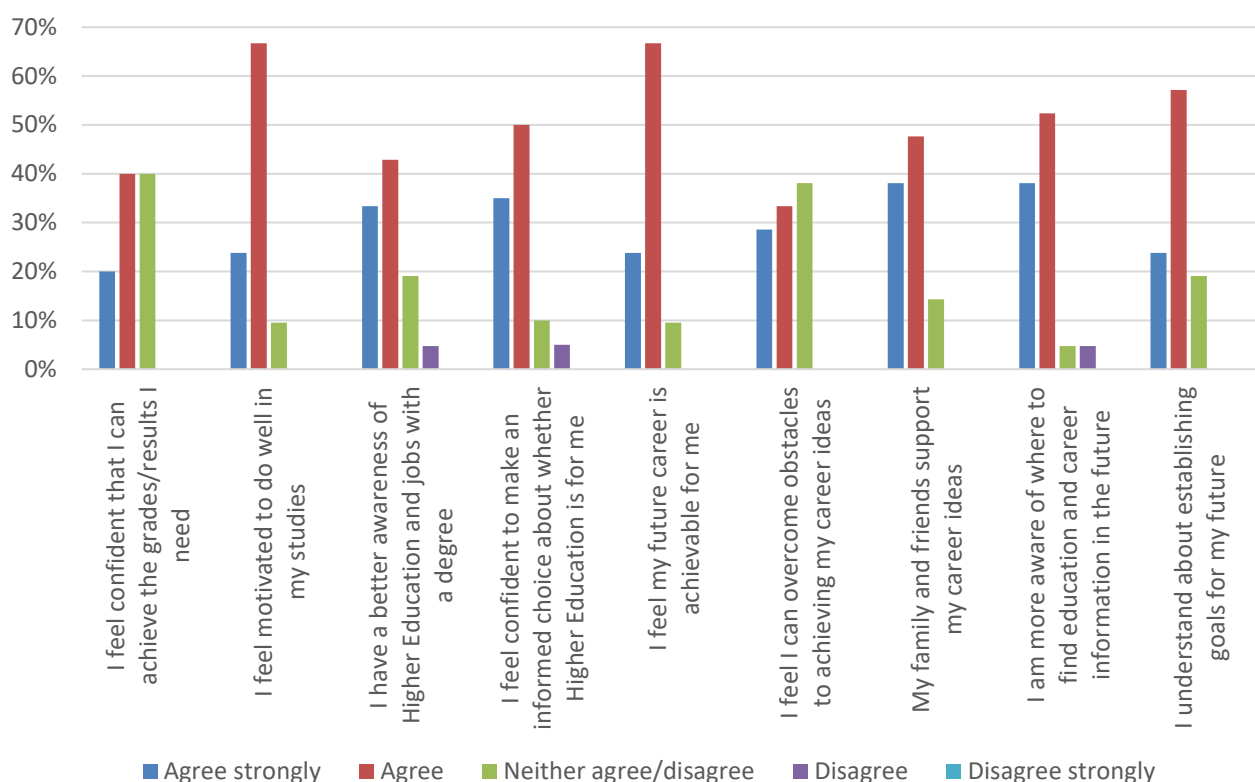
**Recommendation:** *To explore ways to signpost young people to broader support, for example, financial assistance to attend open days, specialist talks, work/higher education-related seminars, and CV/Apprenticeship support.*

### 3.3 The personal impact of participation

The students highly valued the support received through the Careerpivot Guidance Sessions and recognised how it had enabled them to vision and plan their future career and education options. In the second survey, students responded to a series of statements about the impact of taking part (Figure 14). Students were most likely to agree strongly or agree (all 90.5%) with 'I feel motivated to do well in my studies', 'I feel my future career is achievable for me' and 'I am more aware of where to find education and career information in the future'. The statements relating to higher education were also highly rated. 85.0% and 76.2% of respondents, respectively, strongly agreed or agreed with the statements I feel confident to make an informed choice about whether Higher Education is for me and I have a better awareness of Higher Education and jobs with a degree. However, there was a higher level of uncertainty regarding the ability to achieve the grades (40.0% neither agreed/disagreed with this statement) and to overcome obstacles to achieving their career ideas (40.0% neither agreed/disagreed with this statement).

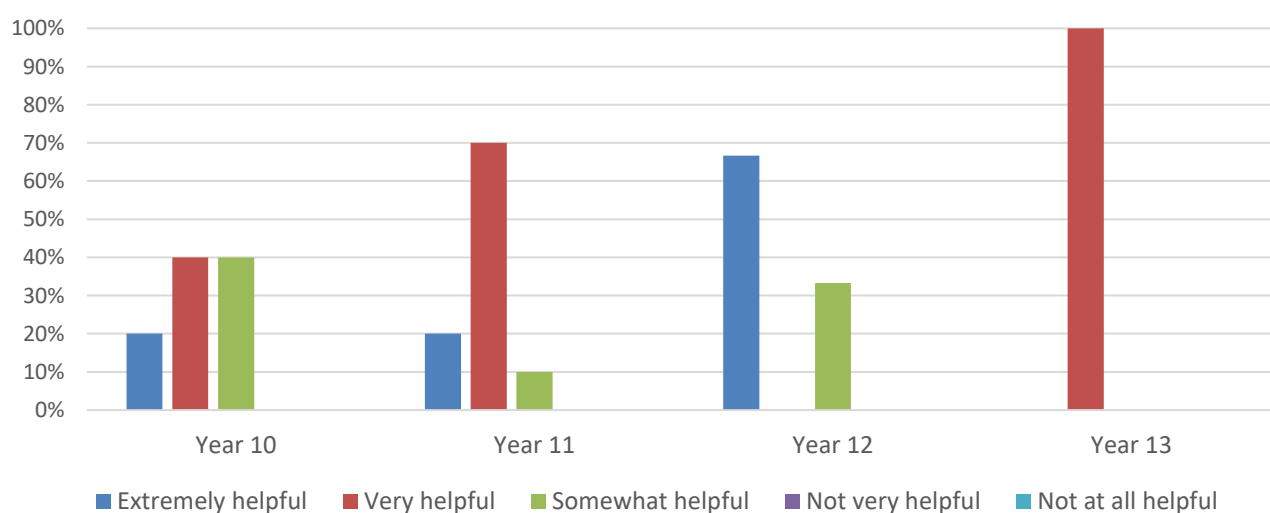
**Recommendation:** *To explore means of helping young people stay motivated in their learning, managing themselves, and achieving the academic grades to enable progression to higher education.*

Figure 14 Thinking about how you feel since taking part in the Careerpivot Guidance Sessions, how much do you agree with the following statements.



While the programme has helped most students, the Year 11 to Year 13 students view the programme as most helpful (Figure 15). This may be reflective of the students' educational stage and the need to make decisions about their future.

Figure 15 Overall, how helpful have the Careerpivot Guidance Sessions been to you?



**Key finding:** The young people acknowledged the personalised and responsive nature of the advice and guidance and how it challenged them to consider opportunities, such as higher education, which they may have previously dismissed.

Particularly striking is the young people's appreciation of being able to discuss with an Adviser their future hopes, aspiration, educational ideas and career choices and to receive tailored advice and information in response:



*It helps significantly to have a focused session to gain a better understanding of what you want to do next and the steps you will take to achieve them without the feeling of being overwhelmed with all the information. (Year 12)*

*Helps give you a clearer understanding of options in the future and the pathways you can take yourself focusing on what you enjoy and want to be in the future. (Year 11)*

*The advisers were friendly and knew exactly how to help and gave very useful information which can help me think about my future options. (Year 11)*

*They gave me more information on what is best for my abilities and helped me decide what I want to do. (Year 11)*

*Helped me look into all options put it to context that I could understand and really helped me look at all opportunities with my grades and made me feel like I can do more. (Year 11 student).*

The impact on young people of participating in the guidance falls into four main themes: increasing understanding of the importance of exploring ideas and forward planning, broadening awareness of educational pathways and knowledge of higher education, increasing understanding about future career ideas and graduate employment, and developing confidence in self and future ideas. While these are discussed separately, there is a significant overlap between each of these themes.

### **3.3.1 Increasing understanding of the importance of exploring opportunities and forward planning**

The surveys and focus group data offer an insight into the impact of the Careerpilot guidance model on young people's understanding of the importance of exploring education and career opportunities and planning to help them achieve their goals.

There was significant recognition amongst the young people that participating in the activities had helped them to think about their future, to understand the importance of planning, and using this to help them focus on their future pathway. Furthermore, discussions reflected the recognition that early planning towards future career and education goals is helpful.

*It has made a big difference because it helped me find the steps I need to do. (Focus Group 3).*

*It has made me think more about my future. (Focus Group 4)*

*They're extremely informative and enable you to see a clearer view of the future. (Year 13)*

*Made me consider more what I would like to do after GCSEs. (Focus Group 2)*

*Has made it clear to me that it's better to prepare for all of this stuff early. (Focus Group 3)*

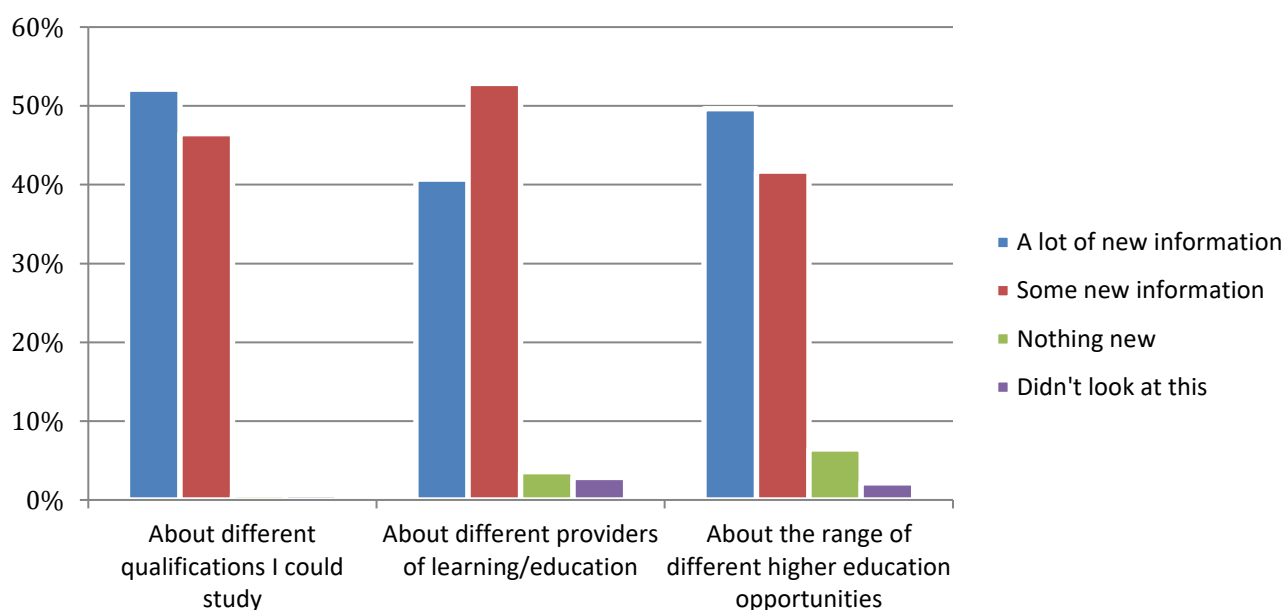
**Recommendation:** *To explore developing activities to develop young people's self-esteem and self-confidence which would further support them to take forward their action plan and realise their future goals.*

### **3.3.2 Broadening knowledge and understanding of educational pathways and higher education**

A core component in making informed future career decisions is knowing about the different learning opportunities, qualifications and careers which are available. Figure 16 below highlights the positive impact Careerpilot has had on the information young people have acquired about educational opportunities and higher education. Overall, 98.6% had learnt new information about different qualifications, 93.6% had learnt new information about different learning providers and 91.4% had learnt new information about the range of different higher education opportunities.



Figure 16 Information learnt about qualification, providers and higher education



**Key finding:** *Involvement in the programme had impacted on the young people's awareness of the range of educational pathways and had expanded their knowledge of higher education.*

The Pre-16 student feedback was focused on how the activities had increased their general knowledge about Post-16 opportunities and their awareness of the benefits of higher education study. While the Post-16 students showed a greater level of sophistication in their reflections of participating; which recognises they were likely to have started the programme with an existing understanding of educational pathways including higher education.

The Pre-16 student comments reflect a developing understanding and appreciation of the educational opportunities that would be available to them after their GCSEs:

*Helped me feel more aware of what I want to do after college and more aware of the opportunities and benefits of higher education. (Focus Group 2)*

*This has been really helpful for me to understand what qualifications I need to get to a well-paid job. (Focus Group 1)*

*Made me aware of the different opportunities I have in the future to achieve my goals of becoming a social worker or physio. (Focus Group 2)*

*It has helped me to discover more future options and courses available and to find out which is best for me. (Focus Group 2)*

They were also reflective on the impact on the more immediate Post-16 study decisions – including what they could study, where they could study and ensuring that their decisions were able to lead into their desired opportunities and careers.

*Allowed me to choose better A Levels to ensure I am able to do what I want (Focus Group 2)*

*It has helped me make sure I know what I need to get in my qualifications to help me achieve what I want to do. (Focus Group 1)*

They also discussed having developed a better understanding of higher education and graduate opportunities and careers.

*Helped me know what is available Post-16/18. I now know different types of courses related to what I want to do at different universities. (Focus Group 2)*

*It helps you to understand the different routes you can take after education into higher education and that it is helpful for looking for jobs that suit you. (Year 11)*

In contrast, the Post-16 student's discussions focused more about their capacity to navigate higher education opportunities and make an informed choice about higher education study and future careers. Many students discussed how, through the guidance activities, they had developed a more detailed understanding of higher education – including understanding how to compare institutions, course content and the opportunities for personal development.

**Key finding:** *The Post-16 students were reflective of how their increased knowledge of higher education had enabled them to clearly focus their course interests.*

*Given me a better general knowledge about my course and has helped me decide what direction I'm going to take in the future. (Focus Group 2)*

*Extremely helpful helps pinpoint different routes to take to achieve what course you want. (Year 13)*

*It helped me narrow down my interests to decide what I wanted to study at uni. (Focus Group 6)*

*It was a really useful experience that highlighted a lot of new possible routes, that previously I hadn't considered. (Year 12)*

Integral to the young people's knowledge of higher education is understanding the financial aspects. Some young people suggested it would have been useful to explore the financial aspects in more detail, but others recognised that when they had raised questions these had been addressed and their concerns allayed.

*Helped me with worries, e.g. finance. (Focus Group 6)*

*Any worries about prices (cost of courses) were answered. (Focus Group 1)*

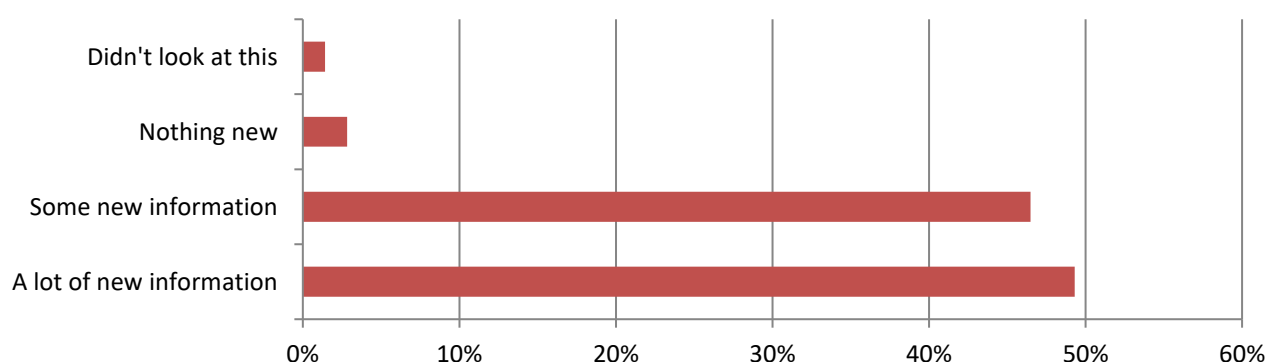
Such gaps may be able to be covered through greater coordination with or signposting to school-based activities.

**Recommendation:** *To ensure greater coordination with, or signposting to, school-based activities to help young people access other support and information which may be better provided by schools or other agencies.*

### 3.3.3 Increasing understanding of future career ideas and graduate employment

There was a consensus that the Careerpivot Guidance sessions had added significant value in helping the young people explore career opportunities. Figure 17 below highlights the positive impact Careerpivot has had on the information young people have acquired about jobs with 95.1% having learnt new information about jobs and job sectors they might be interested in,

Figure 17 Information learnt about jobs and jobs sectors



This information had helped them understand the link between salaries and education level and the range of educational pathways that could help them achieve their goals.

*I knew what I wanted to be before [the Careerpilot session], but I didn't know what I need to study. (Focus Group 1)*

*I knew I wanted to be a teacher or working in sports, but I didn't know what I need to do or get to do it. (Focus Group 1)*

**Key finding:** *The guidance sessions had a significant impact on young people's understanding of their personal interests and skills and the relationship to potential careers and pathways.*

There was much discussion within the focus groups about how talking through their interests with a knowledgeable individual was beneficial for exploring a broad range of careers, in understanding job and salary information, and possible career pathways. The impact of this is highlighted below in the quotes from the Pre-16 students:

*Made me think about what type of jobs I'd be good at or may be interested in. (Focus Group 3)*

*It's helpful, and it is useful to look at the job you would like to do and helps you get set for the future after school and after the exams. (Year 11)*

*It gives you advice and details on what you should do with your career choices. (Year 10)*

*The career session was really good and helped me get a better understanding of what to do in the future. (Year 10)*

The responses from the Post-16 students reflect broadly similar themes with a deeper level of analysis and recognition of gaining increased knowledge and resources to continue their career research:

*It provides general info related to the topic, so I can use this info to refine my pathway and gain further support when I present my ideas/thoughts. (Focus Group 5)*

*Has helped me decide what I want to do and allowed me to explore different options. (Focus Group 6)*

*Helped me to get ideas about my future options and helped me to find out what steps I need to take to get there. (Focus Group 3)*

*Know about lots more websites that help you find a career. (Focus Group 3)*

Some young people suggested that having started the sessions with vague future career ideas through the sessions they had been able to explore and begin to focus on real career options:

*I didn't really know what I was doing and each session I started to get more of a focus of what I wanted to do (Focus Group 6)*

Several young people discussed how talking through their interests and career ideas with a Careers Adviser and been given a greater insight into a breadth of opportunities has led them to change their mind about their future career. As several young people commented:

*When I first started doing this, I wanted to be a lawyer, but I was given loads of information on it, and now I don't want to be a lawyer anymore. It has given me all the information I needed to know I don't want to go down that path. It's back to the drawing board, but I'm happy I'm not going for that thing if I wasn't going to enjoy it. (Focus Group 3)*

*I have seen more jobs and things I could do in the future. (Year 10 student)*

*I am able to know more about options I didn't know I had other than just work. (Year 11 student)*

While this was recognised as a positive outcome, for some young people it had led to a feeling of considerable uncertainty.

### **3.3.4 Developed confidence in self and future ideas**

The final theme is the impact of the Careerpilot Guidance model on the young people's self-confidence (Figure 18).

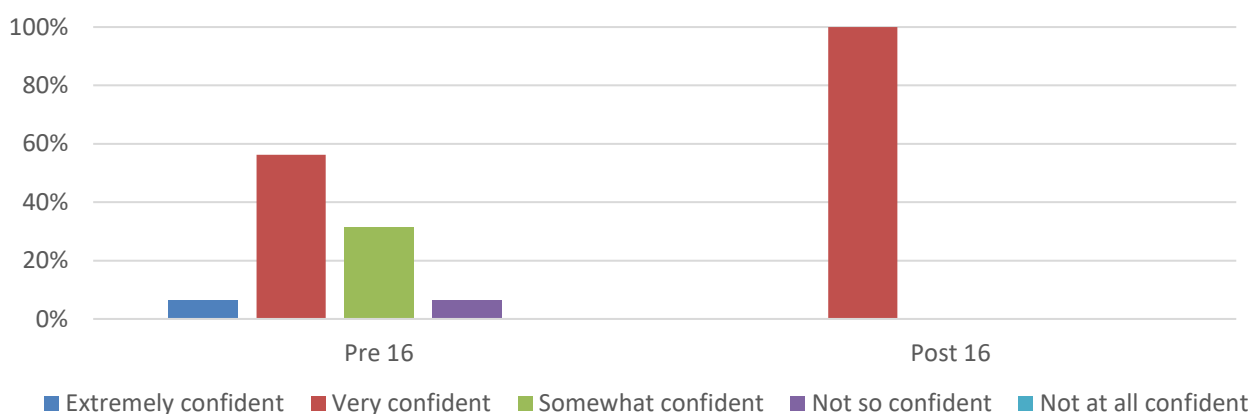
**Key finding:** *The impact on young people's confidence to make an informed decision about their future education and career is exceptionally positive.*

All the Post-16 respondents to the stated they now felt very confident in their decision-making:

*I feel like I have more information to decide what I want. (Year 12 student)*

*I have been given ideas on what to do; I now just need to make more clear decisions. (Year 12 student)*

**Figure 18** How confident do you now feel about making an informed decision about your future education and career?



However, there was a greater spread in confidence levels from the Pre-16 students, which is related to the need for more consideration and research before making an informed decision.

*I have a route that I think I may enjoy and I would like to follow it, but I'm not 100% sure. (Year 10 student)*

*I haven't done research outside of the sessions. (Year 11 student)*

For the Pre-16 students who felt more confident in their decision-making, they related this to being more aware of opportunities, understanding more about courses and knowing the resources available to help them make a decision.

*I know which resources I can use to make an informed decision. (Year 11 student)*

*I feel more aware of the different options available and understand what entry requirements are needed for the higher education courses. (Year 11 student)*

Overall, many young people discussed having greater confidence in being able to navigate making an informed decision and be successful both in their future courses and careers.

*The impact of taking part has been increased levels of confidence in my pursuits and aspirations after sixth form, and a more focused idea of what career paths I'd take based on the subjects I enjoy and what to take further. (Focus Group 5)*

*I gained more confidence and became more aware of what my skills are and what I would like to do. (Focus Group 2)*

*I have become much more confident with the concept of going to university because have been given realistic views in what I want to pursue. (Focus Group 5)*

*It was very useful and boosted my confidence about what I'll do next. (Year 12)*

**Key finding:** *Ultimately, there was the recognition that the support had given them a head start on thinking about the decisions and choices they would need to make in the future.*

*I don't feel like it will be a rush to make decisions. I feel like I'm slowly adjusting to some of the decisions I have to make. It takes quite a while to do all this so starting off now is quite helpful even though university might be a few years away. (Focus Group 3)*

## 4 Conclusions and recommendations

*This chapter draws together the key findings from the evaluation to identify the emerging lessons and recommendations for the future delivery of the Careerpivot/WIN model.*

### 4.1 Conclusions

This report has presented findings of an evaluation into the impact the Careerpivot website and the Careerpivot guidance model on young people's awareness of their career choices, their future decision-making and progression to higher level study.

To frame the conclusions, we return to each of the five research questions before moving to outline recommendations to improvements to the model of delivery and the nature of the personalised support.

#### 4.1.1 How does Careerpivot contribute to young people's awareness and understanding of the range of career choices and their accessibility?

The ability to understand career and labour market information is crucial in helping young people make informed education and career choices. The Careerpivot site introduced young people to information on educational opportunities, helped them explore career pathways, understand labour market information such as employability and salaries, and offered self-evaluation tools for career-related attitudes and skills. It is a comprehensive, progressive resource which helps develop young people's awareness and understanding of the range and accessibility of careers and career pathways. For some young people, this resulted in changes to their pathway, for others a greater certainty in their decisions while the rest had just begun a journey of exploring different possibilities. Nonetheless, there was evidence that young people had begun to develop their capacity to manage their career decision-making and transitions.

#### 4.1.2 Does the Careerpivot Guidance process influence young people to consider progression to higher education?

Involvement in the Careerpivot Guidance process impacts on the young people's awareness and knowledge of higher education. How much influence it has on young people's decisions to progress to higher education depends on various factors including year group, career interests and perceived ability. The evidence from the Pre-16 students suggests that, through participating in the Careerpivot Guidance process, they had a better understanding of higher education and graduate opportunities. Furthermore, they had achieved a broader understanding and appreciation of the educational opportunities available to them after their GCSEs and ensuring that these decisions opened opportunities such as higher education and future careers.

While the intention to progress to higher education was already high for the Post-16 students, the impact was evident in their capacity to navigate higher education opportunities and make an informed choice about higher education study and future careers. The Post-16 students discussed how, through the guidance activities, they had developed a more detailed understanding of higher education and were reflective of how this increased knowledge and understanding would support a successful transition into the right course for them.

#### 4.1.3 How do the one-to-one guidance sessions support exploration, decision-making and forward-planning towards career and course progression?

In the main, participating in the programme helped young people to think about their future, understand the importance of setting goals, and using these to help them plan their career pathway. Many students also recognised the importance of early planning for future career and education goals. However, making decisions about future careers is a process that occurs over several years, and across several transition points. The process of decision-making extends beyond information and knowledge, and with an increasing variety of pathways, the decision-making process for young people is complicated. There was evidence that the Careerpivot Guidance process was comprehensive in introducing young people to the skills and knowledge needed to make effective decisions. The process supported young people to:

- Become more self-aware – to develop an understanding of their abilities and interests and how these relate to future career ideas.
- Begin to define career goals/plans and to understand how their short-term choices can help them realise their aspirations.
- Source information about education and career opportunities, understand educational pathways and labour market information and relate these to personal interests to make an informed choice.

However, despite the resources involved in providing the young people with a comprehensive report and action plan few had taken time to read these. This suggests that for some young people the involvement in the guidance process did not sustain its momentum and there is a need to consider how to continue to engage the young people in understanding the on-going research and decision-making process. Some young people may require continued support; recognising that good careers guidance is a learning process.

#### **4.1.4 How effective is the 2018/19 staged model of delivering pre-guidance, guidance and follow-up?**

The Careerpivot Guidance model takes a user-centred approach, led by the young person and their needs. The guidance staff are skilled in tailoring the support and play a significant role in ensuring that young people are fully aware of a range of options. This is particularly important given that the targeted students are from widening participation backgrounds. This guidance and support is particularly relevant at transition points and plays an aspirational role while helping prepare young people for transitions well in advance. This report highlights the effectiveness of the WIN Careerpivot model on raising young people's awareness of a range of careers and higher education opportunities and their accessibility. The staged model was viewed as a successful approach by the young people, schools and Advisers involved. This report acknowledges that Pre-16 students were less enthusiastic about certain aspects of the programme. However, it is essential to recognise that early intervention had broadened their horizons and extended their options. Decisions taken at the GCSE transition point can severely limit future education and career options, and it is therefore vital they continue to be beneficiaries of such programmes.

#### **4.1.5 Do the young people who participate in the Careerpivot Guidance process feel better informed and more confident about their next steps as a result of the support?**

Overall the students involved in the Careerpivot Guidance process exhibited a better understanding of themselves, their career interests and greater confidence in their next steps. The Careerpivot guidance activities aided their ability to determine a career or course interest related to the increased understanding of themselves. Knowledge, understanding and tailored support are vital contributors to the students increased confidence in their career decision-making. However, there is a need to recognise that the younger students were less confident in their next steps, which suggest a need for on-going participation in the Careerpivot Guidance process.

## **4.2 Recommendations for improvements to the Guidance model**

While the young people were generally positive about the sessions and support from the Advisers, some consistent feedback emerged regarding where potential improvements could be made to both the programme of activities and content of the guidance sessions.

### **Model structure and content**

1. To aim for a higher level of integration of the WIN Careerpivot guidance model with a school's broader careers and progression work to support the programme's sustainability.
2. To schedule the pre-guidance and personal guidance session close together to have a more significant impact.
3. To review how the iCould quiz is utilised within the pre-guidance session and ensure the HE Adviser takes time to fully explore the results with the young person to help them develop self-awareness and understanding how it connects with their interests or skills.

4. To explore providing information which young people could take away from the guidance session, for example, a discussion summary to show parents may be useful.
5. To explore alternative means for delivering the Pre-16 paired student sessions, for example, conducted as friendship pairs.
6. To consider how to continue the flexible and responsive follow-up approach, while ensuring all young people can access this support.
7. To consider how to ensure young people are aware of how they can request extra help.
8. To consider the addition of small group follow-up activities to include drop-in sessions, individual appointments and guided sessions on a range of career-related topics.
9. To integrate the young people's follow-up actions into a school's broader programmes of support and development.
10. To consider how to better coordinate between the guidance and follow-up session to identify the gaps in the young people's knowledge and understanding, which will ensure the programme has a greater impact.
11. To consider the structure of the pre-guidance to ensure it is linked to the Guidance session and helps the young people prepare to participate in the programme meaningfully.
12. To develop a short proforma which is completed during the pre-guidance session to help the young people think about the career guidance meeting.
13. To explore how best to communicate the action points more succinctly to encourage young people to follow-up and return to the Careerpilot website, for example, virtual reminders or alerts regarding action plans, open days and website updates.
14. To consider developing a pre-programme information pack which outlines participant selection, programme aims, programme structure, and the potential impact to ensure young people are prepared to participate and maximise the support. Pre-programme information may provide a positive means to involve parents.
15. To ensure greater coordination with, or signposting to, school-based activities to help young people access other support and information which may be better provided by schools or other agencies.

#### **Careerpilot resources and information**

16. To consider how Careerpilot could connect to profiles of graduates to help young people gain a greater insight into future careers and working life.
17. To explore developing some simple video tutorials to help guide young people through the website.

#### **Further development of the WIN Advisor role**

The young made several helpful suggestions of how their personal developed could be supported which they felt would help them move towards achieving their career ideas. Many of the suggestions could offer a way for the WIN Adviser to engage meaningfully in helping the young people develop themselves and their confidence in making decisions.

18. To explore means of helping young people stay motivated in their learning, managing themselves, and achieving the academic grades to enable progression to higher education.
19. To explore ways to signpost young people to broader support, for example, financial assistance to attend open days, specialist talks, work/higher education-related seminars, and CV/Apprenticeship support.
20. To explore developing activities to develop the young people's self-esteem and self-confidence which would further support young people to take forward their action plan and realise their future goals.