

Evaluation of key APP activities

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ROYAL
HOLLOWAY
UNIVERSITY
OF LONDON



Summer School

This aims to improve students' knowledge of higher education, increase understanding of their subject area, and strengthen confidence and motivation

Pre/post survey responses suggest a positive impact on all key outcomes for the students, with highlights as follows:

- 49% increase in 'Greater understanding of your chosen subject and greater subject interest'
- 19% increase in 'Confidence in own subject knowledge and ability to study it at a university level'

"...it's made me a lot smarter when it comes to applying to university because I've seen accommodation options, spoken to students actually attending the uni, had campus tours and I now feel like I know a lot more about all of the opportunities available like scholarships and bursaries"

Scholars Programme

The Brilliant Club's Scholars Programme delivers attainment raising activities to school students via PhD tutors and aims to improve skills and confidence for those taking part. In 2022/23 11 PhD research students from Royal Holloway delivered 23 placements to 320 school students. Overall, 460 students attended trips to Royal Holloway or worked with a tutor.

- 150 of the participants (47%) made 5% or more progress between their baseline and final assignment
- 76% of the school students who visited Royal Holloway as part of the programme agreed with the statement "I will be able to study at this university when I am older if I work hard at school."

RH Link

This 2-year programme for Y12 and Y13 aims to give potential students a real taste of university life.

Pre/post survey responses show the following improvements in key outcomes:

- Our Applying and Affordability session saw a 700% increase in participants' confidence in the application process for higher education and student finance
- Students were given an in-person subject taster session at the launch event on campus and 77% of participants showed an improved rating in their knowledge of the topic after the event

"The professors were friendly, and passionate about their subjects, which made it easier to learn, and take part. The subject tasters have made me feel more certain that I want to go university, and excited, rather than anxious about the change from sixth form."



Head Start

This free, two-day course for new undergraduate students runs just before the start of Welcome Week. Our short-term aims for students are for a better understanding of what to expect from university study and the practical steps they can take to succeed in their studies. Longer-term aims are to increase continuation rates into students' second year of study, and end of year outcomes.

Participants in Head Start were more likely to continue into their second year of study, and more likely to get a higher end of year score.

For those eligible for a contextual offer, the uplift associated with attending the course was even higher.

Maths support

Maths and stats support includes sessions available to Computer Science and Economics first year students for specific modules. The aim is to improve end of module scores for students studying these courses.

Looking at all supported modules over the past three years, in every case the average end of module score was higher for students who accessed the support compared to those that did not. The uplift to end of module scores was between 6-9 percentage points on average across the different modules.

"These sessions have greatly improved my understanding of maths, within a very short span of time."

"They have greatly increased my confidence on the maths part of my course, my teacher was very kind and taught us the content in a very understandable manner."

PEMENTOS (Peer MENToring TO Succeed)

This peer mentoring pilot involved students as co-creators/co-delivers and aimed to determine if this type of mentoring support was beneficial to the growing number of students from underrepresented groups.

Analysis of the pre/post survey showed statistically (Anova and Welch 2 tests) significant increase in confidence and decrease in measures of worry for our mentees relative to non-participants.

Mentees from BGM ethnic backgrounds reported a greater increase in confidence about socialising with their peers and managing their finances than white mentees.

Mentees were also more active on our Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) and had higher attendance than non-participants.



Summer Skills Placement

The Summer Skills Placement Programme (SSPP) is designed to empower RH students by improving their employability skills, building their confidence in professional settings, helping them identify their skillsets, and ultimately increasing their chances of securing a graduate role.

Pre/post surveys show the most improvement in the following areas, with an average improvement for all areas assessed from 3/5 to 4/5:

- *"I feel better prepared for a range of placement /graduate level recruitment and selection processes"*
- *"I believe I can effectively present myself professionally to an employer during recruitment and selection stages"*
- *"I am confident that my CV is at a high enough standard to send to employers"*

Santander internships

Santander funded 2 separate internship schemes in 2022.

- The Open Minds internship scheme for final year students with a registered mental health condition and/or social communication impairment
- The Employability scheme for all finalists and recent graduates

Students were paid £1,000 each on completion of the internship, which lasted 2-3 weeks. The aim of both schemes was to improve employability skills.

Qualitative data suggests a positive impact from the schemes, with many of the hosts continuing to offer paid work following the completion of the internship, and all employers involved in providing internships volunteering to continue to host.

Snapshot evaluation

- Promotion of the 10,000 Black Interns programme in 2023 resulted in 100 applications from RH students for this year – a 24% increase on the previous year.
- A quiet hour is provided at large careers fairs, where students with additional needs can attend ahead of the large crowds. Targeted communication is sent out through our Wellbeing and Disability & Neurodiversity teams to relevant student cohorts. A small number of students take advantage of this offering and have provided positive feedback.

Note on types of evidence



The majority of the evidence used in this evaluation is Type 2 evidence.

We are able to show that these activities are associated with positive results, based on either pre/post survey responses or student outcomes such as improved grades or rates of continuation of study. However, we are not yet able to provide evidence showing that these positive results are directly caused by the activities.

Further details about types of evidence can be found [here on the OfS website](#).