BAYES
BUSINESS SCHOOL
CITY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Boosting Aspiration Through Near Peer Mentoring on the Curriculum

The Schools Engagement programme Impact report 2016 – 2024

Supported by

Portal Trust

[Always learning]

Contents

"Since working with my mentor, I have been able to organise my workload and revision more effectively as well as now having a clearer idea of what Uni I want to go to and the ones I want to shortlist."

Central Foundation Boys' School, 2017/18

Authors

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Foreword
from Professor André Spicer

As Dean of Bayes Business School (formerly Cass), I am delighted to introduce the impact report for the Schools Engagement Programme, looking back on eight years of partnership between Bayes and The Portal Trust. As an exemplar of responsible business education, this initiative was established, supported by Bayes with funding and resources in kind, to foster greater social mobility in the local community, while enhancing the prospects of undergraduate students.

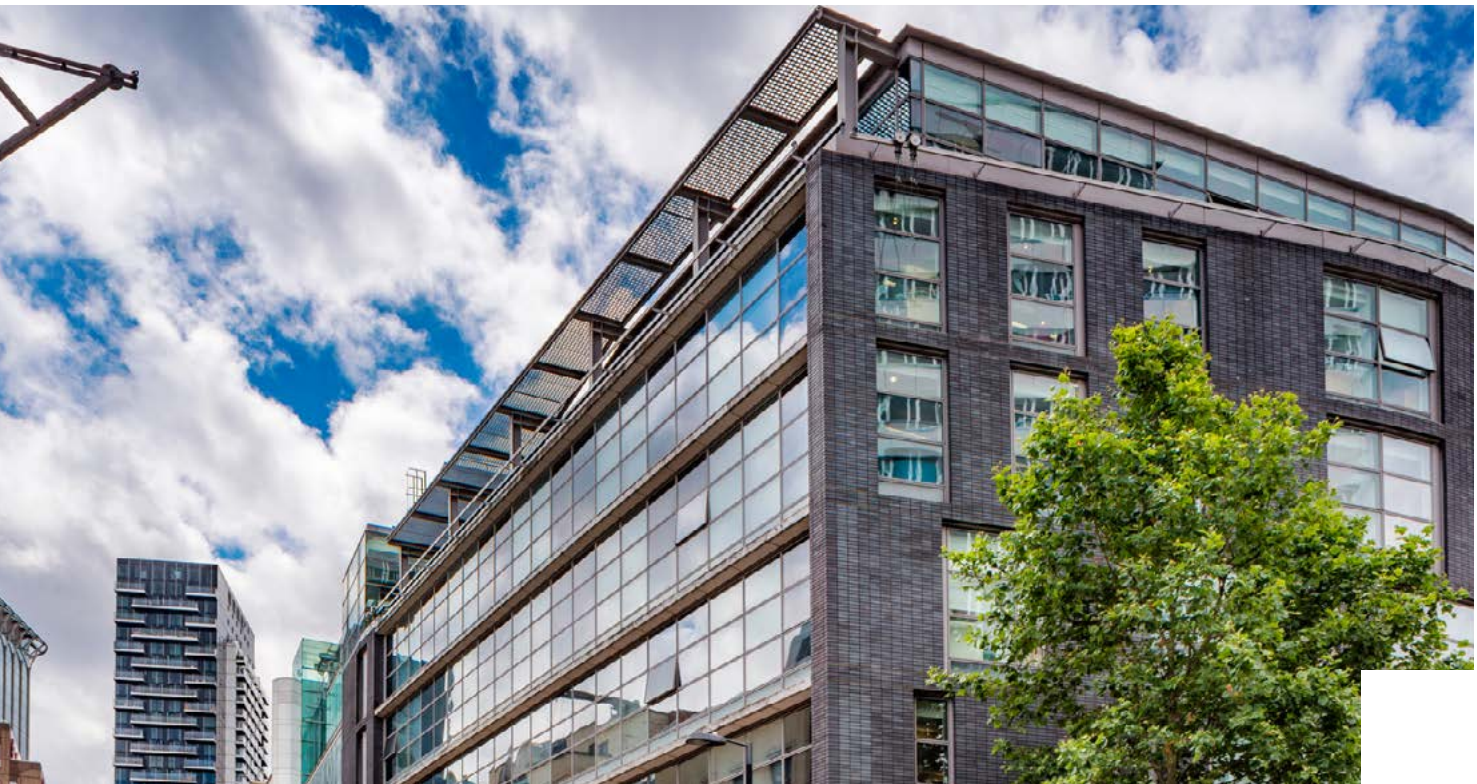
At Bayes, our culture is shaped by three principles: We Care, We Learn, We Act. We care for each other and for the world around us, we are always curious and make decisions based on the best available information, and we shape the world through our actions. We offer transformational education, teaching our students how to think and, crucially, how to make a difference. Our diverse community helps future business professionals to connect and learn from each other. Through rethinking teaching methods, we have updated the conventional business school curriculum to further develop communication and social skills.

The impact report charts the success of the Schools Engagement Programme in improving the life choices and pathways for mentors and mentees. We are proud to report that secondary school pupils have benefited greatly from working with our student coaches, while our students have been able to develop vital employability skills. In the spirit of responsible partnership, the impact report provides recommendations for universities, business schools, secondary schools, NGOs and the Government on adapting and extending the programme.

We look forward to expanding the programme and our model of collaboration in the years ahead, as well as implementing the recommendations included within this report.

Best wishes,

Professor André Spicer
Dean
Bayes Business School (formerly Cass)



Foreword
A modern philanthropic partnership

It is with great pride and enthusiasm that I pen this foreword to the report detailing the remarkable journey of the Schools Engagement Programme (SEP) developed through the pioneering philanthropic partnership between Bayes Business School (formerly Cass) and the Portal Trust. The Trust has now provided the programme with £635,000 in funding and I find myself able to reflect on the incredible eight years of dialogue and dedication that have defined this collaboration.

The Schools Engagement Programme stands as a testament to the commitment of Bayes Business School and The Portal Trust to fostering social mobility, community engagement, and the holistic development of young Londoners. This innovative programme, spanning nearly a decade, has been at the vanguard of reshaping the landscape of management education by integrating near peer coaching and mentoring into the undergraduate curriculum.

The following report captures the essence of SEP's journey and showcases the positive impact on both the aspirations of secondary school pupils and the employability of mentors. This success, measured through the experiences of 1,090 mentors and mentees from six inner London secondary schools and a diversity of backgrounds, speaks volumes about the programme's effectiveness in creating meaningful change. The three core principles - commitment to experiential learning, understanding the interdependence of business and society, and promoting social mobility, reflect the values that Bayes Business School and The Portal Trust have embraced throughout this journey.

Looking ahead, the recommendations for key stakeholders outlined in the report provide a roadmap for the continued success and expansion of SEP. The prospect of long-term collaboration with external partners, the opportunity for City, University of London, and other educational institutions to embrace this model, and the potential for government and non-governmental organisations to join the initiative represent a call for collective action in advancing social mobility and educational engagement.

In conclusion, I am delighted to have been a member of the Steering Committee since inception and extend my thanks to Sophie Fernandes, Chairman and all members of the Portal Trust for their invaluable contributions to the programme.

I extend my heartfelt congratulations to Professor Paul Palmer and everybody involved in the programme at Bayes Business School (formerly Cass), the six participating secondary schools, and of course, the inspiring mentors and mentees.

This report, and accompanying film, not only reflects on the past but also paves the way for a future where responsible management education becomes synonymous with positive societal change

Richard Foley
Chief Executive
The Portal Trust

Executive summary

In this report we bring together almost eight years of learning from a ground-breaking partnership between Bayes Business School (formerly Cass) and The Portal Trust. The Schools Engagement Programme (SEP), supported by both institutions with funding and resources, seeks to develop a new way of collaborating with local schools.

It aims to foster social mobility and community engagement while enhancing support for and developing the employability skills of undergraduate students.

We reflect on the development of a novel approach to learning that can make a difference for various groups of young Londoners. By including near peer coaching and mentoring in the undergraduate curriculum and applying the learned skills to encourage aspiration, participation in higher education, and employment, SEP is an exemplar of responsible management education.

The report demonstrates how a business school can engage with its external stakeholders and teach professional and social skills alongside the standard business school curriculum, amending traditional approaches. It also considers how SEP has evolved over time and how the experience from working with school pupils in underprivileged areas of London was transferred to similar work with first-year university students at risk of dropping out. To date, 1,090 mentors and mentees have benefitted from the programme.

Drawing on data from multiple stakeholders, our evaluation shows a positive impact on:

- the aspirations of secondary school pupils,
- the quality of life-choices made by university student mentees, and
- the employability of our mentors.

Our recommendations are:

- Funders should examine how they can replicate our novel collaborative matched funding model with other HEIs and programmes to best support their beneficiaries.
- City, University of London should investigate how it can embed SEP across all its Schools to enhance learning and support the Civic Engagement Strategy.
- Bayes Business School should explore how full-time academics with a background in coaching can contribute to better supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds through SEP.
- Secondary schools should seize the opportunity to connect their careers provision and engagement with higher education to raise pupils' aspirations.
- NGOs and the Government should consider whether similar programmes can be initiated among their own networks and institutions to advance social mobility.

The online format allows specific themes to be explored in more detail, so when reading this report, you are encouraged to go online and consider which elements may be applicable to your context. You can access the full report by scanning the QR-code or going to www.bayes.city.ac.uk/about/more/diversity-equity-and-inclusion/the-schools-engagement-programme, where we also welcome your feedback and comments on the programme and the report.

"I have been able to practice other revision methods e.g. flashcards, post it notes and mind maps. I have been able to manage my time more effectively. Thus, I am most proud of managing my time better."
Ada, 2017/18

Report terminology

Below is a list of the key terms used in this report. We refer to school pupils as "pupils" and university students as "students" to avoid confusion.

Degree Apprenticeships	are a post-18 vocational alternative to a university degree qualification that offers students the chance to work and earn money alongside their studies.
Assessment Methodology	the Assessment Methodology for the module is an **essay** which combines a review of literature with personal reflection and an **observation** where a mentoring session is viewed and graded.
Bayes Business School	is one of six schools that constitute City, University of London. We will refer to Bayes and City as shorthand.
Civic Engagement	in the UK refers to universities' social engagement and outreach in local communities such as volunteering and fundraising, partnerships with charities and local government, and sustainability initiatives aimed at reducing the universities' carbon footprint.
Coaching and mentoring	for the purposes of our study programme describe "development approaches based on the use of one-to-one conversations to enhance an individual's skills, knowledge or work performance" and can be interchangeable (CIPD, 2023).
Module	refers to a 15 academic credit element within an undergraduate degree programme. The "**programme**" in this report relates to the School Engagement Project (SEP).
DBS	refers to the Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), the standard UK criminal records check, an absolute requirement for unsupervised contact with children (under 18s) or vulnerable adults.
Safeguarding	covers training to safely prepare students for mentoring and coaching activities in schools, at the university campus, and online.
Secondary school year groups	start with Year 7 (aged 11 at the start of the school year) through to Year 13 (aged 17 at the start of the school year) in the UK. Students typically complete GSCE (General Certificate of Secondary Education) assessments at the end of Year 11 and A levels (Advanced level qualifications) or vocational study assessments at the end of Year 13.
STEM	stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths. Commonly used in the last 20 years to promote a higher take up of students taking these subjects in Further and Higher Education.
Vocational study	primarily refers to BTEC (Business and Technology Education Council) qualifications at Level 3 as opposed to A levels. BTEC qualifications are assessed through tests, coursework and practical projects over two years instead of exams after the study period.

1 Introduction
Our principles and aims

What is the role of a business school?

After the banking crisis in 2008, this was a prominent question and a subject of active debate in both academic journals and business school accrediting bodies.[1]

The academic community, employers, public sector and non-profit stakeholders discussed the importance of civic or community engagement and the responsibilities of business schools as educators of future generations

The UN Principles for Responsible Management Education (PRME), an increased attention paid to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the aligned Principles for Responsible Investment (PRI) were responses to and interventions in that debate.

At Bayes Business School (formerly Cass), the Ethics, Sustainability and Engagement (ESE) initiative was launched in 2010 under Dean Richard Gillingwater. Professor Paul Palmer was appointed Associate Dean to lead that intervention. ESE led to reforms in the teaching of ethics and corporate social responsibility (CSR) throughout the school, the recruitment of world-leading CSR academics, and the incorporation of the Centre for Charity Effectiveness (CCE) into the Business School.

Since then, the growth of the Civic University Network has increased the level of engagement with societal issues more widely. How to respond to society once again came into focus in 2020. The issues raised by the death of George Floyd saw both the Business School and the then Sir John Cass's Foundation undertake a review of their history and purpose. Separately and jointly the Foundation leadership and the University concluded that a name change had to happen because of Sir John Cass's involvement in the slave trade. In 2021, the business school was renamed Bayes Business School, and this change was an opportunity to strengthen societal objectives within the School's strategic priorities (see Appendix 1). More recently, Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), CSR and engagement initiatives are being integrated within the broader strategy with an extensive review of the curriculum led by senior academics.

The Schools Engagement Programme (SEP) was created in 2015 in partnership with The Portal Trust (then the Sir John Cass's Foundation). SEP was designed as a fully accredited undergraduate module in which students build core people skills through workshop learning before embarking on a real-world practical experience mentoring young people in the community or at the university. The module has been governed by quarterly feedback from a multi-stakeholder Steering Group.

This report focuses on the story and impact of the programme, building on Bayes' objective to change "more than a name". SEP meets the wider ambition to make a difference by re-thinking how we educate the next generation of business leaders and professionals. SEP's novel, collaborative and evolving funding model has been pioneered with The Portal Trust, who provided an initial investment for five years and a subsequent three-year extension. The Portal Trust is therefore an exemplar for grant-making trusts who want a fresh approach to supporting disadvantaged communities that goes beyond simply giving grants for educational projects (see Section 3.2).

As proof of concept, Bayes was awarded PRME Champion status for this programme with the objective of "taking transformative action on integrating the SDGs in curriculum, research and partnerships" (PRME, 2023). To date, SEP has matched 419 Bayes Business School students to 243 pupils in local secondary schools and 428 first- and foundation-year university students in near peer mentoring. This equates to a total of 1,090 young people supported as mentors and mentees through the programme.

This report is an open account of what we set out to achieve in 2015, how we have adapted and improved processes, the practical challenges we have faced and, most importantly, what we have achieved and learned and how we see SEP developing further. We will celebrate our successes, reflect on the challenges that remain, and provide recommendations for others looking to do similar work.

[1] Curtis et al., 2013; Locke and Spender, 2011; Miles et al., 2014

1.1 Our principles

While adapting and evolving our processes and delivery models over time, we have remained consistent in the application of three core principles:

Learning through experience, defined as *experiential learning* or *service learning*

Service learning combines the learning benefits from reflecting on a concrete experience (where students are exposed to a different and diverse cultural context to become more aware of social issues and one's civic duty) and with the actual benefits in the community the learners engage with (Bringle and Hatcher, 1996).

Recognising the fundamental connection between *business and society*

More sustainable business outcomes come from graduates who have experienced and understand this relationship (Kleinrichert, 2013) and are thus better able to apply that understanding in their working lives.

Equality concerns and the promotion of *social mobility*

Too many talented young people are unable to realise their potential because of their ethnicity and/or disadvantaged households (Vandecasteele, 2016). Higher education institutions (HEIs) have a responsibility to reach out to schools and employers to address the difficulties that still withhold social mobility and unlock the potential of these young people.

1.2 Programme aims

The value of peer mentoring for young people has been established by academic research[2] and practical projects on widening participation in higher education.[3] The near peer dynamic often provides one-to-one or small group guidance or support, where small age gaps in life experience between participants creates stronger rapport through relatability. This could be a cost-effective solution for schools unable to pay for such interventions made possible because of a partnership between the university and a charitable grant-making trust. The overarching ambition of SEP was to establish a new model for near peer mentoring and demonstrate its added value to mentors and mentees and ultimately to society (see our theory of change model in Appendix 3).

1.2.1 Primary programme aims

Within this context, SEP has aimed to achieve the following:

- Build external partnerships with schools to demonstrate our civic commitment to local communities and young people;
- Raise aspirations and foster social mobility by supporting the recruitment of students from local underprivileged communities into the Business School;
- Give greater and more effective support to first-year university students at risk of dropping out, especially those students from more disadvantaged backgrounds;
- Provide a rich experience for undergraduate students and help them develop people skills that are highly valued by employers.

Together this represents a journey with partnership and collaboration at its centre as the young people are supported from school through to university and into the workplace (see Figure 1. A journey built on partnership).

[2] Clark et al., 2013; Collings et al., 2014; Crisp et al., 2017; Resnjanskij et al., 2023

[3] Andrews and Clark, 2011; Comfort, 2023

Figure 1. A Journey built on partnership

1.2.2 Secondary programme aims

The secondary aims of SEP relate to dissemination, which are achieved by:

- Demonstrating pedagogical innovation with applications in other academic settings;
- Implementing an innovative partnership with a funder;
- Sharing knowledge and engaging with other academic institutions on a practical level to replicate and increase the scale of the programme.

1.2.3 What we do

The programme teaches students essential people skills required to be an effective mentor or coach, such as active listening, giving and receiving feedback, and self-awareness (see Figure 2. Mentoring and coaching micro skills) during an elective module titled Mentoring and Coaching for Leadership. This is an accredited 15-credit module and is spread across two terms: 11 two-hour workshops[1] in the autumn term and 8-10 mentoring or coaching sessions in the spring term to apply that learning (see Figure 3. The student experience: How does it work and Figure 4. Programme timeline and resourcing). The mentoring and coaching sessions take place with school pupils or first-year or foundation year university students. Students are assessed through an essay testing their academic understanding of the context of coaching and mentoring as well as their ability to reflect and continuously develop skills. They are also observed and graded on one of their coaching sessions during the spring term, which includes a viva conversation to review and reflect on the experience.

This assessment format better reflects what students can expect in the workplace than the traditional paper- or test-based assessment still prevalent in business and management education.

[1] From the 2023/24 academic year, Bayes Business School will incorporate the university-wide reading week, and the autumn term will be comprised of 10 two-hour workshops instead of 11 workshops.

Figure 2. Mentoring and coaching micro skills

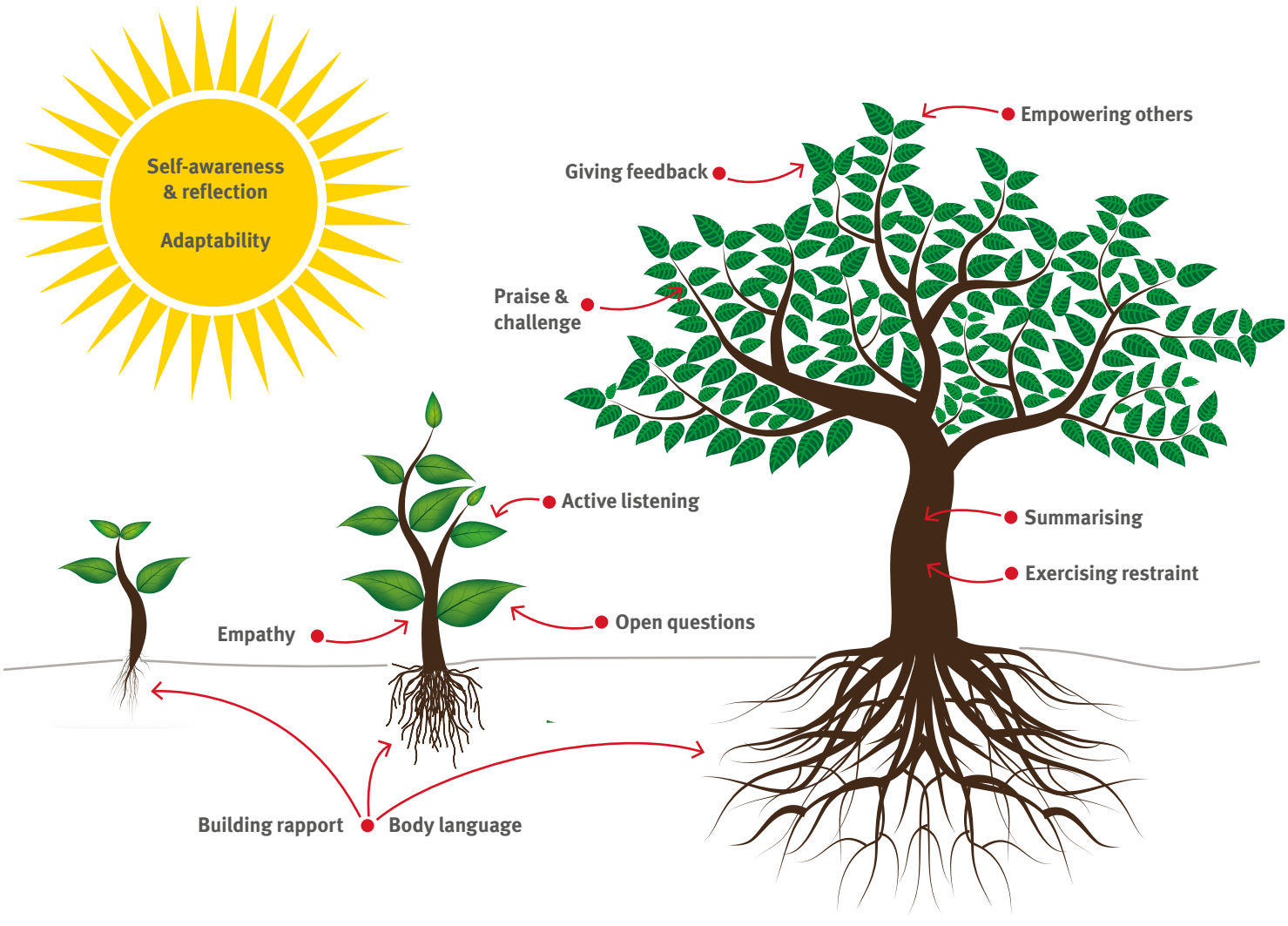
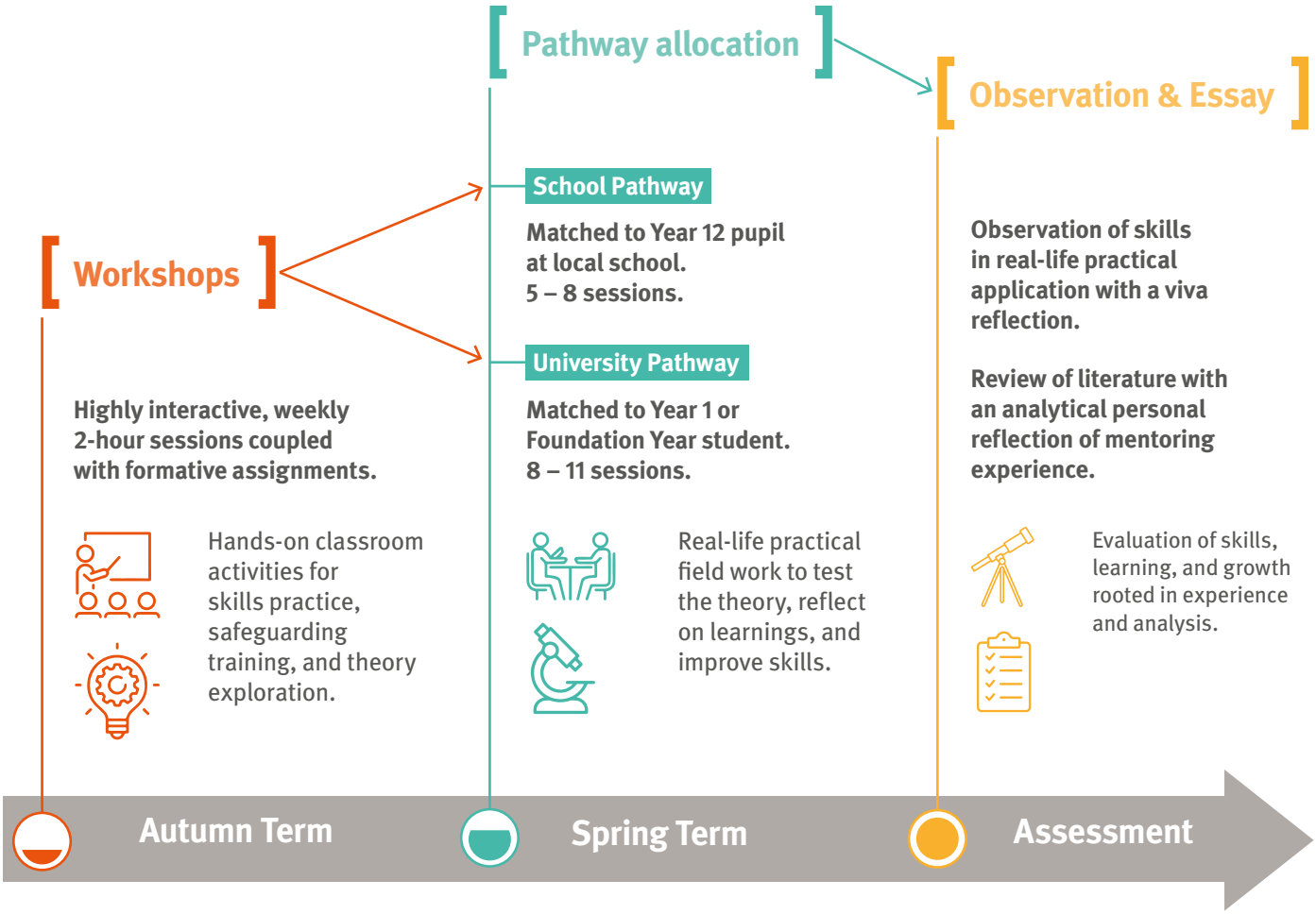


Figure 3. The student experience: How does it work



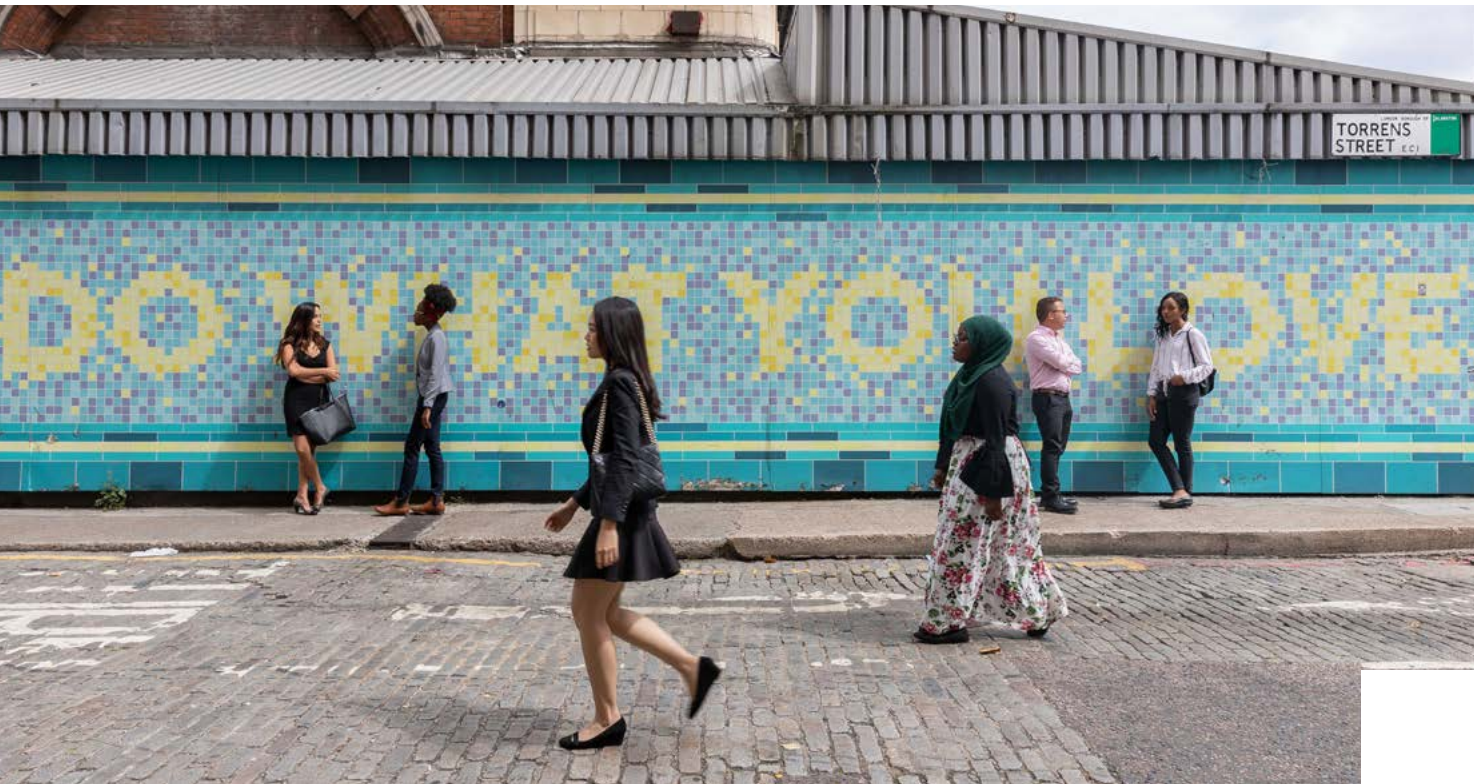


Figure 4. Programme timeline and resourcing

	General Timeline	Term 1				Term 2				Term 3			
		SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG
School Pathway	Partnership: kick-off meeting, sharing mentor profiles												
	School inductions: welcoming pupils to university campus												
	MENTORING (regular facilitation required at schools)												
	Data collection (survey, focus group, feedback meeting)					before			...and after, from schools & mentees				
	Report writing & dissemination												
University Pathway	Recruitment: strategy planning, preparation, and execution												
	Individual mentees "interviews" for matching												
	Matching, release of matches, and monitoring of engagement				round 1	round 2							
	MENTORING (students arrange on their own)												
	Initiation of peer coaching pathway (PPP)												
	Data collection (survey, focus group)					before		middle	...and after, from mentees				
	Report writing & dissemination												
Module	Promotion for elective choice												
	DBS application												
	WORKSHOPS	2 hour workshop over 10 weeks			refresher								
	Skills self-assessment (before)		●										
	Mentor profiles		●										
	Coaching model presentation			●									
	Skills self-assessment (after)				●								
	Essay planning and preparation				●								
	Weekly self-reflections		●	●	●	●	●	●					
	Formative in-person or online observation						●	●					
	ASSESSMENT: In-person or online observation							runs over 5 weeks					
	ASSESSMENT: Final report / essay												
Others	Annual curriculum review and planning												
	Steering Group meetings												

2 Evaluation of the primary aims

2.1 Building partnerships with schools and local communities

SEP seeks to establish further connections with schools in our local communities to support young people growing up in disadvantaged backgrounds, to raise pupil aspirations and enable our students to better understand the lives of young people in London. The initial approach of SEP was to ask schools what they needed most and to prioritise engagement, informing the development of the School Pathway for student mentors.

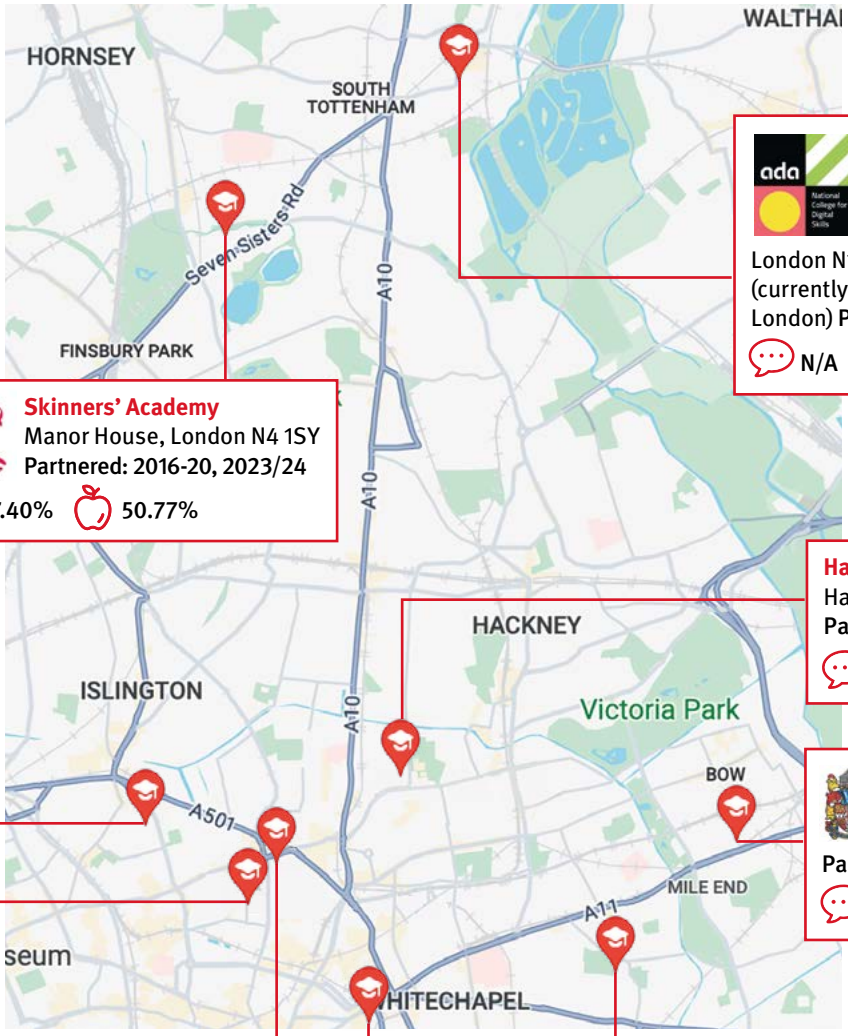
We have worked with a total of six schools, all in disadvantaged communities (see Figure 5. Map of school partnerships), and most of their pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds (see Figure 6. Snapshot: School level pupil ethnicity in June 2020). As an example, the gender and ethnicity demographics of pupil participants in June 2020 are presented in Figure 7. Pupil mentee demographic distribution. Although school engagement has become more challenging with various issues such as budget cuts, staff turnover and heavy workloads, we have forged strong partnerships over the years with two schools, Stepney All Saints Secondary School (formerly Sir John Cass's Foundation and Redcoat School) and Central Foundation School for Boys (CFBS). At present, we are working with five schools and are well-positioned to engage more schools to meet the growing number of students joining the programme.

Figure 5. Map of school partnerships

Pupil data is taken from UK Government 2021/2022 records.
England mainstream secondary school national averages:

Pupils whose first language is not English = 17.48%

Pupils eligible for free school meals at any time during the past 6 years = 26.92%



Ada, National College for Digital Skills
Previously located in Tottenham Hale, London N15 4AG during partnership (currently located in Victoria, London) **Partnered: 2017-2019**
N/A N/A

Skinners' Academy
Manor House, London N4 1SY
Partnered: 2016-20, 2023/24
57.40% 50.77%

Haggerston School
Haggerston, London E2 8LS
Partnered: 2022/23, 2023/24
36.80% 53.10%

Central Foundation Girls' School
Bow, London E3 2AE
Partnered: 2021-23, 2023/24
49.70% 48.32%

Central Foundation Boys' School
Islington, London EC2A 4SH
Partnered: 2016-20, 2021-23, 2023/24
30.20% 43.25%

Stepney All Saints Church of England Secondary School
Stepney, London E1 0RH
Partnered: 2016-20, 2021/22, 2023/24
49.90% 52.77%

Figure 6. Snapshot: School level pupil ethnicity in June 2020

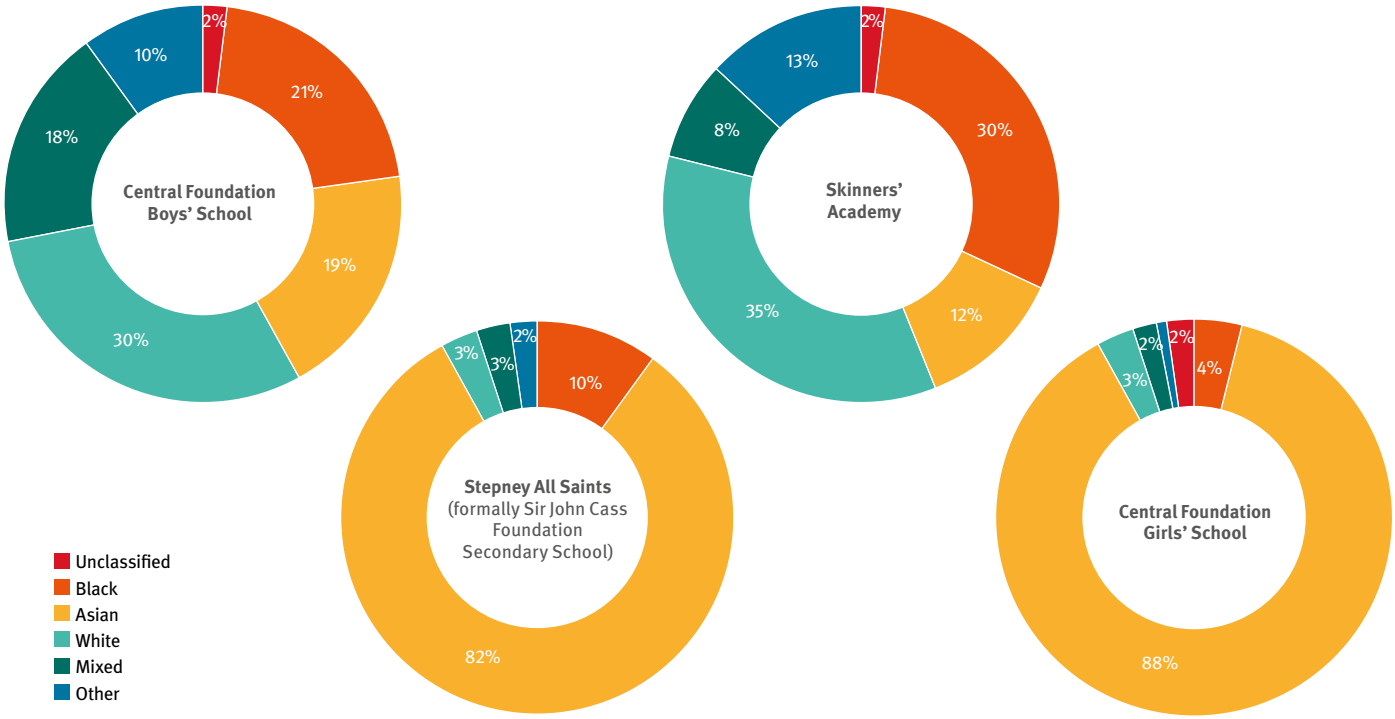
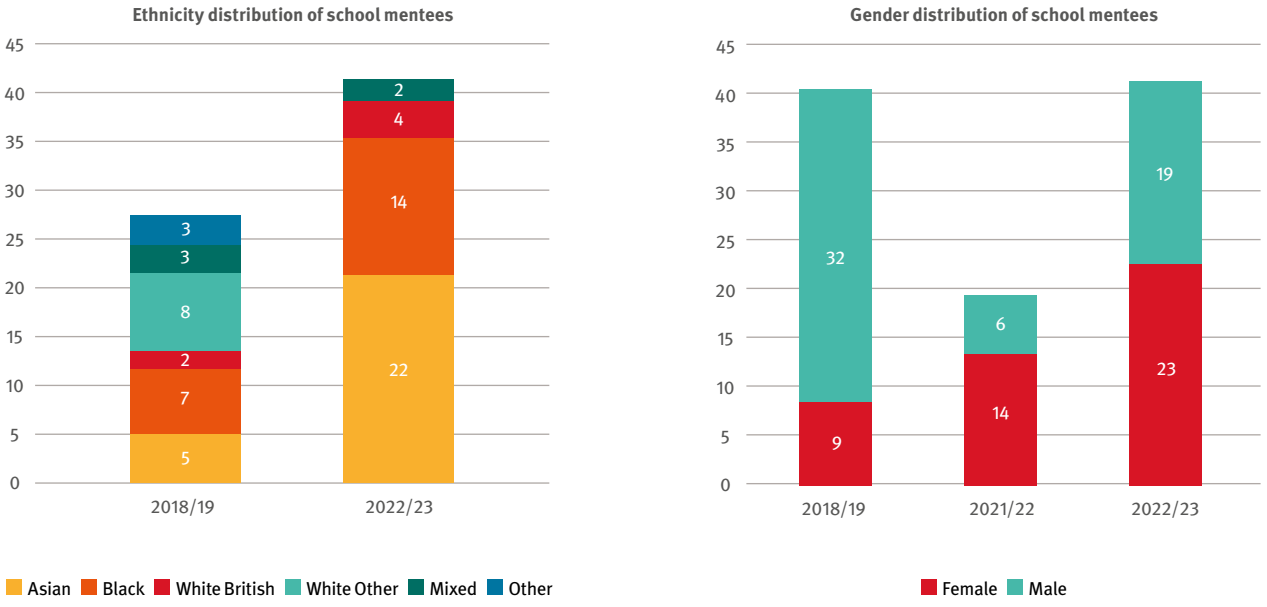


Figure 7. Pupil mentee demographic distribution



At the conception of SEP, our theory of change was set against the importance of supporting education in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Maths).

These subjects were identified as potentially the most impactful area of skills for advancing upwards social mobility, particularly for girls.[4] This was also something promoted in the City of London by local businesses through initiatives such as Tech City. While it is difficult to isolate London-only evidence using Office for Students' data, there is a challenge for young people growing up in local communities to access leading universities (including City). This can be the result of not achieving grade requirements across a range of subjects, yet can also be attributed to lack of aspiration and the cultural context of the HE Institution.

The school partnerships were developed with open discussions to identify the suitable mentee age groups.

Literature collated by the Early Intervention Foundation[5] indicates that aspiration raising initiatives generally should target children from primary school age. However, we needed to consider potential age-gaps and the maturity of the mentees. The concept of a mentor or coach can be hard for younger children to understand as this is not a teacher, family member, or a friend. Therefore, the programme first responded to the school's needs to trial different year groups. In 2018/19, for example, the School Pathway matched student mentors to students in years 10 to 13 at five different schools.

Initially mentoring took place exclusively at the school campus in response to the preferences of the school partnerships, with student mentors traveling from university to meet with their mentees.

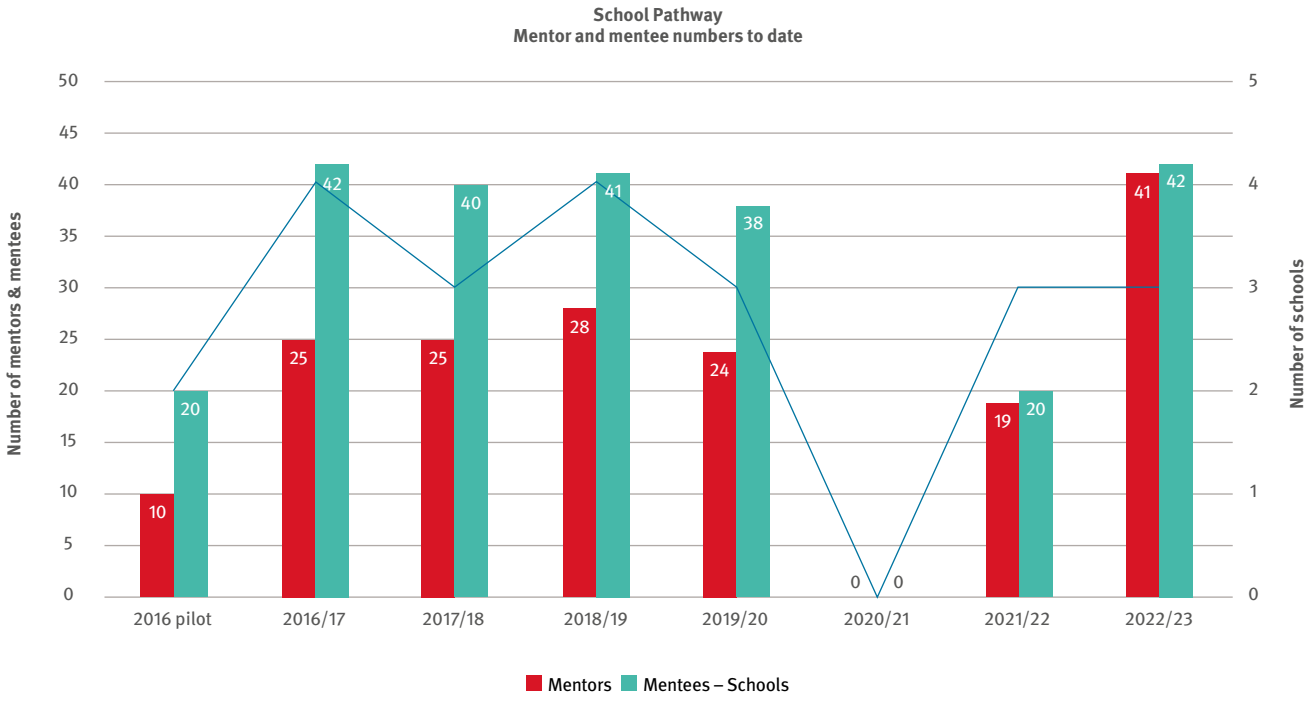
Pupil timetables are much more constrained and complex with mixed lesson times ranging from 45 to 90 minutes, particularly when there is a mix of year groups. Schools struggle to commit additional staff to accompany students to and from weekly off-site sessions. In response to their needs, SEP determined school-based sessions were the most suitable. This further supported the intended outcome for the mostly international undergraduate student mentors to gain a personal understanding of the real London. Bringing the mentors to the schools meant they could see the area of London where their mentees were growing up.

Through these collaborative efforts, by 2019-20, SEP achieved strong school partnerships with steady mentee numbers (see Figure 8. School Pathway numbers). However, in March 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic brought activity in schools to a standstill. For our students, it meant suspending our activity at school sites for the rest of the spring term and the 2020/21 academic year. Government-imposed social restrictions, strained school resources, and lost teaching time meant schools and teachers were struggling to maintain their own activities resulting in limited capacity to work with external partners. This lost year gave us the opportunity to take stock of how we work and consider innovations to support pupils settling back into normality.

[4] Archer et al., 2020; Britton et al., 2021; Friedman et al., 201

[5] Feinstein, 2015

Figure 8. School Pathway numbers



We moved away from a specific focus on STEM to embrace more personalised pupil-directed skills and pathways.

In spring 2017/18, focus groups were conducted at two of the three participating schools. The feedback indicated that pupils found the coaching most useful for topics other than subject-focused support. When asked "If you were to work with a mentor again, what would you want to work on?" the top responses were pathway choice (7 pupils) followed by confidence building and resilience (3 pupils) and study skills like time management (2 pupils), problem solving (1 pupil), and communication (1 pupil). Only one student mentioned "specific subject" support.

> *"I now have considered going to university because I was adamant before that university was not for me."*
> **Stepney All Saints School**

Pupils were also asked "What is your best achievement since working with your mentor? What improvement are you most proud of?" in a written survey. Forty-one pupils filled out the survey, with the top results relating to pathway choice (12 pupils) followed by study and revision skills (11 pupils), time management and organisation (7 pupils) and resilience and greater confidence (6 pupils).

From the written feedback, only three pupils mentioned a subject-specific assignment or class as their best achievement working with a mentor. This was a clear indication that the success of the mentoring sessions was building pupil aspirations through improving study skills, increasing pathway understanding, and strengthening confidence and resilience (see section 2.2).

Evidence from schools and pupils showed that SEP is best suited to Year 12 mentees doing vocational studies

or in the first year of their A levels. The shift to pupil-directed topics beyond subject content was further bolstered when we considered which age group was most receptive to coaching. For example, the 2017 end of programme feedback at Skinners' Academy showed higher aggregate scores for Year 12 and 13 experience than the Year 11 ones across overall satisfaction, enjoyment, meeting expectations, and valuable use of time (Mentoring Programme Feedback Form – Skinners, 2017). This result aligned with the general feedback from pupils over the years.

Taking the 2018/19 cohort as an example, feedback from Year 12 students showed greater depth of achievements compared to the feedback from younger year groups:

> *"I did not like talking to my mentor because he could not relate to anything and would change the topic or always misunderstand what I would say."*
>
> *"I was able to understand how university works. I was able to understand which university would be the best to go to."*
>
> **Year 10, Stepney All Saints Secondary School**

> *"Being able to talk about what I find hard and how to overcome them."*
>
> *"Some questions I had about uni life were answered and revision techniques were talked about."*
>
> **Year 11, Skinners' Academy**

> *" I feel like I've been able to identify problematic aspects of both my daily life and mindset and improve to better my performance. I have also gained new outlooks and the ability to deeply analyse myself."*
>
> *"Gained a lot of information about career options and new perspectives on courses, allowing me to narrow down my options to a clearer path to university."*
>
> **Year 12, Central Foundation Boys' School**

Year 12 includes completing UCAS forms and starting to work out pathway choices beyond school. Year 10 and 11 pupils are less mature, and their focus is on GCSE exam outcomes. From a practical perspective, it is harder to find time in the school day to accommodate this kind of intervention prior to Year 12, while an after-school intervention for younger year groups can be perceived as a punishment and therefore less effective. Working with Year 12 pupils makes this easier as they have more free periods in their timetables and can travel independently to the university campus when required (sharing the commute time with student mentors). Year 13 is usually too late as the intervention is after they have submitted UCAS forms and clashes with preparation for final assessments. When asked about their achievements from the programme, pupils in the 2022/23 focus groups spoke about the relatability and timeliness of the mentor support, reinforcing the importance of matching mentors to the right year group:

> *"I found it helpful as my mentor shared similar challenges they had when at school and told me how they improved things, so I could relate. Also, my mentor lives not too far from me so he understood a lot of what I was talking about in general, also Muslim which was a bonus."* **CFBS**

> *"I was able to discuss the future with a new person, someone not that much older who understands the processes of applying to university."* **Haggerston**

With the focus on older year groups, it was possible to innovate on where mentoring sessions took place and offer a blended approach.

We have found that environment greatly impacts the effectiveness of mentoring engagement with schools. In schools, there needs to be an environment with minimal distractions. Following feedback sessions, we have moved from using classrooms and the library to larger spaces such as auditoriums and sports halls. This allows us to space out the mentoring pairs, manage noise levels and conversations while still providing a clear line of sight for safeguarding purposes. On the university campus, a variety of open spaces and classrooms is available to host mentees. Starting with the 2022/23 cohort, we have offered a blended experience with at least two of the eight coaching sessions held at Bayes Business School in addition to the pupil induction. The university-based induction and mentoring sessions give pupils the experience of life on campus and supports engagement with higher education.

For our school partners this is an engaging experience beyond a conventional "Open Day" setting for university visits, which pupils from more disadvantaged backgrounds are less likely to voluntarily attend. In November 2022, a UCAS survey found that 42% of applicants from the most disadvantaged areas in the UK attended fewer open days due to higher costs linked to the cost-of-living crisis; of those who cut back on the open days they attended, only half of the group treated virtual open days as a suitable alternative.[6] This is confirmed by our own experiences with online mentoring, introduced post-pandemic (see page 29 **The impact of COVID-19**). However, we continue to explore with school partners how to incorporate one or two online sessions, not least as it provides pupils with valuable skills for future learning and work.

Overall, SEP provides an engaging approach to introduce more young Londoners from disadvantaged communities to university. We work proactively with wider recruitment and marketing activity at City to bring more potential students onto the campus by connecting with existing outreach activities and sharing connections in schools.

While the School Pathway has positively transformed in terms of focus, age group, and environment, it still faces challenges as we work with more schools and enhance our offer.

- Most schools run on complex fortnightly timetables which are hard to align with university weekly timetables, even when the focus is on Year 12. Student mentors also choose their elective modules late in the spring term, thus affecting their availability after being matched to a mentee. Also, half-term and Easter breaks in schools are not always aligned to breaks at universities, often leaving only seven or eight weekly mentoring sessions
- Leadership and staffing changes have impacted three of our school partnerships. In fact, school staff turnover is relatively high in London, particularly when compared to the overall pattern across other major cities in England (Worth et al., 2018). More staff who understand and champion the programme would be needed in each school.

[6] Busby, 2023; Policy Unit UCAS, 2023

2.2 Raising aspirations: supporting the development of pupils from local communities

The trust and collaboration built through the school partnerships has been fundamental to the success of SEP. By actively listening to the challenges and changes the schools faced each year, SEP could work with the schools to create a programme that actively supports raising pupil aspirations.

In 2018/19, a pre- and post-programme survey was introduced to capture the impact the coaching programme might have had on four core areas: engagement, confidence, problem solving, and time management. On average pupils reported progress across all four areas through their coaching experience (see Figures 8). This evidence supported the transition from STEM to more personalised and pupil-directed coaching on skills, as described in Section 2.1. This broader offer of personalised support for pathway choice and study skills allowed us to recruit more female mentees, previously underrepresented in STEM-related interventions by the schools (see Figure 7). A more versatile, personalised, pupil-directed programme also allowed us to forge a new partnership with Central Foundation Girls' School in 2021/22. In turn, the module was updated to better prepare mentors to support mentees with goals of personal development and professional skills (see Section 2.4).

Figure 8A. 2018/19 pre- and post-programme mentee survey for School Pathway

The results of the pre-programme survey (n=30) for strongly agree and somewhat agree are indicated by the grey and green circles, respectively. The results of the post-programme survey (n= 33) are indicated by the bars. The graph illustrates how the percentage of students who strongly agreed or somewhat agreed with the statements of engagement and confidence increased following the programme.

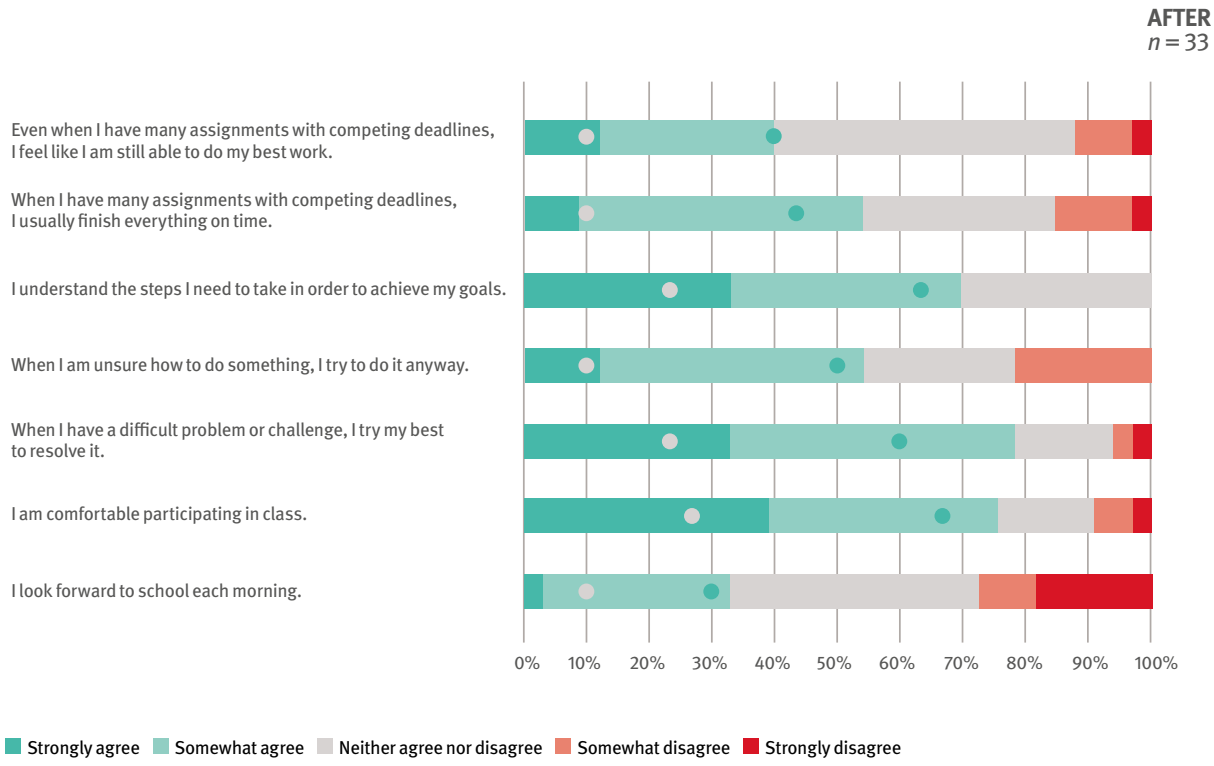


Figure 8B.

In 2022/23, pupils were asked to retrospectively assess of their confidence in their knowledge on post-sixth form pathways before and after the coaching experience. 74% of the pupils reported being three to five points more confident in their knowledge after they had been mentored (see Figure 8C. School mentee confidence in their knowledge about pathways).

3. On a scale of 1 – 10, how confident were you feeling about your knowledge on the pathways available for after sixth-form **BEFORE** you started mentoring?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

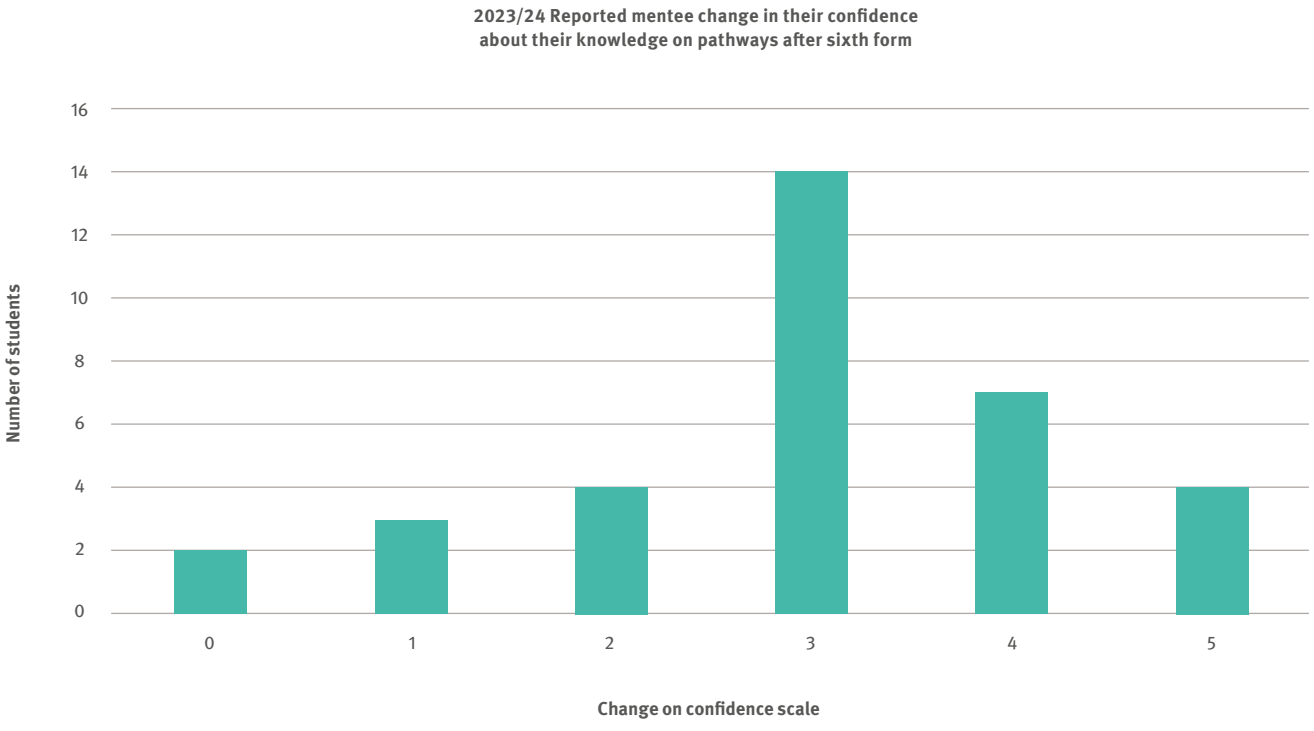
Not confident Very confident

4. On a scale of 1 – 10, how confident are you feeling about your knowledge on the pathways available for after sixth-form **NOW**?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Not confident Very confident

Figure 8C. School mentee confidence in their knowledge about pathways



As a new means of gathering data from mentees, during the focus group held at Central Foundation Boys School in the academic year 2022/23, pupils were asked "What did you achieve by discussing these topics with a new person/mentor? How did it help?" Their achievements focused on future options and pathways, which reinforced data collected in the written survey.

> *" I had insights into the university application process by someone who did it recently and had insights into university life by someone living it right now."*
>
> *"My mentor lived in Dubai before coming to London for university and speaks Arabic, it was just luck that we got matched as I was able to get first hand insights into what Dubai is like as I want to move there. Also, we spoke about learning Arabic and best way to do this as a beginner.*

Building aspirations will remain a complex outcome to measure. SEP also celebrates the individuality of each school, as evidenced by our approach to building partnerships, so comparative studies would be misdirected.

- Ideally, we would like to gather as much data as possible on school pupil attainment, behaviour, and wellbeing before and after each intervention. We have gathered some information and have excellent qualitative feedback from our host schools that this report extensively builds on. However, it has proved difficult to correlate data across our school partners, manage issues relating to GDPR, and overcome resourcing challenges as well as low response rates to surveys.
- Early in the programme, we explored long term tracking of pupil mentee outcomes through models such as the Higher Education Access Tracker (2023). This could potentially demonstrate progress of our mentees against a control group of students not supported by the module. However, relatively low numbers of mentees in each school and the resourcing commitment by the schools have presented a significant challenge. Our thinking on social return on investment (SROI) and on the measurement of impact (see Appendix 3) also question how we can realistically attribute the long-term impact of seven or eight 30- to 50-minute sessions on a child's long-term study and career prospects. The Steering Group also holds the programme team to account to ensure we are realistic about impact: "I think the bigger challenge is the need for us to be honest about … just how much a difference this, inevitably rather limited, intervention makes in terms of overcoming some of the structural barriers … rooted in class, rooted in social position, rooted in history" and "I think we are honest about it".[7] Still, HEAT data is now available at City and we plan to track pupils' achievements through it in the future.
- With our activity in schools and the innovation of SEP being on the curriculum, we recognise the linkage with recruitment of students from disadvantaged schools as well as Widening Participation (WP) programmes. Much of WP activity is managed centrally by City, University of London, while all curriculum activity is managed by Bayes. We work closely to align our school recruitment and partnerships to ensure this is clear for all parties, such as sharing contacts and advising on which schools to work with. More recently, in 2021 and 2022, we have run joint events with the recruitment and WP teams to bring more students onto campus at both City and Bayes.

[7] Davis Smith, 2022

School Pathway key learnings: Raising aspirations through building partnerships

Age group.

SEP is best suited to older secondary school pupils aged 16 to 18 predominantly in Year 12 completing vocational studies or A-levels. They are mature enough to take responsibility for their goals and actions. They are also facing a critical point of pathway choices which benefits greatly from individualised mentoring and coaching.

Topic focus.

Moving away from STEM towards more personalised, pupil-directed interests and ambitions such as pathway choice and skills such as time management is more aligned to the spirit of mentoring and coaching. It can work to support pupils in STEM subjects, especially when they are underachieving, provided there is a clear distinction between mentoring and tutoring.

Location and environment.

Creating a mix of school-based and university-based sessions gives mentors the opportunity to experience the real London while also supporting school targets relating to engagement with higher education. A mixed approach along with an element of online mentoring is ideal, and we have recently connected the programme to wider recruitment activity.

2.3 Giving greater and more effective support to Y1 university students at risk of dropping out, especially those students from more disadvantaged backgrounds

In the early stages of developing the programme, we realised that not all students would be a good fit for working with a school partner; issues such as timetabling constraints, family pressures, level of maturity, or administrative hurdles for international students with the DBS checks meant some students could not join the School Pathway. Therefore, it was important to have a backup option for students to practice their acquired coach and mentoring skills. This led to the development of what was first called the "internal pathway" option where our student mentors would work with first-year students settling into their study programme. As this alternative option took shape, it was then called the University Pathway (SEP Steering Group, 2017)

Mentee recruitment was linked to an existing first year module.

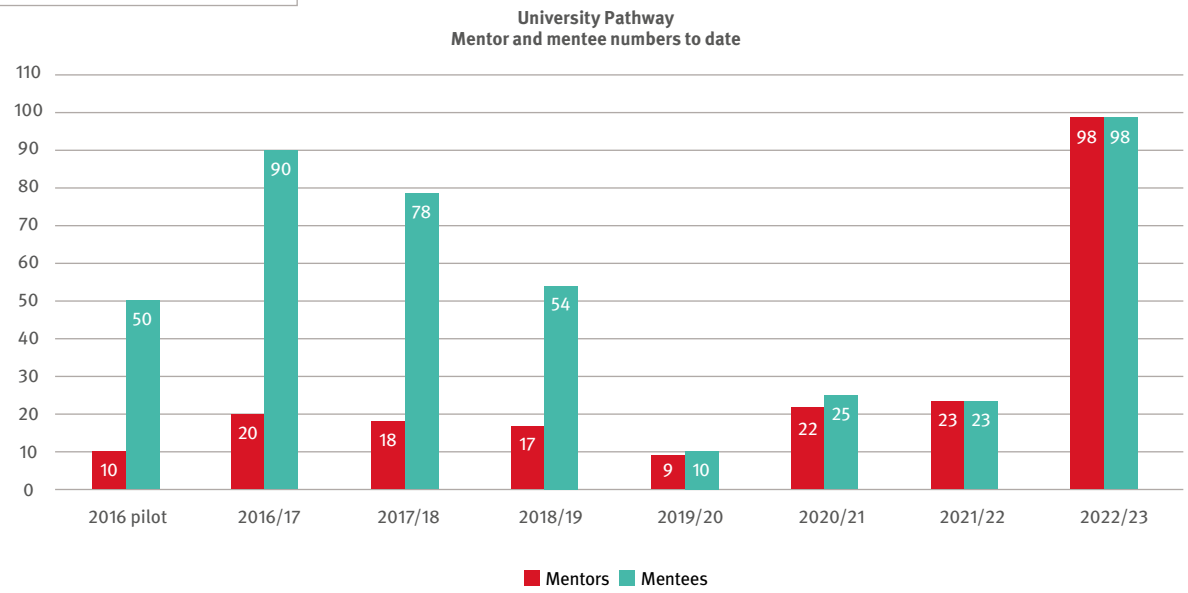
The University Pathway was a pragmatic alternative to the School Pathway, and first-year mentees were required at short notice. The quickest approach was to identify spring term modules where first-year students were most in need of additional support. The Management Lab module is an innovative, experiential class where students work on business simulation exercises in teams.

The University Pathway first focused on group mentoring.

As third-year students, our mentors had first-hand experience on the Management Lab first-year module and could support the first-year teams in small groups. Thus, the concept of a "coaching service" was built into the module framework with a focus on helping students achieve module outcomes. Management Lab teams were invited to apply with their motivations for wanting to work with a mentor.

After three years of the University Pathway, SEP secured additional university investment, and the programme management team grew. This motivated the redesign of a more strategic University Pathway aimed at providing one-to-one personalised support for first- and foundation-year university students (see Figure 9. University Pathway numbers).

Figure 9. University Pathway numbers



Mentee recruitment was redesigned to target those who could benefit the most from near peer mentoring.

Research and consultation with colleagues working on WP programmes informed our design. We identified that the University Pathway could build on existing schemes such as CityBuddies, a voluntary programme welcoming first year students at the start of the autumn term, and potentially increase engagement between students within the university. By providing a continuation of support to the end of the first year, our programme meets a critical need in the first-year students' journey immediately after their first set of university examinations.

The University Pathway is now connected to the University's and Business School's strategies for improving access opportunities for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. While we are an international Business School with a diverse student body, we are not representative of our city and some groups are underrepresented, specifically Black African and Caribbean young people. For example, we now work with UK-based foundation year students who are seeking to achieve the marks to enter Bayes undergraduate programmes. Furthermore, a decision was made in 2021 after consultation with The Portal Trust that the grant from Sir John Cass's Foundation should be used for a Black British Scholarship for UK-domiciled undergraduate students. These students are often the first to go to university in their families and many of the support structures for those from families with a history in Higher Education do not exist. Mindful that the scholarships would be wasted if the student then drops out, Bayes has put in various supports including SEP's near peer mentoring. SEP was already engaging with students from WP and vocational backgrounds so extending the support to the scholarship students became a part of this inclusivity strategy.

The programme has shifted away from group mentoring to focus on delivering personalised one-to-one support from a near peer mentor.

In the early years of the programme, group mentoring was more common on the University Pathway as students were mostly matched with mentees working in Management Lab teams. While group mentoring is often effective and benefit mentees working together as peers, the change to one-to-one coaching meant we could target support for students who could benefit the most, particularly WP-flagged and vocational background students. All first-year students are now invited to apply to the programme for one-to-one support on academic, professional, and personal goals.

Support programmes have existed at City for many years alongside a personal tutoring system by faculty members. However, recent national concerns about student mental health and support have questioned how supportive the longstanding personal tutoring system is with non-academic issues.[8] In addition, pressure on student health and counselling services have become significant.[9] Our near peer mentoring system is not a replacement for these services; however, we have found that it can serve as an early warning indicator. Dr Martin Rich, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programmes at Bayes and a longstanding member of the SEP Steering Group, identified early in the programme that mentoring was an

> *"incredibly effective way of keeping track of how people were doing, giving people something you could use [as] the basis for feedback"* **2022**

Our student mentors can help mentees identify wellbeing related issues such as lack of sleep or struggles with concentration.

[8] Ghenghesh, 2018; Stephen, O'Connell and Hall, 2008; Yale, 2019

[9] Lewis and Bolton, 2023; StudentMinds, 2023

This is particularly important following the COVID-19 pandemic with its likely long-term impact on students' mental wellbeing (StudentMinds, 2022). The University Pathway mentees wrote about the impact their coach had on their overall student life balance in their end-of-programme feedback surveys:

> *"It is good to set personal goals to ensure clarity on the next steps you need to take. Those sessions has [sic] also made me reconsider my priorities and strike a healthy balance between my part time job, studies and social life."* **2023**

> *"The mentor clarified my concerns or any uncertainties that I was having about university life and what is expected from me. He was also someone I could talk to about my outside-university problems and get proper advice. Overall, the meetings were useful as I could reflect upon everything that happened during the week and look for a possible course of action to take to tackle my challenges; also, set goals for an upcoming week and have a good chat."* **2021**

More help for students once their studies are underway from a near peer who has been through a relatable experience, can make a real difference to whether students progress from their first year and realise their potential as graduates.[10] This highlights the value of one-to-one interventions in the second half of their first year as they take on assessments. At the end of their experience, mentees would talk about the special connection they could build with a near peer coach:

> *"A great friendship blossomed – someone to ask all those little 'silly' questions to – any queries about modules as she had been through the same thing so it was great to gain clarity on certain aspects – helped me manage my time more effectively."* **2021**

> *"Something I didn't mention previously was how much more confident I felt going into lectures and assignments. Having spoken with someone who was in my exact position just two years prior really helped negate how alien the first few months of university felt for me, and made me see that everything is going to turn out great, just like it did for her!"* **2023**

Feedback from first year mentees also indicates that the programme provides intervention on their own career development. Mentoring often covers topics such as arranging a work placement or more general discussion of plans for life after university. This complements existing resources for first year students and encourages career planning. As another mentee wrote in their 2023 feedback:

> *"Coaching has given me good guidance on what I should be doing from now on to reach my final goal. For example, before I didn't take internships, or communication skills that seriously but after talking with the coach I now understand very well the importance of getting an internship and also mastering communication skills moreover we also worked on how I can achieve and I have started implementing which is making me more comfortable towards my goals now."* **2023**

Looking at the quantitative data from the 2023 University Pathway pre- and post-programme feedback surveys (see Figures 10 and 11), it can be seen that on average the mentees reported an improvement across all four areas of engagement, confidence, problem solving, and time management.

[10] Akinla et al., 2018; Collings et al., 2014; Hall & Jaugietis, 2011

Figure 10. 2022/23 pre-programme mentee survey on University Pathway

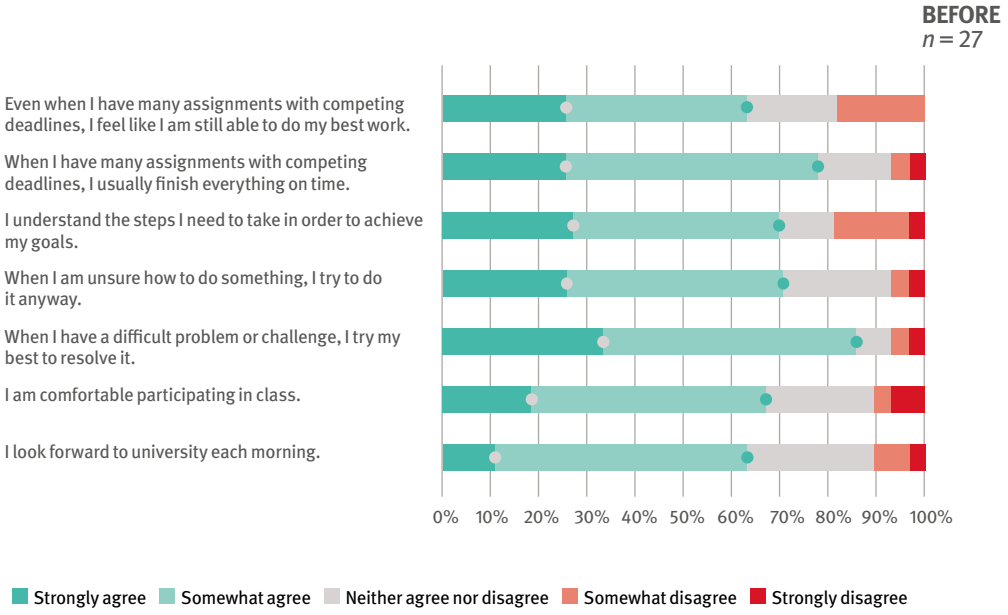
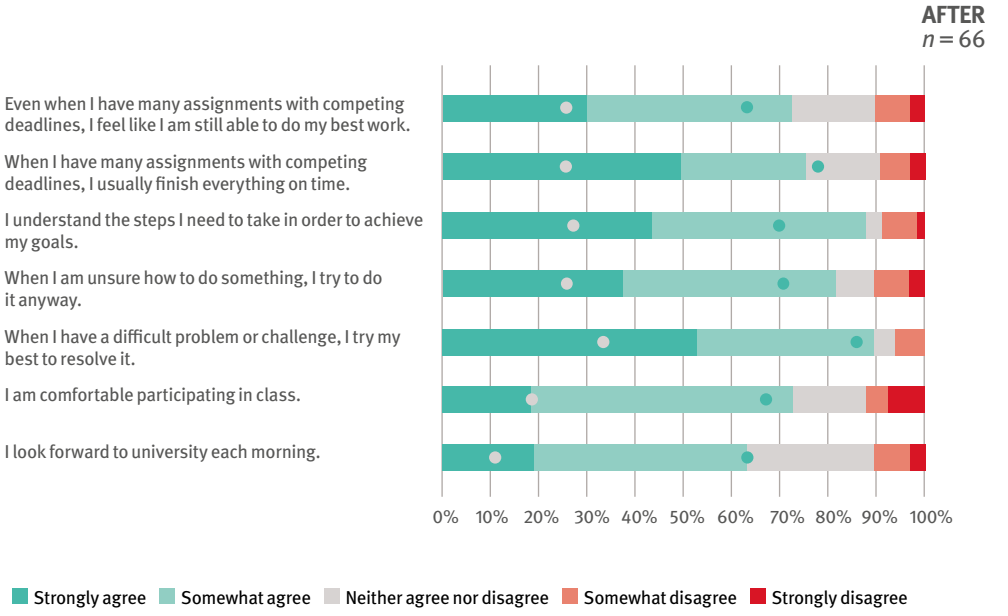


Figure 11. 2022/23 post-programme mentee survey on University Pathway



University Pathway key learnings

Working with those who could benefit the most.

With the formalisation of the University Pathway and increase in resources, recruitment can focus on reaching those who could benefit the most from coaching, including WP and vocational background first- and foundation-year students.

Personalised one-to-one support.

While group coaching offers mentee peer support, the needs and experiences of first- and foundation-year students are individual. Personalised one-to-one coaching aligns with the teaching curriculum and responds to what the mentees were asking for. In 2023, 85% of the mentees rated the overall experience at 4 or 5 stars.

Adding the University Pathway as a second option for students was a critical development linked to access, retention, and social mobility goals for the Business School. It is a breathing and evolving example of a live learning laboratory.

Now firmly established as a parallel experience to the School Pathway for the student mentors, the University Pathway still faces challenges as it looks to support more first and foundation-year students.

- First- and foundation-year students who could benefit the most from working with a mentor, who meet the WP and vocational backgrounds criteria, and/or who are finding student life difficult are hard to find and engage. Indeed, if you reach out to find mentees across the whole cohort, the first responses will often be highly engaged with fewer support needs. A large, complex part of our workload is devoted to finding mentees through a range of communication routes and meeting them to assess their suitability.
- One important aspect of our module is to ensure the student mentors understand the boundaries between coaching or mentoring and counselling. Although mentees on the University Pathway are independent adults over 18 years old, they are still very young and potentially vulnerable. Safeguarding content is built into our workshop learning alongside School and University material available in the relevant Handbooks and Moodle pages: student mentors are trained specifically on referral routes to Course Officers and Personal Tutors should there be any issue, big or small, as well as knowing who they can speak to in our team. However, each mentee situation is individual, and our student mentors are inherently still learning how to navigate complex circumstances during the practical field work.

2.4 Providing a rich experience for undergraduate students and helping them develop people skills that are highly valued by employers

In addition to helping our students understand the value of civic engagement, we also emphasize how this links to longer-term skills development as they move into a world of "boundaryless careers".[11] With a future dominated by automation and technological advancements such as artificial intelligence, universities must bridge the gap between knowledge-based learning and skills-based work. Teaching must equip students with core skills that prepare them to face an unpredictable world with ill-defined problems. These broad capabilities include critical thinking, problem solving, and adaptability.[12] The module distils these capabilities into micro-skills such as active listening, giving and receiving feedback, and self-awareness (see Figure 2. Mentoring and coaching micro skills) so students can pinpoint and practice specific actions and behaviours that, together, strengthen their adaptability in the future world of work. From conception, the professional and employability benefits were designed into SEP. The Careers and Employability team at City have supported the development of the programme. Through experiential learning, the module links small group, highly interactive learning with a real-life practical experience, reflecting City's Careers Activation Programme, and helping them develop critical skills highly valued by employers.

[11] Defillippi and Arthur, 1994; Masood, 2021

[12] Hopkins, 2023; Jaiswal et al., 2022; Rampersad, 2020)

2.4.1 Building student interest and engagement

In the first three years of the programme, we faced a challenge to grow the number of students. Despite an increase in the number of Management and Business Studies students on the course, the number electing to take the module flatlined in 2018/19 (see Figure 12. Growth of student mentor numbers). As an elective module it can be viewed as non-essential learning by default and perceived as a "softer option" with no formal exam. We have considered and discussed over the years whether to lobby for the module to become compulsory rather than elective. Nevertheless, one of the distinctions of an accredited business management undergraduate programme is the power of electives that attracts students and draws upon the strengths and uniqueness of the school faculty. Therefore, we concluded that for foreseeable future we would prefer the module to remain an elective, although it has become compulsory for students studying on the Social Purpose pathway of the BSc Business Management programme since 2021.

Credit-bearing professional development modules are often placed in the first half of the curriculum, before students specialise and when they are still two to three years away from applying for jobs. To underscore the importance of the skills learnt, the module was moved from the second year to the final year of study in 2019/20 for most of our students. By placing it in the final year of studies, the module gains greater worth; degree programmes are weighted to give more value to modules in the final year of study, and students are thinking more directly about their future. The dip in 2019/20 numbers is explained by the move because it was offered to the same cohort of students who took the class in their second year.

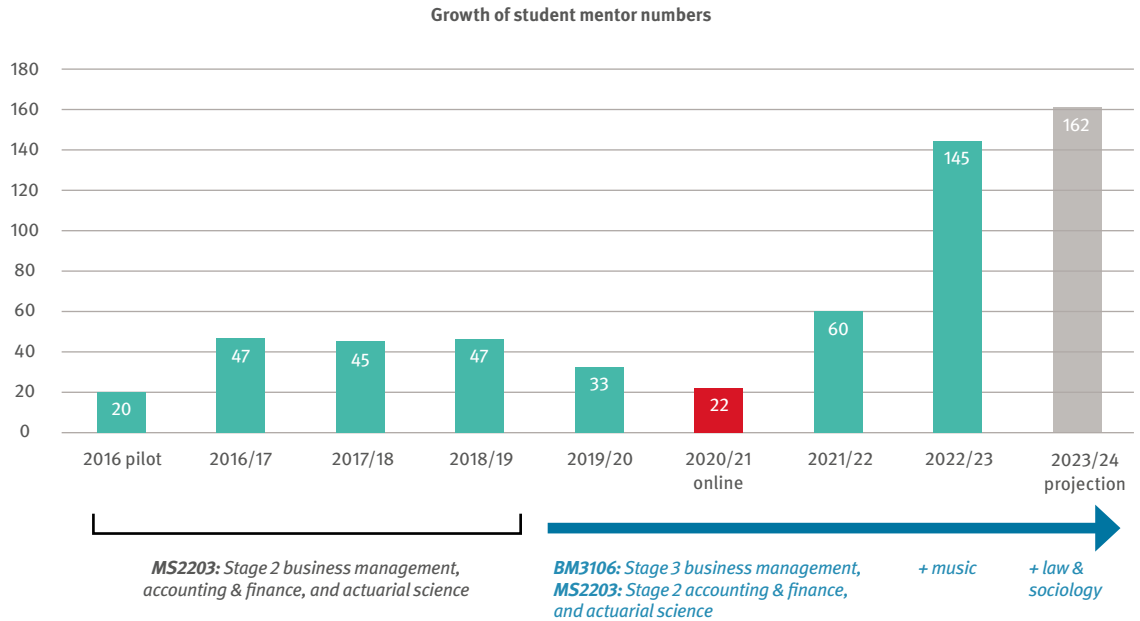
With the COVID-19 disruptions, it has taken over five years to secure greater numbers on the module. The multiple, highly transferable benefits of the module make it more difficult to create focused, targeted messages to engage students. This was recognised early in the programme, as evidenced by our 2016 report to The Portal Trust explaining: "This is a new and different learning experience, and they require a greater level of guidance than for other elective study options" (Interim Report, 2019).

Bayes has a highly international undergraduate body influenced by very diverse cultural factors; this leads to a wide range of motivations for students choosing the elective. The 2018/19 cohort is particularly valuable to analyse because we had reached three years of steady enrolment without a clear indication of further growth in numbers. The mentor profiles of that cohort are an excellent illustration of varied motivations. When asked why they chose the module:

- A student from China wrote *"mentoring can improve my communication skill, which is my weakness."*
- A student from Turkey wrote *"a good practice to have, because these are the skills that we'll need in a workplace or in our personal relationships."*
- A student from the UK chose the module to *"to help the student [mentee] progress and achieve their goals."*
- A student from France wrote *"I personally see this as a human experience, because it is something that I never really did"* in addition to wanting to learn skills essential for her future jobs.

This wide range of motivations influences how the module is presented. We revised our pitch to students to focus more directly on employability. Communication with students became more pro-active, using in person lecture shout-outs and videos of alumni from the programme talking about the value of their learning.

Figure 12. Growth of student mentor numbers



We have adapted this messaging and developed online and in-person materials to encourage second year students to elect the Coaching and Mentoring for Leadership module in their final year. Throughout this process we have worked closely with the Course Office team to articulate the value of the module to students. It is very challenging for Course Officers responsible for several hundred students to give bespoke support on prospective options and new learning formats. We continue to work hard to make sure the right information is available as well as responding directly to questions from prospective students.

2.4.2 Developing the curriculum

The module teaching approach requires a balance to encourage quieter students to express themselves while managing more outgoing students' enthusiasm and confidence. The assessment comprises two parts: (1) an essay with relevant academic and professional literature and a reflection on students' experiences and (2) an observation of their practical skills. This approach ensures that work on personal development is reflected in the final grading. With a limited number of electives to choose from and additional pressure from their dissertation or final project, the assessment structure can be off-putting to risk-averse students who believe a traditional paper or written exam is the best option to secure a good final result and, consequently, their employment goals. Follow-up interviews with our graduates in management programmes with international companies, however, found differently, that the people skills acquired during SEP are highly valued by prospective employers, in line with academic research on the topic.[13] SEP provides an opportunity for students to develop their communication skills, be leaders, and overcome feeling "shy" to speak up in class.

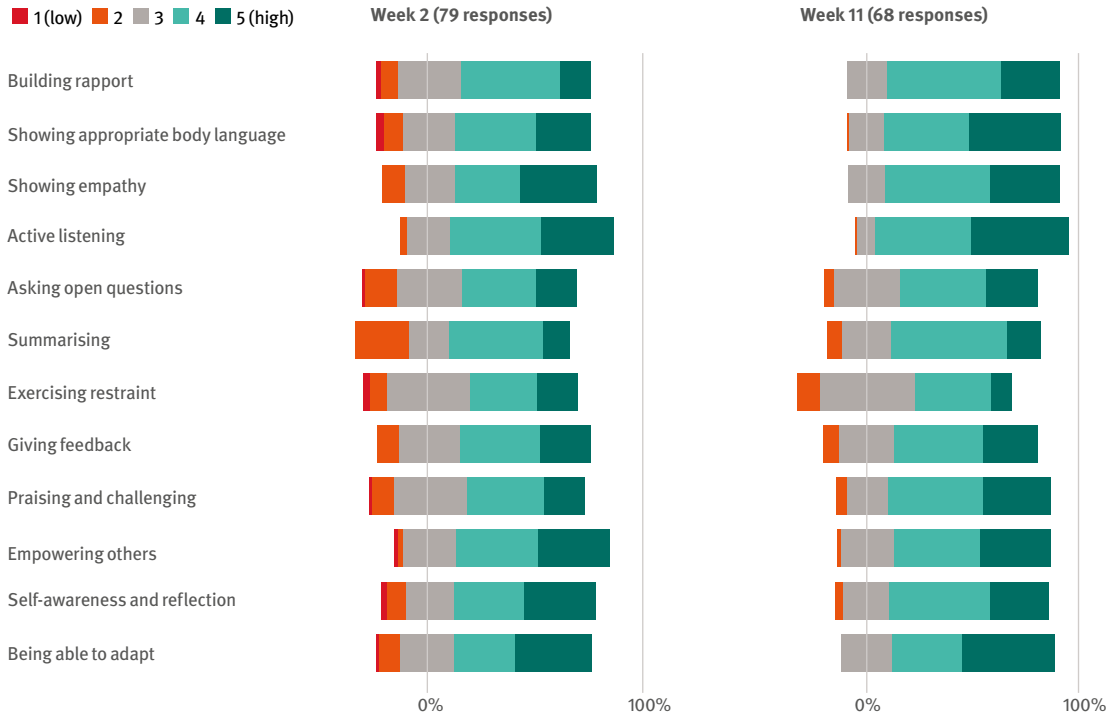
As an element of continual self-reflection and personal development, we invite the students to do a formative skills self-assessment at the beginning and end of the workshops before they start the real world practical. The results from the most recent class of 2023 shows the complexity of their self-assessment (see Figure 13. Mentor skills self-assessment, 2023). Overall, there was clear growth in the number of high scores (dark blue) and a reduction of low scores (red and orange) across nearly all the micro skills taught. However, personal development is often not simple. For example, as student self-awareness increases, the difficulty of executing the skills such as exercising restraint and reflecting become more apparent, and there is less confidence in those skills than at first thought, to only then be rebuilt through practice.

As a business school, we firmly believe that we have responsibilities toward both society and our students' life chances. Through SEP, our students realise that the good feeling arising from giving back to society can be coupled with enhancing their employability (see pop-out on Mentor Reflections on Learning). Such a motivation to give back has been reflected in a growing number of students who connected SEP to social purpose and to doing business that is embedded in society, or indeed opted for the Social Purpose pathway. Mentoring in schools or in universities is a good activity on a personal level generating wellbeing benefits through a sense of giving back. Research is emerging[14] showing that this is an experience that is more valued by young people as "Generation Z" are more committed to helping others as well as sustainability.

[13] Hall & Jaugietis, 2011; Tenenbaum et al., 2014

[14] Dabija, Bejan & Dinu, 2019; Konstantinou & Jones, 2022; Prayag et al., 2022

Figure 13. Mentor skills self-assessment, 2023



Mentor reflections on learning

As a mentor, I appreciated that I need to be more self-aware, respectable and caring towards myself to be able to respect and care about others. Ensuring this mindset allowed me to become more confident and comfortable going into our sessions and allowed me to build rapport and demonstrate to the mentee that I was aware of my own emotions. **2023**

The programme encourages social interaction outside of a 'normal' setting for the mentor and can lead to increased self-assurance and improved communication skills. In my case, I feel I have grown in confidence and I've developed many leadership capacities. **2019**

The first key reflection from my mentoring experience, is that before I started the module, my belief was that mentoring is a one way learning process, where the mentor gives and the mentees take. However, as my mentoring sessions progressed, I started to realise that I learnt as much as my mentees did. **2019**

This module has had a great impact on me, and after several months of interesting courses, I have found that my conversations with anyone in life have undergone a qualitative change. For example, when chatting with others, I pay more attention to listening and can easily get the thought they want to express, and then give a positive response. So I think the biggest reward is to exercise my logical thinking and I think this is a very worthwhile subject for students to study in university. **2023**

This has already helped me: When I mentioned I had taken this module to a potential employer, he was fascinated! In addition, I am sure it will help me not only getting this job, but mainly when I am already inside of the company, dealing with people. This will make my experience much more smooth, as I developed a much better "touch" with people. **2023**

Based on personal mentoring experience, it is apparent that AI-based mentoring programs may not be as effective as traditional methods in higher education. This is because mentees in schools or universities are still in the process of developing their personalities and may require personalised guidance that an AI system cannot provide. ... For instance, if I had offered my mentee an AI-based mentoring software, she may not have interacted with it as much as she did with me, as AI-based programs are not advanced enough to establish a rapport with the mentee. **2023**

2.4.3 Our alumni

In pulling together data for this report, we looked at employment outcomes for our students. Our aim was to find out if this module helped them to find interesting work and whether they used mentoring and coaching skills in the workplace.

Alumni surveys can be challenging and will reflect graduate outcomes, yet we have found a large proportion of our students stay in touch through a LinkedIn connection to the module leader, giving us additional data on employment progress and the opportunity to carry out periodic surveys. Analysis of this feedback indicates that over 50% of our alumni have directly referred to the module and their experience of mentoring during successfully applying for jobs. The module presents them with "a great example to cite in an interview situation" (Mayur Patel, 2022).

We have picked out three alumni to share their stories:

Gina

Gina started out at Bayes studying Business Management with a few ideas about a career in marketing and a good grasp of numbers. She was mentored by Jodie, a second-year student on the programme and the pair quickly developed a great relationship that really helped Gina to clarify her thoughts on how to combine a passion for sports with marketing. This informed her elective study options, and the mentee became a mentor in her final year. She was one of the first students to be involved in the programme as both a mentee and mentor, and we are delighted to learn that her career in sports marketing is progressing well following graduation in 2021.

Olga

Olga was one of our mentors in the early stages of the programme. She quickly grasped the concept of developing people skills and engaged strongly with the academic context as well as providing inspirational support for her school mentee. They are still in touch nearly six years later and Olga holds the current record for highest essay grade. She is now building a successful career at IBM and has continued her mentoring story working with numerous colleagues and being accredited through the company's development programme, having received Mentor of the Year Award and IBM's BlueCore Mentor Badge. We are delighted that Olga is the first of our alumni to join the SEP Steering Group.

Ruhel

Uniquely, Ruhel is an alumni mentor who had the opportunity to mentor a young person from the school he attended, Stepney All Saints Secondary School. Ruhel enjoyed a positive experience giving back to his community and had an inspirational impact on his mentee. Since graduating from Bayes, Ruhel is now working in recruitment for Amazon and is focused on working with future generations from disadvantaged communities to raise their aspirations and find new career opportunities in a fast-changing world.

The impact of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic clearly had a significant impact on our school partners, students and the operation of the programme itself. March is always a critical time for the programme with mentoring well established and observation assessments taking place in school and on campus. In March 2020, we managed to anticipate the lockdown by two weeks and adjust operations in schools. We were well placed to use technology having experimented with MS Teams for nine months previously. We were also testing the idea of students on the university pathway recording their mentoring sessions to upload for assessment.

This was crucial for the delivery of the programme in the 2020/21 academic year when the module was taught exclusively online. Although it was not possible to deliver activity in schools that year, we were able to support first-year university students experiencing an isolating and challenging start to their time at Bayes.

For 2021/22, we then faced the further challenge of going back into schools. Schools were now more open to online mentoring options, although their pupils were understandably looking for in person support and keen to be back in school or visiting the university campus. It was noticeable that school pupils and, to an extent, our student mentors were less reliable in this first year back with a higher number of cancellations and no shows. Online sessions on Zoom with breakout groups worked to an extent, but attendance and full, camera-on engagement was difficult. It's often hard to find the right quiet environment on a school site for a mentoring session.

Since 2022, we have further adapted our approach, recognising the ongoing impact of the pandemic on both pupils and student mentors as well as the workplace shift toward more flexible working. On both the School and University Pathways, there is a strong need for in person connection at the start of the mentoring and for open discussion of the pandemic impact in mentoring conversations. On the School Pathway, more activity on campus helps build confidence in the mentees, and with appropriate safeguarding considerations, online mentoring sessions are now feasible for some school pupils. On the University Pathway, mentees and mentors have an opportunity to practice new ways of working. Online sessions allow for greater flexibility, but they must balance this with the importance of in-person sessions for achieving sometimes deeper progress.

While it has not been easy, the pandemic context has accentuated the value of the programme for young people who have been through unprecedented challenges at a formative time in their lives. For many more years to come, pupils and students will continue to feel the impacts, and the SEP one-to-one support makes an invaluable contribution to helping them move forward.

3 Evaluation of the secondary aims

3.1 Demonstrating pedagogical innovation with applications in other academic fields

From the outset, this programme has created and tested innovative teaching and assessment methods based on the principles of experiential learning to practice key transferable skills that are increasingly valuable in the modern workplace (Chartered Association of Business Schools, Institute of Student Employers, Chartered Management Institute, 2018; World Economic Forum, 2023). This includes taking students out of their comfort zone and using methods more closely connected to workplace learning and employer requirements.

3.1.1 Deep-end learning

From its early foundations, SEP was built on the pedagogical approach known as service learning. This type of experiential learning[16] postulates that the underlying experience can, and often should, be geared towards students interacting with an underprivileged or marginalized social group. Thus, the experience that students learn through reflection is also a service to the community. This pedagogical approach originates from fields that naturally lend themselves to it, like social work or nursing, but it has increasingly been adopted by management scholars too[17] for teaching about business ethics,[18] sustainability,[19] project management,[20] social entrepreneurship[21] and various other topics.

SEP fulfils the four 'R' criteria found in the literature: reality, reflection, reciprocity,[22] and responsibility.[23] Students in SEP have to face the reality of social issues in their mentees' lives, issues different to what they are typically exposed to at home and in their City University bubble. The programme is delivered through a highly interactive, workshop-learning format enabling students to practice skills in a classroom environment before improving proficiency in a "real-life" context. This enables students to deliver enough mentoring and coaching sessions to make a difference to the beneficiary.

In the first two years of the programme, the subject was explored through the lens of mentoring and coaching and the context of management theory. Although practical and workshop-based, our curriculum has been transformed by examining the subject in the context of the skills involved in mentoring and coaching. These skills are highly transferable, and a more flexible context enables students to relate the content of the module to the reality of student development and progression into employment; thus, fulfilling Jacoby's first criterion. While it is good to see examples of students who become coaches, we want alumni to build coaching skills into their work as managers, with peers and networks as well as "managing upwards" to engage with senior colleagues. At the same time, the module was renamed "Mentoring and Coaching for Leadership" to recognise the alignment between skills developed during the module and those attributed to leadership. This association is built into the teaching content and potentially increases the appeal of the module to aspirational students.

The skills tree sits at the heart of what we teach (see Figure 2. Mentoring and coaching micro skills) and was developed and refined based on academic insights and input from professional coaches. Students have identified several "hidden

Service learning is "a credit-bearing educational experience in which students participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity in such a way as to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility. Unlike extracurricular voluntary service, service learning is a course-based service experience that produces the best outcomes when meaningful service activities are related to course material through reflection activities such as directed writings, small group discussions, and class presentations" (Bringle and Hatcher, 1996: 222).

skills" in this context that are particularly valuable yet rarely mentioned in HE. These include building rapport, giving feedback, praising and reflective writing. Exercises during the workshops take students out of their comfort zone, often practising with colleagues they don't know in preparation for their time in a school or with a first-year student. One positive side-effect of this teaching approach is it helps the student mentors to work through their own challenges by talking with peers during practice sessions.

Learning happens when students *reflect*, in line with Jacoby's second criterion, on how they have managed to implement the mentoring skills learnt in the first half of the module, on what works and what does not during their weekly mentoring sessions, and on how their mentees' life experiences shape their lived worlds differently to those of our students. This is further reflected in the innovative "authentic assessment" (Ashford-Rowe et al., 2014; Koh, 2017; Villarroel et al., 2018) the module features. Students compose an essay which includes reflective writing based on primary experience alongside academic context in a literature review. Crucially, we also assess students through observation of a mentoring which includes the opportunity to reflect verbally and give their own perspective in a viva conversation. For both elements, students have the possibility to complete a practice or formative assessment, gain feedback after workshops, and experience a formal observation by a module leader or assistant.

In the first year, the programme incorporated mentee feedback into the final grading of the student mentor. However, this proved inconsistent and impacted the academic rigour of the assessment process. Focus groups hosted on the university campus and individual pre- and post-programme surveys have proved to be a more effective way of getting pupil feedback compared to the questionnaire tied to the mentors' marks.

The assessment model gives a good reflection of student potential and enables assessors to account for variations in mentee participation. If a mentee is not naturally open, for example, mentors can describe techniques they have used to make a connection. This assessment method works well but presents considerable challenges to scalability as the programme grows, particularly in schools where we are unable to conduct video recording of sessions for formal grading.

Crucially, all parties, as per the third criterion of service learning, reciprocally benefit from this experience: mentees leave SEP with heightened aspirations and a broadened horizon of life opportunities; mentors learn essential life skills that can potentially increase their employability by helping them "stand out from the crowd"; participating schools can provide one-to-one mentoring to pupils; and the University benefits from increased legitimacy,[24] which is reflected in pupils visiting City to learn about university life.

This is a feel-good activity; students enjoy the workshops and enjoy giving back to their mentees. This can get lost in the drive to show business or learning benefits and focus on employability or getting the best grades. Giving your time and skills feels good and can be highly motivational. The students complete an anonymous end of module feedback survey each year in which they are asked: "What do you find most rewarding about the module?" In the 2022/23 cohort answers included:

> *"The tangible growth results of my mentee."*
>
> *"The relationship I built with my mentee was, for me, super valuable. I learned so much from her and was glad to guide her during these 8 sessions to help her achieve her goal and, hopefully, maintain it."*
>
> *"I found the most rewarding was actually being myself and helping and trying to solve issues."*

> *"The part I found the most rewarding was when my mentee was happy after the sessions and had more clarity as to what she wanted."*

Finally, mentors certainly act with responsibility towards their mentees in terms of understanding the situation as a civic duty. They also have to learn to act responsibly towards the pupils or first-year students they mentor as they have to make sure to turn up on time, arrange and prepare for the weekly meetings, and apply the skills learnt for the benefit of their mentees not just their own. Such responsible behaviour then contributes to the mentees acting more responsibly as they get to see their near peer mentors as role models, evidenced by many of the university mentees eventually becoming SEP mentors themselves. Still, some questions regarding responsibility remain, for example in isolated instances some mentors did not show up on time for their sessions, and we have seen only scattered evidence of volunteering in mentors' later lives.

In Section 3.3 below, we also discuss how we apply these same principles of service learning to the management of SEP[25] with the continuous review and tweaking of the programme using the internal reflections of those involved daily with its running as well as the external review provided by the carefully assembled Steering Committee.

[16] Kolb and Kolb, 2005
[17] Collins, 1996; Kenworthy and Fornaciari, 2010; Papamarcos, 2005
[18] Vega, 2007
[19] Brower, 2011
[20] Brown, 2000
[21] Litzky et al., 2010
[22] Jacoby, 1996
[23] Godfrey et al., 2005
[24] Nikolova and Andersen, 2017
[25] cf. Barin-Cruz and Pozzebon, 2017

3.1.2 Challenges to our pedagogical approach

Such a hands-on experiential approach coupled with the aim of working with partners to provide a service brings its own set of practical and financial challenges.

In terms of the organization of teaching, we have refined our approach to communicating with students to introduce the module. However, a minority of students do struggle to adapt to the format of the module across two terms with high levels of interaction and practice. Teaching spaces across the University have improved during the last eight years, but there is still a lack of rooms with the flexibility to accommodate workshop learning for groups of 35 to 45 students.

Regarding assessment, we must reconcile student expectations created in most other modules, where students primarily write papers and sit tests, versus our more authentic assessment method, that aims partly to simulate real-life situations. Some students expect fixed texts and a set essay or exam question. This module requires them to find resources and define their own question, which can lead to uncertainty and anxiety. Though it applies to a small number of students, reassessing students who fail the observation, and subsequently the module, poses another challenge. It is not possible for them to re-sit an observation. Currently, reassessment is by essay only with a revised brief prompting the student to reflect more directly on their personal experience of mentoring.

Another issue arises when mentoring partnerships break down or are disrupted. While uncommon, typically 5-10% of partnerships do not work out with students unable to complete enough sessions for a fair assessment of their skills. This can be down to a range of factors from mentees dropping out, personal problems, illness, or poor commitment from the mentee. We have further refined the process in recent years to support students whose matches gets disrupted, and we do everything possible to mitigate and manage this. These small groups of students work in pods of three or four to mentor each other in a round-robin style; we ensure mentee-mentor matches do not know each other well. Thus, they can catch up by completing at least six of these "backup" sessions. Observers make their assessments in the context of the disruption, although this is a great way to demonstrate the core skill of adaptability.

Finally, in financial terms, both teaching with maximum sized groups of 35 students and assessment through observation increase the cost per student of delivering the programme. With this in mind, we are compelled to review the observation element to consider whether online observation, a journal-based assessment or peer review can be used instead. With the growth of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, any non-live written assignment, like a journal-based assessment, needs to be carefully designed because the tools can quickly generate fluent, convincing pieces of written work to artificially demonstrate learning. To date, the programme has also been dependent on Visiting Lecturers with experience of teaching people skills in a workshop setting and practical coaching experience. Faculty resource has not yet been used to teach the module as part of the academic workload, and this is a consideration for the further growth of the module.

3.2 Implementing an innovative partnership-based working process with a funder

The relationship between the Business School and The Portal Trust has a long history that predates the naming of the School after the then Sir John Cass's Foundation in early 2000. Whilst a close relationship existed, the award of a grant by The Portal Trust to support the SEP was not automatic.

The proposal was over two years in development and went through an extensive process of verification and testing before it was presented and approved by the Trustees in 2015. A similar extensive quality assurance process was also undertaken by the Business School and University. This is a fully accredited module – not an extracurricular volunteering activity – and the proposal was subject to an extensive examination of its pedagogy.

In addition, the programme is resource intensive, which is why the partnership between The Portal Trust and the School is so important. Matched funding between the School and The Portal Trust was agreed as this is not a cheap or easy module to teach and put into effective practice (see Appendix 4 on costing). The external requirements include DBS checking of students as well as building a close relationship with each school and individual teachers to ensure that effective mentee-mentor matching. There is also the management of the expectations of our own students. Completing the taught workshops is step one but going into schools requires practical knowledge, resilience, and support.

These issues are discussed elsewhere in the report, but the risks associated with the programme were always at the forefront of the team's mind (see Section 4.2) and they required a transparent and open relationship with The Portal Trust. Whilst the programme is subject to the monitoring and evaluation annual report of The Portal Trust and the quality checks of the University, the programme was designed to have a feedforward control and process, rather than monitoring via feedback. The formation of a Steering Group, which meets quarterly, provided a "check and proceed" function that enabled issues to be openly debated. Comprising stakeholders from both the Business School and The Portal Trust plus external experts (see Appendix 2), the culture engendered was open and did not hide complexities; rather, it took a proactive approach to raise issues to seek solutions. For example, a member of the group raised the debate on "soft skills", and the programme pivoted to incorporate the more future-focused approach on "real and life skills" (SEP Steering Group minutes, 8 June 2017).

The relationship between The Portal Trust and the School was not a traditional, passive grant-received-and-report-back relationship. Instead, it was an active, ongoing and continuous partnership with both parties seeking to learn from this experience and constantly seek to improve it.

It had the reassurance of a five-year grant timeframe and a learning and evaluation structure that meant the partnership was one of two equals wanting to learn together. Issues of power imbalance and "hiding bad news" have never appeared in the partnership, and strong trust between the two organisations and teams has been maintained from the outset to the present.

Grant making by charitable trusts has never been under more critical scrutiny (Breeze, 2021; Eikenberry and Mirabella, 2018; O'Sullivan, 2021; Phillips and Jung, 2016; Saunders-Hastings, 2022). Critical perspectives have questioned grant-makers as imperialist reflecting a disconnect in the balance of power. The Lankelly Chase Foundation's decision to close for these reasons moved those issues from debate into reality (Beal, 2023; Butler, 2023; Lankelly Chase, 2023). The partnership model developed for this programme highlights how a relationship between funder and funded in the 21st century can be synergistic and bring tangible benefits to both.

3.3 Sharing knowledge and engaging with other academic institutions on a practical level to replicate and increase the scale of the programme

Sharing knowledge and learning with partners across the institution and with other HEIs in the UN PRME network using Creative Commons License terms for the greater good has been a priority from the outset of the programme.

The fundamental challenge for HEIs introducing this programme is that it breaks the conventions for teaching and professional (student and academic) services. Nearly all HEIs operate outreach/WP programmes separately from their academic-led delivery of teaching. By definition, a new concept requires innovative management and some form of pilot introduction as well as attempts to connect with, and learn from, similar initiatives run at other HEIs.

Partnering with Nottingham Business School

Nottingham Business School
Nottingham Trent University

Partnering with Nottingham Business School (NBS) was a logical step as fellow UN PRME Champions sharing a commitment to working with local communities and innovation in curriculum development. From a research perspective, it also provided the chance to test whether the model was replicable in other UK cities with social deprivation. NBS has a very different student demographic with more students from the UK and more from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Early discussions between NBS and Bayes were timely as NBS were reframing a final year module, Leadership and Employability, to integrate experiential learning opportunities to embed coaching and mentoring skills into the graduate toolkit.

This project resonated due to the shared values of improving social mobility and supporting community engagement given the NBS student base. It thus aligned with NBS strategic aims and seemed a natural extension to our tailored student-focused programmes, reflecting ongoing initiatives around the development of responsible leadership skills and enhancing employability skills.

At NBS, the module started out with students mentoring first years, before extending to work with a local Sixth Form College to replicate the outreach element of the Bayes programme. Five years into this ongoing collaboration, 210 students have taken part to date and 106 young people from Nottingham have been involved, demonstrating that the key elements of the programme can be replicated elsewhere in the UK. The team at NBS have also connected the programme to their association with the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) to offer students external accreditation of their coaching skills in addition to their academic credits.

We continue to meet bi-annually to share ideas and feedback on curriculum and project management. The next steps on the horizon include the publication of further academic papers (following our joint presentation at INTED 2020 in Valencia), sharing learning in the UN PRME network, and a commitment to extending the partnership to other business schools in our network.

Based on our experience of developing and managing the programme over eight years and that of Nottingham Business School over four years, there are two tactical ways to approach this challenge; they are not exclusive but do require collaboration between the academic and professional teams in the HEI.

External or Matched Funding.

Our partnership approach at Bayes has worked well matching the objectives of external funders such as foundations or trusts to educational and civic partnership priorities of the HEI. As highlighted earlier in the report, this has been driven by a highly collaborative, long-term approach. We hope this report provides important evidence on the value of this template.

Employability and the civic, socially responsible university.

In addition to exploring external partnerships, universities should always look to their own business case for developing this kind of initiative. Student employability is a critical factor alongside the growing awareness of demonstrating credentials as a socially responsible institution, actively encouraging social mobility, and living ethical, diversity and inclusion values. This also includes the involvement of teams doing outreach work in the university with a strong understanding of student engagement as well as partner networks in the local and regional community.

4 Next steps

4.1 Objectives

	Teaching	Programme	Research
Build external partnerships with schools to demonstrate our civic commitment to local communities.	Securing commitment to new forms of deep-end learning through growth of the programme and more on campus and online activity.	More schools recruited with long term commitment to the programme.	Deep-end learning value. Exploring the wider potential for social mobility through HEI curriculum innovation and the reputational benefits of the programme.
Raise aspirations: supporting the recruitment of students from local communities into the Business School.	Training Bayes academics and Visiting Lecturers and potential new HEI partners to deliver the programme.	Alignment with other initiatives at Bayes and City promoting social mobility. Extension of the programme into other Schools at City.	Research into the value of the model as a tool to assess the short to medium term impact of social mobility interventions.
Give greater and more effective support to first-year university students at risk of dropping out, especially those students from more disadvantaged backgrounds.	Using teaching innovation to identify and test enhanced support to students from diverse communities, particularly during their first year of study.	Working with Course Office and teaching teams to identify students more efficiently. Consider earlier engagement with mentors in the autumn term.	Contribute to under-developed research relating to measuring graduate outcomes of students from disadvantaged backgrounds and evaluation of interventions.
Provide a rich experience and developing skills that are highly valued by employers.	Ongoing review of curriculum content to connect learning outcomes to employability.	Resources secured and dedicated to connecting with professional bodies and external accreditation of student coaches to take forward into the workplace.	Follow up on data from alumni students relating to employment outcomes. Connect to evidence gathered from employers to demonstrate programme value.

As the programme moves forward, we aim to further embed the module as a flagship learning option to all undergraduate students at Bayes that can also be taught across the University. More work is needed to engage students on our finance courses. We also plan to expand to other Schools within City, University of London by offering the module to the School of Law, the School of Policy and Global Affairs and the School of Communication and Creativity. This will impact how we work as a team giving training and support to teachers in other schools, while maintaining relationships with secondary school partners from our team based at Bayes.

We need to review teaching resources more widely and consider whether, in the longer term, this is a module delivered by flexible Visiting Lecturers or part of the workload for full-time academics. New school partnerships will be needed to increase mentee capacity and additional university resources will be required to manage and coordinate this process. This level of expansion will require a review of how the module is delivered to maintain quality standards while exploring opportunities to manage the cost of programme delivery. For example, if journal-based assessment or blogging could work as an alternative to the observation model.

Externally, we will inspire other HEIs to take up the module through our networks, by targeting other University of London and regional PRME partners. This offers the potential for collaboration in school engagement and to increase the social impact of the programme. To achieve this and raise awareness of programme successes and the opportunity to link social purpose to the curriculum in HE, a revised communications plan is needed to showcase the module. We can also now look to award applications and discuss further partnerships across sectors.

Our Steering Group membership is critical, and it now includes alumni students who have taken part in the programme. In the coming year, we plan to recruit new members with recent experience of working in schools with Year 12 and 13 pupils.

Furthermore, we are collaborating closely with the marketing and student recruitment team at City to develop bespoke activities for our school partners that specifically target students from more disadvantaged backgrounds. The overall cost of living clearly has a huge and growing impact on decisions by Year 12 and 13 pupils, yet at least this is a decision that pupils supported by our mentoring programme can make with more information and practical experience of life on campus.

Importantly, as an innovative example of teaching practice and civic engagement in a university, we will also secure the academic footprint and legacy of the programme through the publication of a range of papers looking at diverse aspects of our work.

4.2 Risks for the programme

Risks are reviewed quarterly by the Steering Group, and there are some longstanding challenges that the programme continues to face (see Appendix 5). These range from concerns about the number of students electing to take the module to staff turnover in our school partners (and our own team), and issues relating to DBS checking as well as wider safeguarding concerns.

The module doesn't fit neatly in the established business model for the University. It relies on highly skilled professional staff managing complex relationships with schools, students and university colleagues. Expertise in coaching and teaching people skills for business is not prevalent among academic teaching faculty.

Outside the programme delivery, there are wider issues that will inevitably affect our future. University finances are under pressure as inflation further impacts undergraduate teaching resources, making it harder to support new pedagogical ideas that are relatively resource intensive.

We need to keep making the case about the value of developing these skills as vital assets for graduates looking to stand out from the crowd and progress in the workplace.

School partners are also being squeezed financially. Although we don't charge schools for this service, it is vital they have the right staff with enough time to work with us. Developments in Careers Education and incentives or regulation relating to HE access will influence this and may make it easier to engage with schools to work with A level as well as vocational (BTEC) students in curriculum time.

5 Conclusion and recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This report is an account of our journey from the conception of a fresh idea connecting educational institutions and learners at a critical transition point in the lives of young people to a review of our impact and consideration of how we move forward.

The team are proud of how we established the programme and worked through a series of hurdles to get it up and running. We were surprised to discover that we were doing something new to higher education given the potential to deliver benefits to society, our students, the institution and to graduate employers.

Trying something different is not straightforward; demonstrating how to prove impact over time and having so many beneficiaries is complicated. It can be simpler to focus on one or two closely monitored outcomes rather than capture all potential benefits.

It has also been critical to embrace change, identify and adapt to changing circumstances. Despite nearly two years of preparation, there were surprises and novel approaches that we have been able to adopt. The mutually supportive partnership between Bayes and The Portal Trust has made this possible and genuinely points to a way forward for this form of collaboration to drive improved outcomes in education.

The programme is now in an established position where it is a popular option with students (see Figure 12. Growth of student mentor numbers). It teaches people skills essential in the modern workplace, and it helps young people in schools and universities who wouldn't otherwise get one-to-one support at crucial transitional stages in their lives. We operate in multiple formats in schools, on campus and online to provide a rich experience for all participants.

And now we have a range of alumni, both mentors and mentees, making progress in their studies and careers that would not have been possible without this experience. We shall leave the last word with them:

> *"This module changed everything for me and has an influence on my work every day. I would like to be a full-time coach one day and have the opportunity to share my skills with colleagues all the time. It's good to help others and I'm sure it helps me."*
>
> **Mayur Patel (mentor)**

> *"My mentor was instrumental in finding the right university course and we've stayed in touch! I've just graduated this summer (2023) and looking forward to starting my first role as an IT Engineer in October."*
>
> **James Radley (mentee)**

The Ethics, Sustainability and Engagement (ESE) initiative started in 2010 was always meant to be time boxed; its aim was to be an incubator for projects that would either have a limited life or, if proved successful, would be incorporated into business school management functions. That is, a successful project would be integrated into the mainstream of the Business School and not its periphery, which is exactly the development we described in our interim report. In this light, SEP is now integrated into the wider DEI team at Bayes, helping to further enhance the mentoring experience and give more pupils the chance to engage with the Business School. On a practical level, this increases shared learning with other mentoring programmes such as the peer mentoring scheme run by the Global Women's Leadership Programme (GWLP).

SEP in 2023 has now become "mainstream" and has transformed from its project status into an integral part of the school's DEI strategy. In parallel, it is moving beyond the Business School into the wider University.

5.2 Recommendations for key stakeholders

While the report mostly looks back on the first eight years of SEP, this section looks forward to what we can influence, what can and needs to be done to build on our learning. We can address this question through the programme aims and through the lens of teaching and programme management. We, thus, call on colleagues, at Bayes and beyond, to take this project forward.

5.2.1 The Portal Trust and other funders

Long-term collaboration with external partners is essential to the future success and development of the programme. We call on potential funders working in education and social mobility in London to replicate matched funding models and more adaptive partnership working with HEIs and non-profits to achieve shared outcomes.

5.2.2 City, University of London and other universities

This model is a flagship opportunity to show how innovation in one School at City can work across the entire University's range of degree programmes. Given the strategic commitment from university leadership to exchange knowledge about employability and civic engagement, the priority must be to develop a longer-term resourcing framework that enables the module to be delivered across the University. This could include engagement with an INTO City partnership supporting Foundation level students. It's also a chance to work with other Schools on our fresh pedagogical approach showing a clear commitment to wider University work on DEI and Civic Engagement.

5.2.3 Bayes and other business schools

This programme brings the revived Bayes values and vision to life (see Appendix 1), connecting us to communities and providing opportunities for new research where there are clear gaps. First, we need to conduct more research around how to engage and support students joining Bayes from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds, who were particularly impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, in terms of delivery, the module is led by Visiting Lecturers with experience of teaching practical skills. To further embed the module, we should engage full-time academics, preferably with a background in coaching, in delivering the module. Finally, we are considering the development of the module in the context of artificial intelligence. Potentially, skills developed in this module such as adaptability and effective communication will be more important than ever in workplaces where more conventional knowledge-based tasks have been automated.

5.2.4. Secondary schools

Our secondary school partners are increasingly incentivised to provide pupils with experience of engagement with higher education. This change should be viewed as an opportunity to build multi-faceted connections with local universities and employers. Connecting careers provision to HE engagement would help to take these associations beyond the open day format towards something more meaningful for the school and university students who take part.

5.2.5 Government and non-governmental organisations

There are opportunities for future growth for this programme internally and externally. We have shown that other Universities are interested in developing the module and can make it work. In this vein, we will continue to disseminate outputs and insights from the programme through the UN PRME network. Considering growth within the Business School, insights from this programme can be connected to opportunities such as extending the programme to allow third-year students to be mentored by postgraduate or executive education students and alumni more widely. As universities are not the only institutions striving to learn about skills development in a changing climate and to educate socially responsible leaders of the future, we invite the Office for Students and other potential partners to explore how this model can be applied to their institutions and networks.

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Appendices

Appendix 1. Bayes Business School (formerly Cass)

In 2001, the Business School at City accepted a large donation from Sir John Cass's Foundation, which funds educational opportunities for underprivileged communities in London, for a new building and agreed to adopt the Cass name. Due diligence was carried out on the Foundation but not on the man who was the source of the Foundation's wealth, and what taking his name might imply. In 2020, it came to light that Cass worked directly for The Royal African Company, which was set up to organise and profit from the Atlantic slave trade.

Neither Cass's philanthropy, nor the passage of time will erase the suffering he caused and the persisting inequality that slavery has contributed to creating in the UK and across the world. The exploitation of others through seemingly legitimate business practices remains a source of wealth for many individuals and corporations. Business schools have a role to play in addressing this. Rejecting the name of a slave trader is a first step in that direction as the name signals who the Business School values and whose voice is judged as worthy of being heard.

Following extensive consultation with over 8,000 members of staff, current and prospective students and alumni, Bayes Business School emerged as the clear favourite for a new name. Thomas Bayes (1702-1761) was a theologian and mathematician – his final resting place is in Bunhill Fields, just across from the School. Bayes' theorem suggests that we get closer to the truth by constantly updating our beliefs in proportion to the weight of new evidence. This aligns neatly with the core principles of the Business School – that we should always be open to new information and act on it responsibly.

But as the new motto of the School highlights, the aim has been to "change more than just a name". Bayes has re-focused on diversity, equity and inclusion with a growing portfolio of scholarships for underrepresented students, alongside a programme of engaging initiatives to support inclusion. In January 2022, Professor Lilian M de Menezes was appointed the first Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and is focused on embedding DEI both at the School and in our relationships with the wider community.

Based on and for more details see: www.bayes.city.ac.uk/about/more/our-name-change (accessed: 20 September 2023).

Appendix 2. Governance and oversight

The partnership approach was baked into the project from its inception in 2015. A steering group chaired by Professor Paul Palmer meets quarterly to monitor the progress of the project and provide strategic guidance to the project team.

The Group includes experts from the world of business, education, and the academic community as well as the partner organisations. Our representatives from business and education have experience of managing and overseeing project connecting business with education, while our academics understand the university perspective as well as informing our pedagogy and evaluation.

The steering group provides an important critical perspective, a forum to discuss key strategic challenges related to the project and maintains a Risk Register that tracks issues such as levels of school engagement and student sign ups to the module.

Name	Role	Date of membership
Professor Paul Palmer (Chair)	Associate Dean and Principal Investigator (Bayes Business School)	Nov 2015 – present
Rob Compton	Programme Manager (Bayes Business School)	Nov 2015 – present
Richard Foley	Chief Executive (The Portal Trust)	Nov 2015 – present
Claire Molloy (Secretary)	Programme Co-ordinator (Bayes Business School)	Nov 2015 – present
Ben Butler	Student Development Manager (City, University of London)	Nov 2015 – present
Jenny Tait	Widening Participation Team (City, University of London)	Nov 2015 – May 2016
Martin Rich	Associate Dean for Undergraduate Programmes (Bayes Business School)	Nov 2015 – present
Simon Parker	Research Fellow (Bayes Business School)	Nov 2015 – Mar 2017
Reverend Trevor Critchlow	Rector of Stepney St Dunstan & Stepney All Saints Secondary School	Nov 2015 – Mar 2018
Peter Grant	Senior Lecturer in Management (Bayes Business School)	Nov 2015 – present
Alkis Tsikardonis	Alumni (Bayes Business School)	Nov 2015 – present
Annette Yunus	PhD student representative (Bayes Business School) s	Nov 2015 – Sep 2016
Amy Leonard	Transformation Trust	Nov 2015 – Feb 2016
Sarah Wood	Head of Student Inclusion and Engagement (City, University of London)	May 2016 – Dec 2016
Katie Slater	Grants Manager (Sir John Cass's Foundation)	Dec 2016 – Jun 2017
Justin Davis Smith	Associate Professor in Voluntary Sector Management (Bayes Business School)	Dec 2016 – present
Ben Copsey	Widening Participation Manager (City, University of London)	Dec 2016 – Feb 2023
Elizabeth Renshaw	Schools Partnership & Evaluation Manager (Bayes Business School)	Mar 2017 – Jul 2022
Kate Hursthouse	CR Manager (Slaughter and May)	Mar 2017 – Nov 2017
Marton Racz	Research Fellow (Bayes Business School)	Mar 2017 – present
Emma Hale	Grants Manager (Sir John Cass's Foundation)	Jun 2017 – May 2018
Gabriella Wickes	CR Advisor (Slaughter and May)	Nov 2017 – Jun 2021
Melanie Mullin	Interim Grants Manager (Sir John Cass's Foundation)	May 2018 – Nov 2018
Sylvia Malo	Schools Mentoring Programme Manager (Bayes Business School)	Nov 2018 – Jan 2024
Lesley Thain	Head of Education (The Careers and Enterprise Company)	Jul 2019 – Jun 2021
Bea Malleson	UBS Relationship Director (The Bridge Academy, Hackney)	Jul 2019 – Feb 2023
Jasmin Burnage	Senior Student Projects Officer (City, University of London)	Sep 2021 – present
Sinead Mac Manus	Schools Mentoring Programme Manager (Bayes Business School)	Dec 2021 –Sep 2022
Segen Tesfagiorgis	Schools Mentoring Programme Manager (Bayes Business School)	Dec 2021 – present
Leanne Allen	Senior Widening Participation Officer (City, University of London)	Feb 2023 – present
Lilian de Menezes	Associate Dean for Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (Bayes Business School)	Feb 2023 – present
Olga Woronowicz	Alumni and former mentor (Bayes Business School)	Feb 2023 – present

Appendix 3. Research design and summary of key sources

Financial performance and evaluation measurements, such as profit, are well known and established. But in the absence of a bottom line (as in our case the project has no financial objectives beyond ensuring it stays within the budget agreed by the University and Trust) alternative impact measurements are required. These alternatives have focused on how to measure social impact and what value has been created. Measurement tools such as Social Return on Investment (SROI) have been developed to evaluate if a project has not just met its objectives but how well it has done so.

At Bayes Business School, through SEP, we have created the opportunity to link service/community learning more directly to employability and to put student volunteering on the curriculum. This concept, shared with other schools in the UK and overseas, has the potential to transform learning and employability outcomes for students while enhancing the University's civic engagement outcomes. Such a long-term programme with ambitious aims to deliver lasting benefits to disadvantaged pupils, university students and universities themselves presents a complex challenge when it comes to evaluation and reporting.

Social value, whether that is a type of value (i.e. one that is neither public, nor economic) or value produced by an organization in a particular social location (i.e. not produced by either the government, or businesses), is often remarkably hard to measure as it can be very complex and ambiguous (Barman, 2016). Our evaluation framework reflects the difficulty business schools currently face in having to negotiate between acting in a more socially responsible manner (Ghoshal, 2005) and driving the financialisation of the university (Beverungen, Dunne and Hoedemaekers, 2009). Since the rise of "caring capitalism" (Barman, 2016), in which the care work required to deal with social inequities is pushed onto non-governmental organizations and private businesses, evaluation (and especially measurement) has become more important as a means of demonstrating impact.

We were guided by the framework developed by the European Commission around what is good measurement (Dainiene and Dagiliene, 2015). For measurement to be effective it must be:

- relevant: related to and arise from the outcomes it is measuring;
- helpful: in meeting the needs of stakeholders' both internal and external;
- simple: both in how measurement is made, and in how it is presented;
- natural: arising from the normal flow of activity to outcome;
- certain: both in how it is derived and how it is presented;
- understood and accepted; by all relevant stakeholders;
- transparent and well explained: so that the method by which measurement is made, and how that relates to the services and outcomes concerned are clear;
- founded on evidence: so that it can be tested, validated and form the grounds for continuous improvement.

As the basis to our evaluation, we used the SROI formula:

Impact = ∑ Outcomes – (deadweight + alternative attribution + displacement)

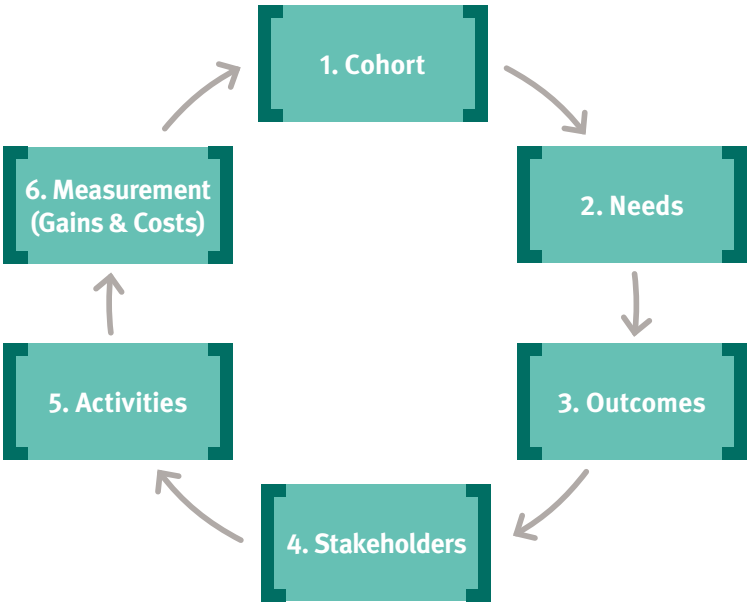
- Deadweight – the outcome that would have happened anyway
- Alternative attribution – the outcome that arose as a result of other interventions
- Displacement – the disadvantage or reduction in positive outcome, or social cost arising as a consequence of the intervention

But in addition, we had to also consider the drop off issue, that is, whether the effectiveness of our intervention would tail off over time.

The evaluation framework we have created incorporates the project team's social, political and moral values, which are most often made explicit through, and visually reflected in, the (re)construction of a theory of change (TOC) (based on Anderson, 2005). A theory of change outlines the overall aim and the intermediate targets in generating long, medium and short-term social change. To do so, it highlights the interventions taken that we presume to be eventually leading to the long-term goals (interventions). The model used to generate our TOC is shown in Figure 14.

The word that underpinned our TOC was – aspiration. For our students, this was linked to the aim of producing responsible citizens with a grasp of their civic duty. Students should become future entrepreneurs, managers and business leaders who were not just good at making money but could create sustainable ventures delivering quality services and be good employers. For the pupils, we aimed to inspire them to think outside of the box of low-level skills work. In 2016, this was set against the development of Tech City being created a hundred meters from the Business School and the explosion of job opportunities it brought. The question was whether for local pupils this would become a work destination to be the cleaners and auxiliary workers or something much more exciting. The resulting top-level TOC model (see Figure 15) starts with the headline goals of increasing social mobility and producing better managers. While it is important to aspire to these ambitions, we are aware that our programme cannot deliver this on its own and that many other factors will influence the long-term outcomes for young people and students who take part in the programme. In order to ensure the success of these steps of intervention, we examined the underlying assumptions and tweaked the interventions accordingly.

Figure 14. Model to generate Theory of Change



Finally, we have created measures for evaluating the achievement at each step of the way. As we designed this process and looked in detail at how we can capture true impact over time, it became clear that a blend of quantitative and qualitative information would be required to evaluate our concept. Educational evaluation since the 1970s has increasingly taken the form of measuring so-called "quality" against pre-set objectives, in line with broader changes towards the audit society. The introduction of New Public Management has resulted in education being governed by these evaluative activities rather than a discussion of its primary role in fostering a particular kind of society and individuals (Segerholm, 2010).

The shift of emphasis in the main approach of the Schools Mentoring Programme, however, makes qualitative means of evaluation more important given that pupils' achievement in STEM subjects in particular as well as in their grades in general become much more difficult to attribute to our students' mentoring activities. It is relatively simple to count how many mentors and mentees are involved over how many hours, yet we also want to recognise the quality of this intervention and try to understand what difference this makes. On the other hand, the kind of experimental design adopted by Resnjanskij et al. (2023) would have required access to quantitative data and a control group, which was not available to us. Case studies are also important in this context as they are representative of students' and pupils' experiences but also allow us to show learning from when activities do not go well. Looking at valuing as an open-ended process (Heuts & Mol, 2013), an evaluation framework, including ours, does not only evaluate the project but it also aims at making it better. Thus, the question should also be about who benefits (Segerholm, 2010) and how our stakeholders' well-being is served by SEP (Hostetler, 2005).

Data collection methodology

We considered against our measurement criteria various sources of data to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of our programme. We initially thought that we could construct the students who took the elective, i.e. the mentors, as a control group that could then be compared against the rest of the cohort in their year. However, it was not evident what we were trying to measure them against given our TOC. Firstly, our impact was neither about students achieving higher grades, nor realising better employment opportunities, as not all our students wanted to go on graduate training schemes with City institutions. Secondly, given the international profile of our students, many return to their own countries. Given the SROI formulae, we questioned whether trying to prove any claims with regard to the impact of SEP would be hard to justify as all the Business School students were in the top quartile by examination entry, which meant that they were likely to achieve good grades and get good jobs anyway. We, therefore, chose instead to undertake a mixed method approach involving a combination of surveys and follow-up interviews with the graduates who had undertaken the module.

For pupils, we again considered a control group methodology and using examination results as a measure. After consultation with teachers and reviewing our TOC, we decided for combination of reasons this was not appropriate. Our student mentors were not there as additional tutors or maths coaches and if examination grades did improve then this was an added value but not the primary aim of their interaction. We also did not want maths teachers to

identify pupils in their class solely based on improving maths grades, rather we wanted teachers to identify pupils who would most benefit from having sessions with a "near peer mentor" and help motivate that student to think outside of their local experience and expectation. We also had GDPR, and ethical issues associated with dealing with under-18-year-old pupils in gathering data, for SEP our primary evaluation method has therefore been an ongoing annual feedback report from teachers.

For the first year and foundation year mentees, interested students either apply themselves or are referred to the programme and apply. Maintaining an application process creates stronger ownership and commitment from the mentee early in the process yielding a more positive and productive experience. This process, however, means there is a self-selection into the programme. Self-selection is contrary to randomised assignment and, despite our best efforts, means some students who could benefit the most do not join because they engage the least. Drop-out rates among our mentees compared to the rest of the cohort who do not complete the programme is a somewhat misleading parameter to measure. Our programme, in fact, tries to guide the mentee to find the best solution for their path moving ahead. This might, on one hand, give clarity about the support available and empower them to find the relevant information on their own to succeed on their degree. On the other hand, this might help them realise the degree they have chosen is not the right path for them, and therefore they should leave the university or change study programmes.

The first years of the University Pathway were a mix of individual and group mentoring without a formal programme structure or were notably smaller cohorts of individual mentoring which were too small to compare to the much larger year one cohort, therefore comparisons would be difficult to draw. Since 2023/24, though, the mentee cohort has grown significantly. This presents an opportunity for the coming years to track potential trends between our mentee cohort and the wider first-year cohort. To date, tracking the impact of the University Pathway focuses on the student experience of working one-to-one with a committed mentor as well as trying to work with as large a proportion of WP and vocational students as possible each year.

In summary, we made use of a range of "hard" and "soft" measures divided into three categories according to where the source data come from: school pupils and teachers (mentees), university students (mentors), and project team and university. Our sources have included the following:

- Reflections from the project team
- Review of academic materials
- Survey of mentoring alumni
- Interviews with teachers/ schools
- Ongoing annual feedback report from teachers
- (Limited) data on mentee progress
- Interviews with Steering Group
- Wider data from Business School during the project
- Interviews with other HEIs in the PRME Network
- Academic sources
- Review of related programmes

There is also an important practical consideration as the evaluation had to be realistic and manageable within our resources. The key to achieving this was to build the measurement process into the design of the programme from including mentor profiles and the skills tree in our teaching to the assessment method and feedback collected from the various stakeholders.

In addition, continuous learning and reflection on the evaluation tools and methods was built into SEP from the beginning to allow for the representation of changes in the Programme that would influence the evaluation tools and outcomes (see also Section 3.2 with a similar approach towards funding). Moving forward, the following tasks and changes remain regarding evaluation:

- We must look for ways to capture the long-term outcomes of school mentees. This would include two sources, both of which are particularly difficult to obtain due to legal constraints. First, we should work with schools to capture, anonymised and aggregated, data on pupils' achievements and school leaving destinations. Second, to create the possibility for a truly longitudinal design, we would have to get direct access to the pupils' contact details, which seems impossible to accomplish with under-18s
- We need to collaborate more closely with the post-graduate surveys team at Bayes, again to increase the longitudinal character of the design, who would be able to share data on the longer-term outcomes of our university mentees
- We should continue to collect data on our mentors' post-graduation outcomes. Results of the first round of such data collection are available to us but monitoring is required to evaluate what and how we need to collect going forward.

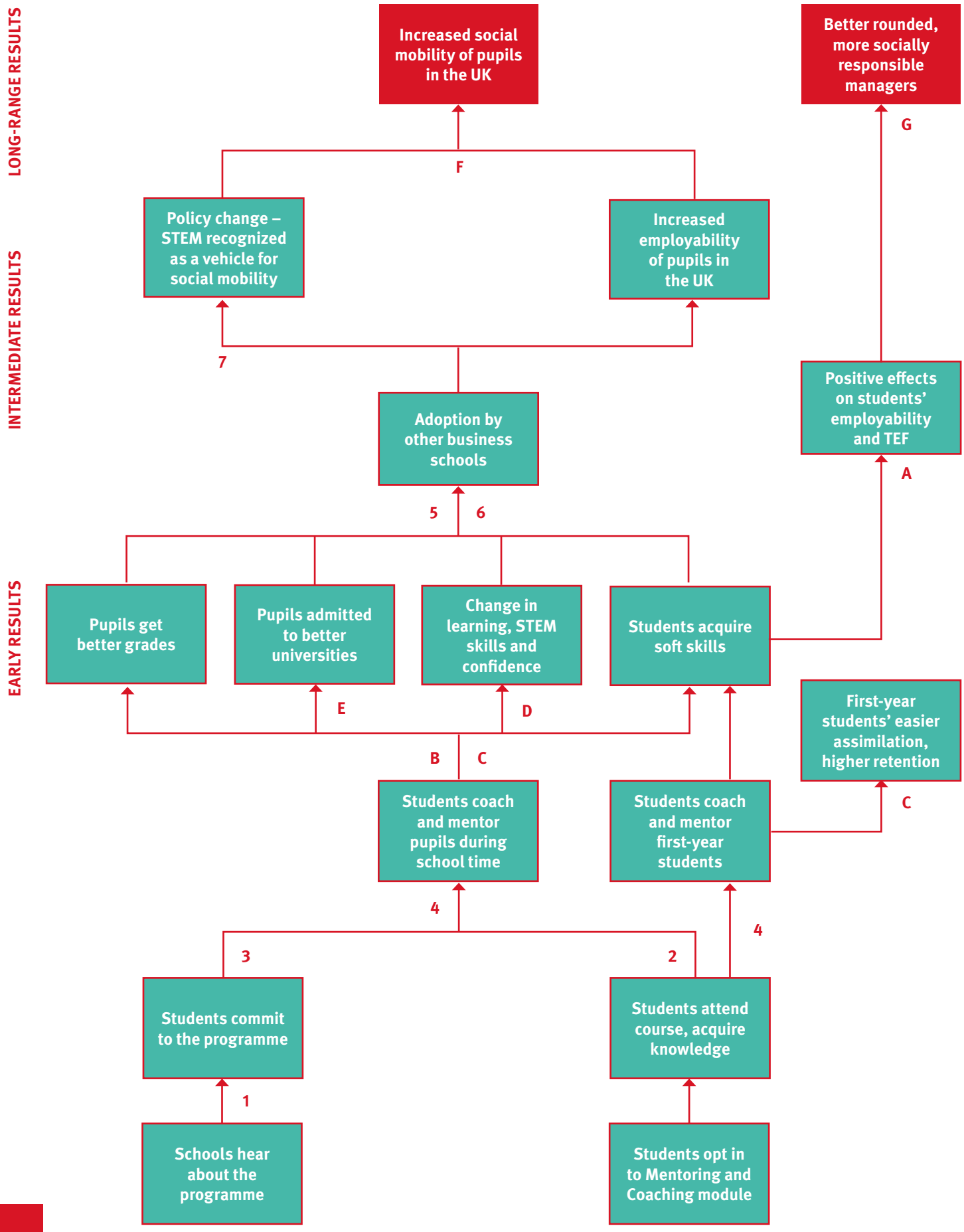


Figure 15. Theory of Change

Interventions

1 Discuss expectations and finalize details

2 Students are evaluated

3 Schools select pupils

4 Students and pupils are matched

5 Evaluate results

6 Write reports and academic publications, present at conferences

7 Write policy proposals

Assumptions

A Volunteering is recognized by potential employers as a differentiator.

B Mentoring built into the curricular activities of pupils leads to better outcomes.

C Mentoring by near peers leads to better outcomes.

D Pupils can learn STEM skills.

E Structural constraints related to social background can be overcome.

F STEM skills have increased value in a knowledge economy.

G Soft skills are required for social responsibility.

Evaluation

E1 Student's module grade

E2 Informal feedback during course

E3 Reflective essays

E4 Employment statistics of cohort

E5 Number of students who are actively involved in volunteering

E6 Tracker interviews

E7 Academic progress

E8 Number of schools, number of pupils supported and hours of support given

E9 Feedback from teachers and/or supervisors

E10 Assessment reports from mentees

E11 Initial and leaving psychometric tests and interviews measuring communication skills, confidence and aspirations

E12 Participant numbers

E13 Links to and feedback from other HE institutions and knowledge sharing (e.g. PRME), academic papers

E14 Project manager reflections

Appendix 4. Finances and resourcing

Over 8 years, the programme has been supported by a £635,000 investment from The Portal Trust, matched by funding from Bayes Business School. The Portal Trust contribution has been dedicated to building and sustaining engagement with school partners and support for the development and evaluation of the programme from 2015-2024. This investment equates to £50,000 per year in the first 5 years of the programme and £45,000 in the subsequent 3 years.

The matched contribution from Bayes Business School is financed through funding for Ethics and Corporate Responsibility, Civic Engagement and Student Premium contributions. Specialist staff working on the programme are engaged in wider activities relating to the UN PRME and DEI agenda at Bayes, so not solely dedicated to the delivery of SEP.

Projecting forward with allowance for inflation, programme costs for 2023/24 equate to £1325 for each school mentee (covering 8-10 sessions of 45-60 minutes).

Appendix 5. Risk management

The Steering Group monitors a rolling Risk Register to review and assess key issues relating to the programme as a key element in the governance of the programme.

This document has evolved across 32 meetings of the Steering Group, although our template has not changed in terms of key headings.

- Risk/ Issue – Programme Sustainability/ Operations Schools/ Operations University
- Category – School/ University/ All
- Status – High/ Medium/ Low
- Mitigation – Ongoing actions
- Quarterly Update

To illustrate this further, our current list (September 2023) of Risks is as follows:

Programme sustainability

- Team resources and extension into other schools at the University.
- Renewal and sourcing of additional external funding.
- Observer role resourcing.
- Insufficient teaching resource.
- Steering group representation.
- Strategic changes at Bayes Business School/ City.

Operations – Schools

- School recruitment, engagement and retention.
- Safeguarding issues – DBS, training and changes to protocols.
- Timetabling alignment.
- Pupil and student attendance for mentoring sessions.
- Pathway management – selection and engagement of school and university cohorts.
- Ongoing pandemic impact/legacy.

Operations – University

- First year mentee recruitment.
- Student workload across two terms.
- Safeguarding issues – student mental health and wellbeing.
- Student elective sign ups – numbers on roll.
- Student attendance and time for training (in autumn term).
- Sufficient time for mentoring impact (in the spring Term).

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