

Mentoring Scheme Review (2015-2016)

Aimhigher West Midlands



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Introduction

What is the Aimhigher Mentoring Scheme?

The Aimhigher partnership coordinates an annual programme of mentoring. Aimhigher mentors are university students who support a group of five school or college learners on a weekly basis, typically for between 12 and 15 weeks. The mentors deliver one-to-one and group sessions during the school or college day, and have access to a secure e-mentoring system which provides further contact opportunities and a range of learning and information resources for both mentors and learners. In 2015-2016 nearly 491 young people from 25 schools and colleges across the West Midlands were supported by 103 Aimhigher mentors. Young people are selected for the scheme because they have the potential to be considering university but come from disadvantaged backgrounds and communities that are under-represented in higher education.

Aimhigher mentors are role models for young people and help them by raising their aspirations, improving their study skills, increasing their awareness of higher education, and generally supporting their self-esteem, motivation and confidence. The Mentoring Scheme forms an important part of the wider Aimhigher programme in the West Midlands, which since the loss of government funding is now sustained by partner universities, schools, academies and colleges.

This report summarises the feedback received from learners during the 2015-2016 academic year. It explores the socio-economic characteristics of the learners involved and the impact of the mentoring experience on their educational and career aspirations. It very clearly and powerfully indicates that attending the Mentoring Scheme has a very positive impact, generating large positive shifts in attitudes to learning, knowledge and confidence about progression and motivation to succeed.

These learners will join a larger cohort of Aimhigher beneficiaries that will be tracked over the coming years to see how they perform in their GCSE and Level 3 studies, and if they do indeed go on to enter higher education. Aimhigher would like to thank the many staff and students at partner universities whose hard work and dedication makes the Mentoring Scheme possible. Thanks are also due to colleagues in schools, academies and colleges, for their support in identifying Mentoring learners and supporting their engagement, and to the parents and carers of the students, for their trust and support.

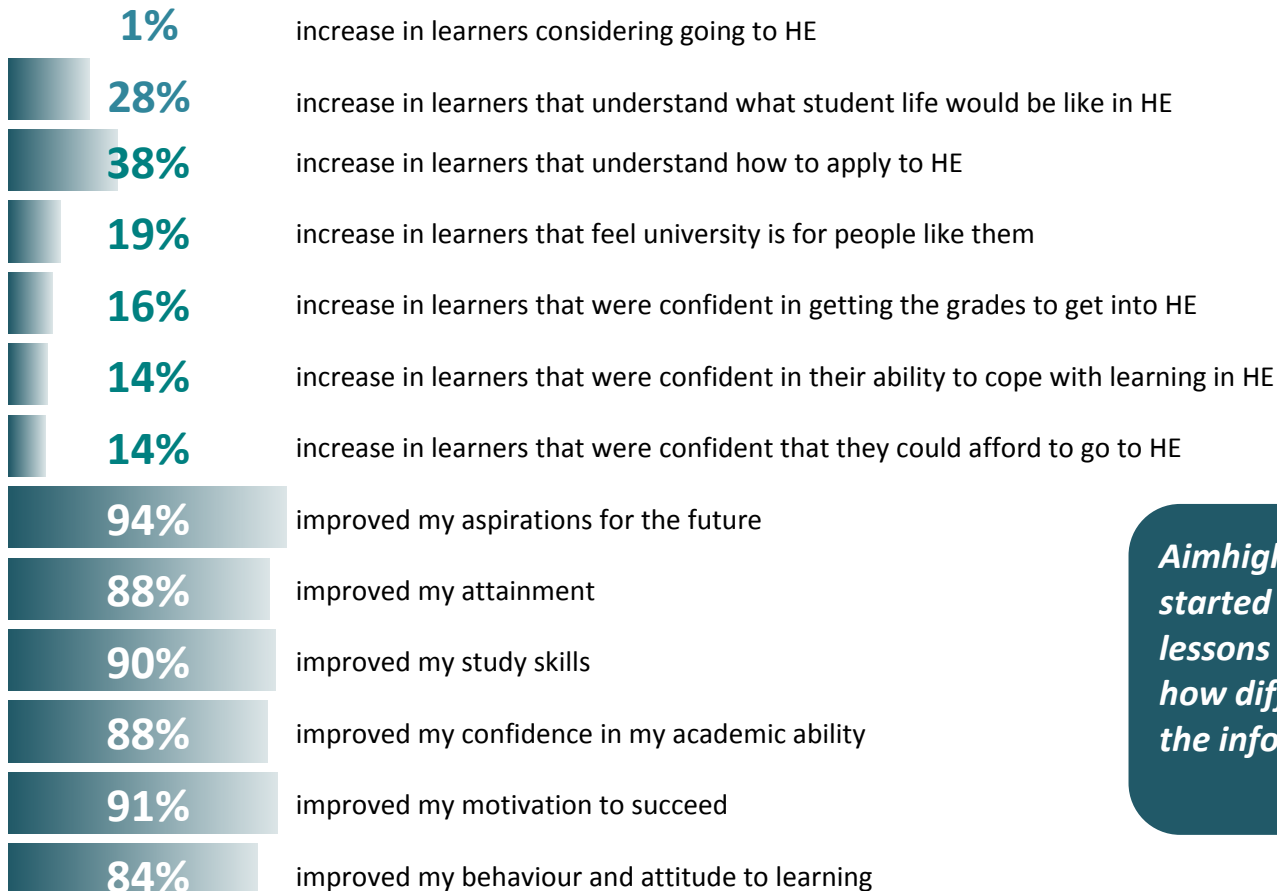
Executive Summary

During 2015-2016 the Aimhigher mentoring scheme achieved the following outcomes:

491 learners engaged in mentoring
4771 total learner engagements
10 engagements per learner

98.8% of learners were very satisfied / satisfied with the scheme

How did the scheme benefit learners?



Aimhigher has helped me a lot because before it started I was putting barely any effort into my lessons and I had never revised. Now I have learnt how difficult life will be with no qualifications and the information I need to achieve my future goals.

Methodology

The data used in this review has been collected from a number of sources:

Scheme attendance/engagement data was regularly monitored by mentors and used within this review.

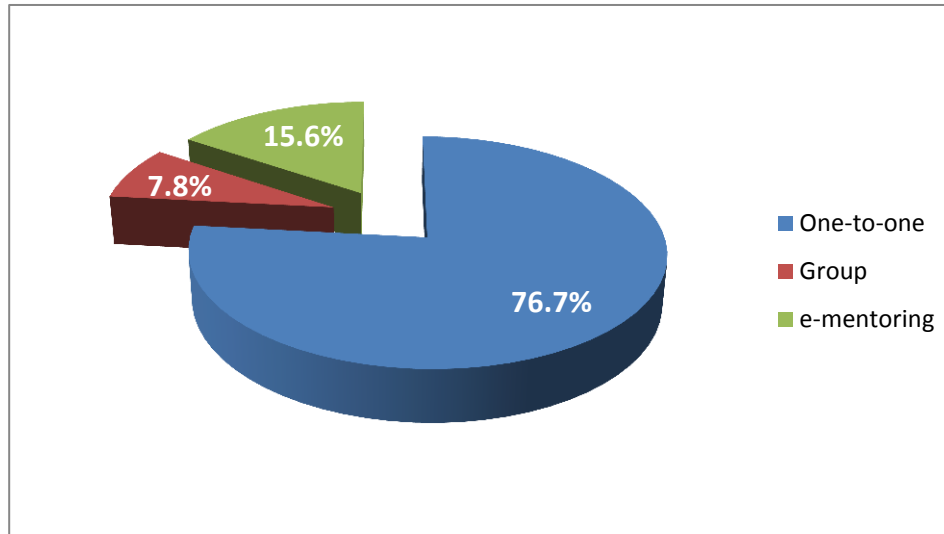
Personal data forms which were completed by parents and learners and used to identify how effectively the scheme targeted disadvantaged young people (where required this was supplemented with school/college data).

Evaluations which were completed by learners at the start and end of the scheme. These were completed either online or on paper. The questionnaires consisted of a standard set of questions which were repeated in both the pre and post event questionnaires. Questions aimed to identify learners' shifts in attitudes in terms of aspirations to HE, confidence towards HE and knowledge/understanding of HE. Other questions also explored learners' perceptions of the quality of the scheme.

Learner Engagement

25	schools engaged in mentoring
491	learners engaged in mentoring
4771	total learner engagements
9.7	engagements per learner (average)

Learner Exchanges by activity type

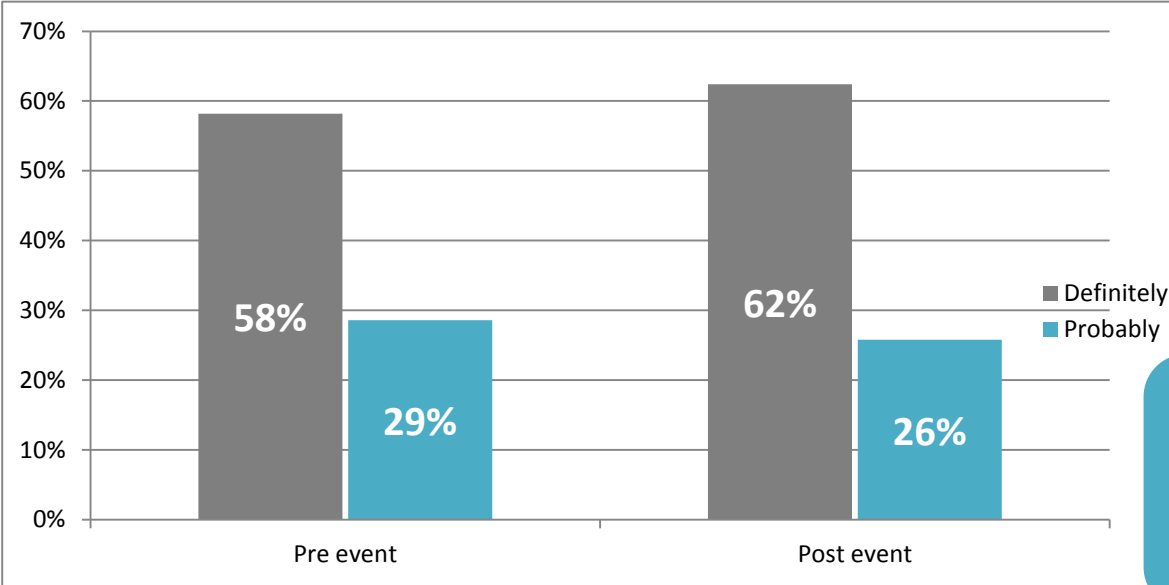


On average each learner engaged in 9.7 exchanges

What Difference Did it Make?

The following analysis only includes the responses of 399 learners who completed both the pre and post event questionnaires.

% I am planning/considering going to higher education before I am 30 years old



I have increased my aspirations to go into higher education.

I have been helped in many ways and consequently I am more interested about going to university. I have enjoyed it.

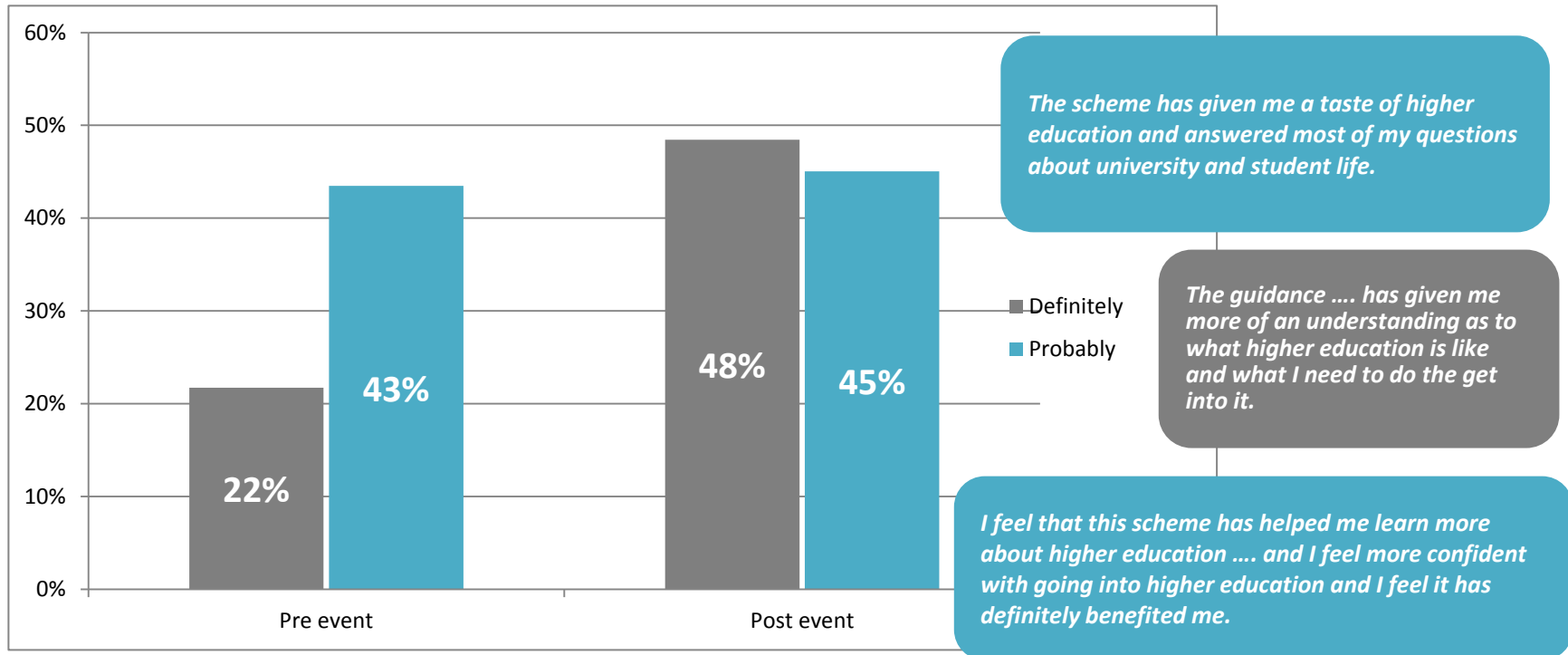
The thing that has worked well for me is that I now know that I want to definitely go into higher education and also that I also need the right grades to do so...

% I am planning/considering going to higher education before I am 30 years old

Year group	Definitely					Probably				
	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12
Pre event	58%	54%	52%	60%	69%	29%	29%	36%	24%	24%
Post event	62%	52%	61%	62%	80%	26%	30%	28%	23%	16%
Attitude change	4%	-2%	9%	2%	11%	-3%	1%	-8%	-1%	-8%

Post event there was a 1% increase in the proportions of learners that definitely/probably wanted to go to HE

% I understand what student life would be like in higher education

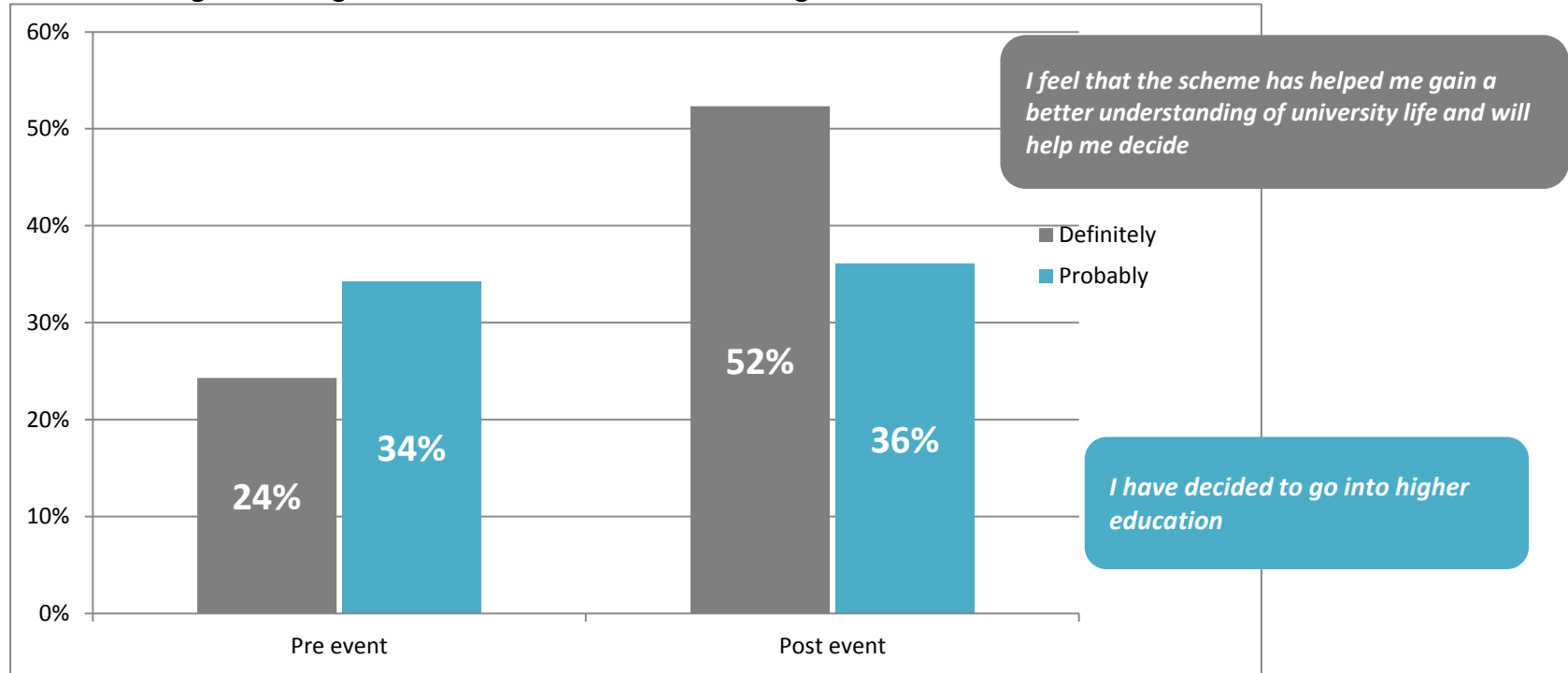


% I understand what student life would be like in higher education

Year group	Definitely					Probably				
	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12
Pre event	22%	22%	25%	4%	23%	43%	48%	34%	54%	42%
Post event	48%	48%	39%	46%	60%	45%	40%	55%	46%	39%
Attitude change	27%	26%	14%	42%	37%	2%	-8%	21%	-8%	-4%

Post event there was a 29% increase in the proportions of learners that definitely/probably understood what student life would be like in HE

% I know enough about higher education to decide whether to go or not

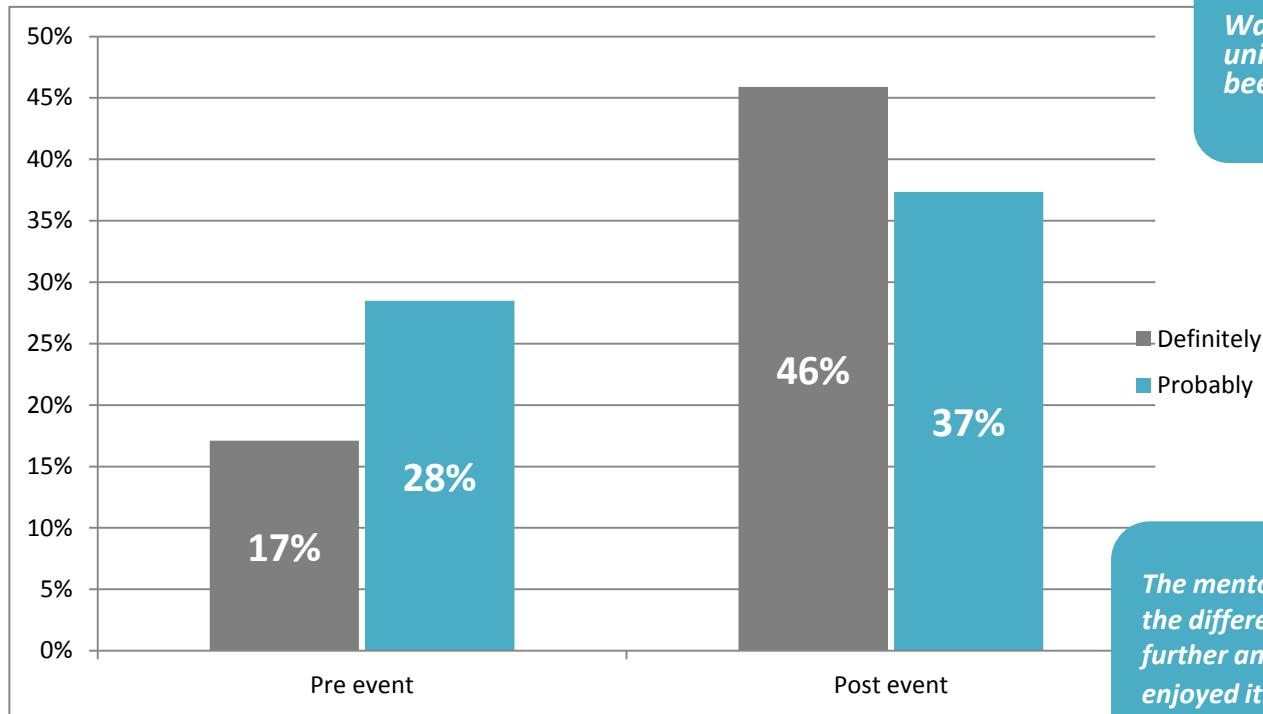


% I know enough about higher education to decide whether to go or not

Year group	Definitely					Probably				
	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12
Pre event	24%	20%	23%	23%	27%	34%	29%	40%	35%	35%
Post event	52%	44%	52%	50%	63%	36%	36%	37%	42%	31%
Attitude change	28%	24%	29%	27%	36%	2%	8%	-2%	8%	-4%

Post event there was a 30% increase in the proportions of learners that definitely/probably knew enough about HE to decide whether to go or not

% I understand how to apply to higher education



Ways in which I can apply to university / how to apply have been made much clearer.

The scheme has benefited me really well as it has given me more information on the process of getting into HE and the courses I want to take.

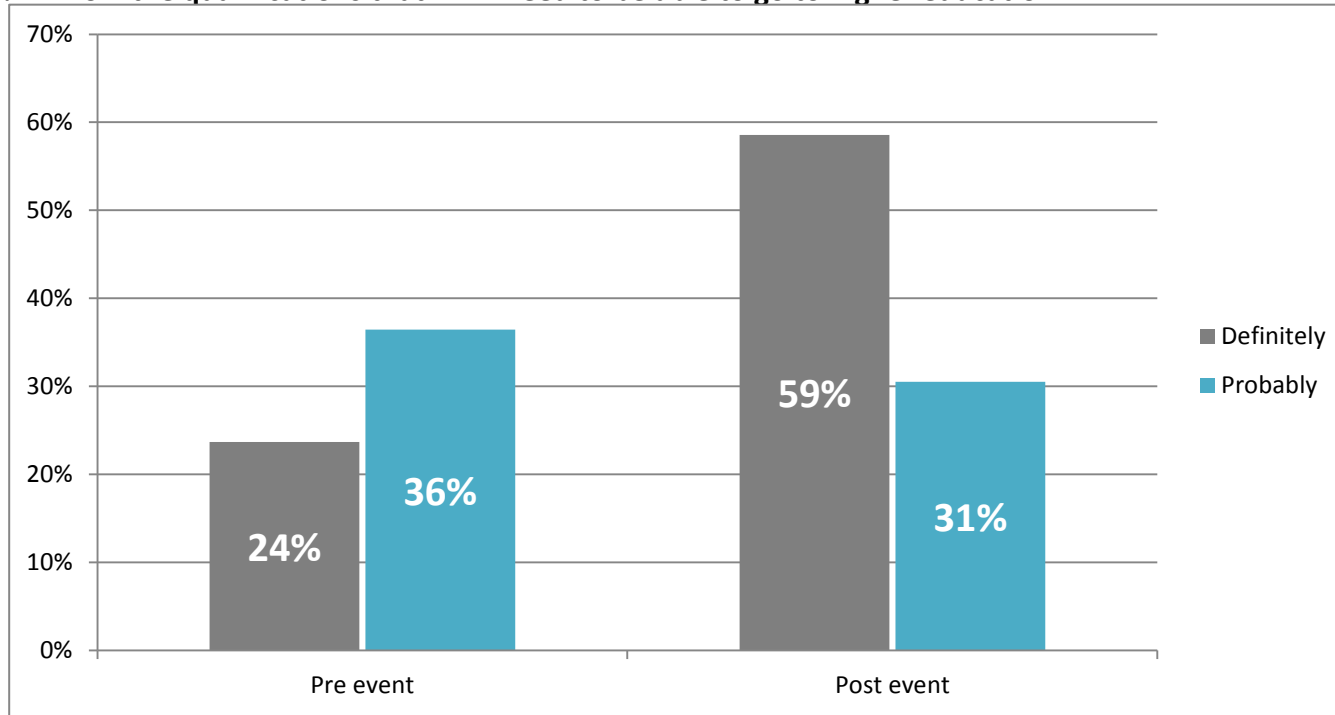
The mentoring allowed me to understand the different courses and ideas about further and higher education. And I really enjoyed it.

% I understand how to apply to higher education

Year group	Definitely					Probably				
	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12
Pre event	17%	17%	14%	20%	13%	28%	25%	22%	28%	39%
Post event	46%	33%	36%	68%	61%	37%	41%	42%	20%	34%
Attitude change	29%	17%	22%	48%	48%	9%	16%	20%	-8%	-5%

Post event there was a 38% increase in the proportions of learners that definitely/probably understood how to apply to HE

% I know the qualifications that I will need to be able to go to higher education

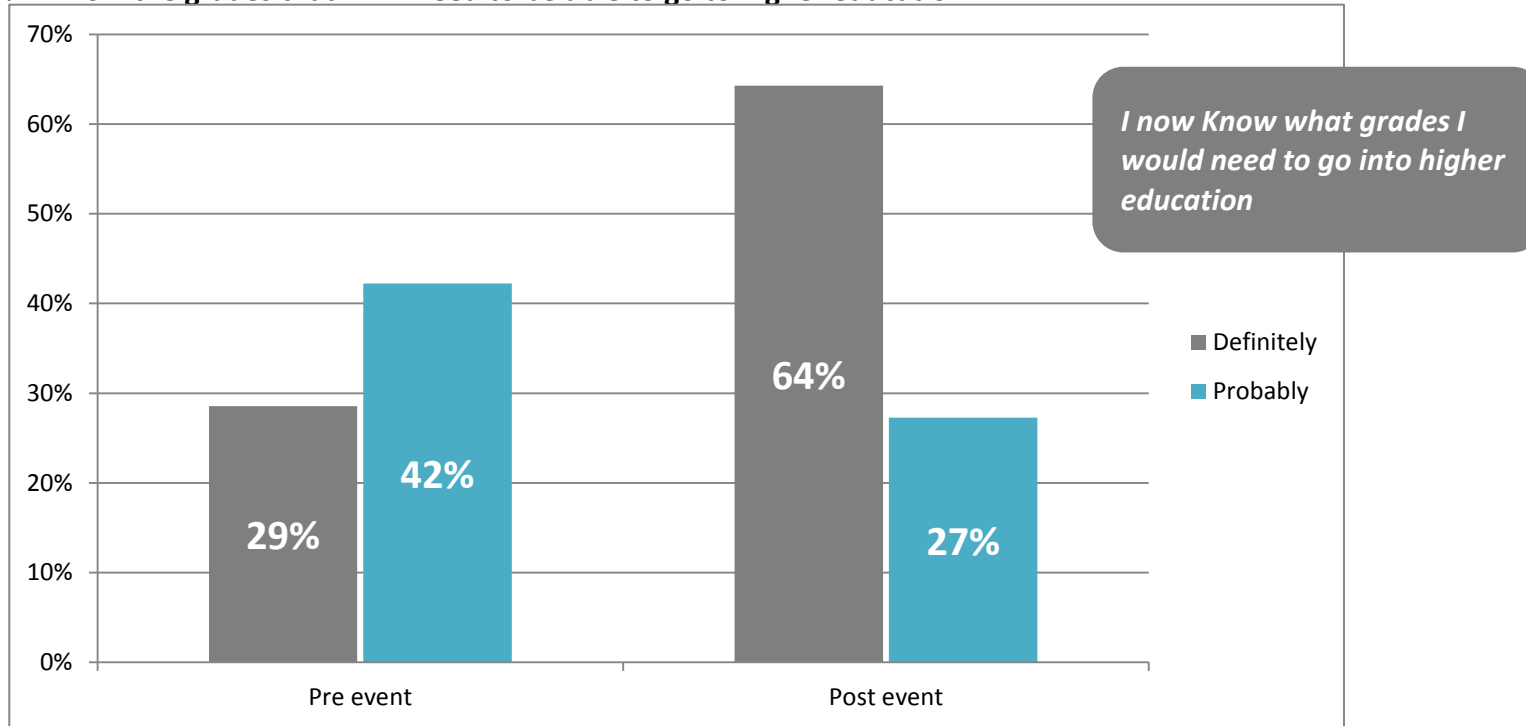


% I know the qualifications that I will need to be able to go to higher education

Year group	Definitely					Probably				
	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12
Pre event	24%	18%	20%	19%	29%	36%	35%	34%	46%	39%
Post event	59%	50%	48%	58%	76%	31%	33%	39%	31%	22%
Attitude change	35%	32%	29%	38%	46%	-6%	-2%	5%	-15%	-17%

Post event there was a 30% increase in the proportions of learners that definitely/probably knew the qualifications required for HE

% I know the grades that I will need to be able to go to higher education

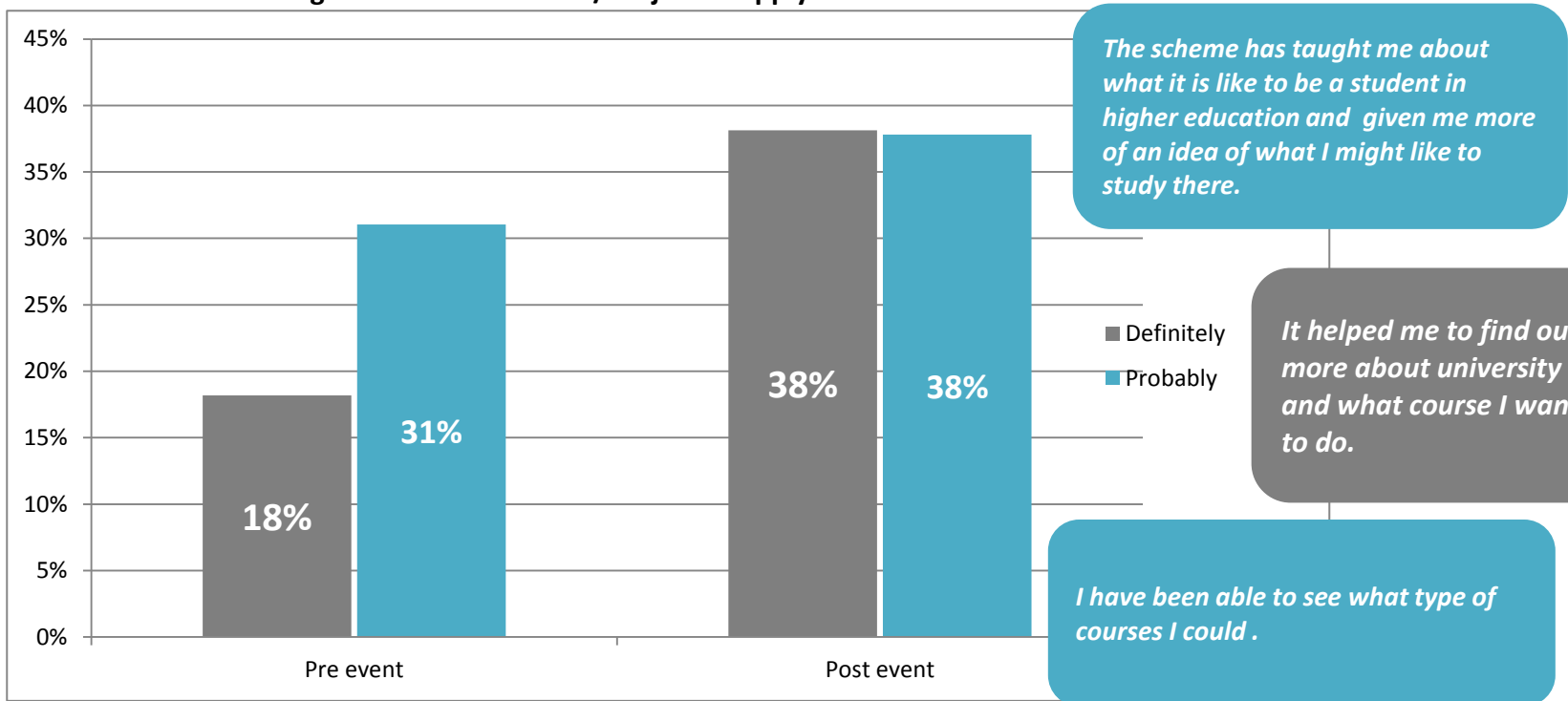


% I know the grades that I will need to be able to go to higher education

Year group	Definitely					Probably				
	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12
Pre event	29%	31%	24%	25%	30%	42%	39%	41%	46%	43%
Post event	64%	54%	56%	76%	80%	27%	35%	34%	20%	16%
Attitude change	36%	23%	32%	51%	50%	-15%	-4%	-7%	-26%	-27%

*Post event there was a **22% increase** in the proportions of learners that definitely/probably knew the grades required for HE*

% I am clear on which higher education course/subject to apply for

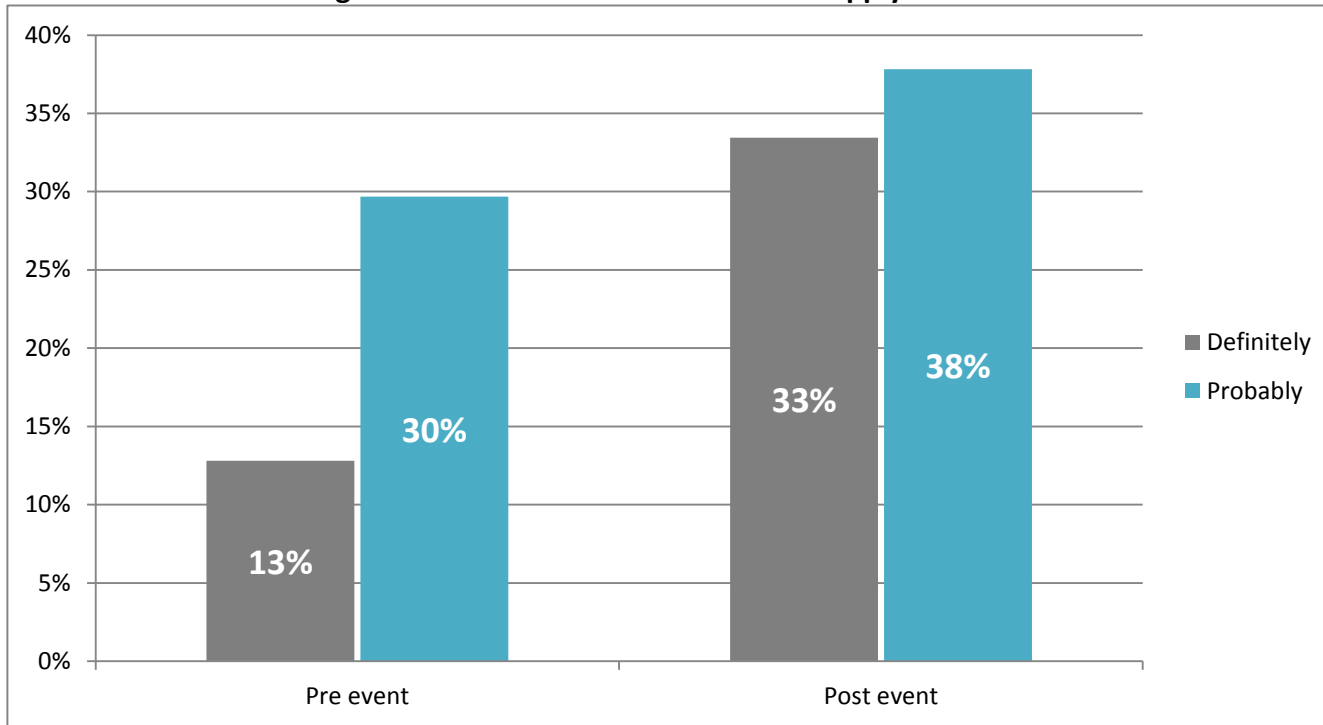


% I am clear on which higher education course/subject to apply for

Year group	Definitely					Probably				
	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12
Pre event	18%	11%	15%	25%	19%	31%	33%	31%	29%	33%
Post event	38%	33%	37%	44%	39%	38%	38%	37%	32%	43%
Attitude change	20%	22%	22%	19%	19%	7%	5%	6%	3%	11%

Post event there was a 25% increase in the proportions of learners that were definitely/probably clear on which HE course/subject to apply for

% I am clear on which higher education institutions I want to apply for

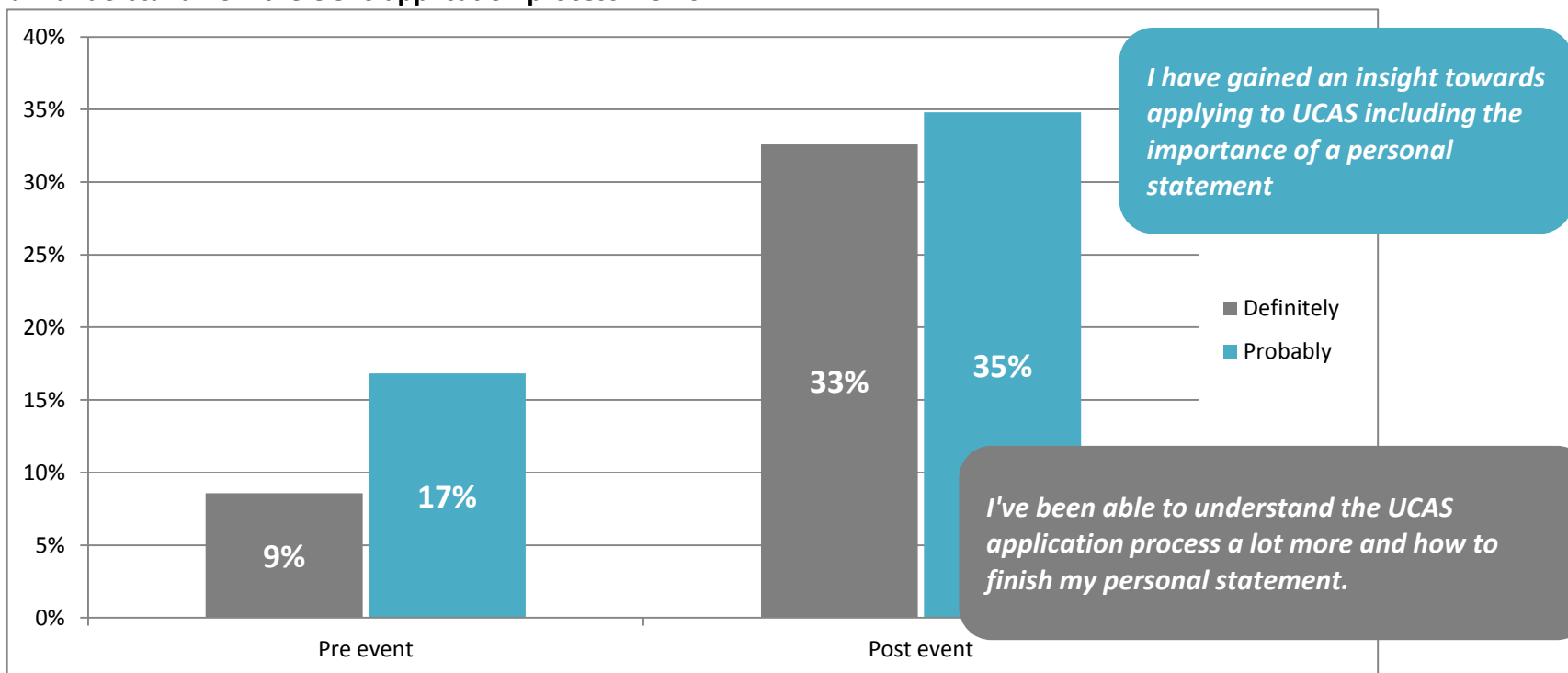


% I am clear on which higher education institutions I want to apply for

Year group	Definitely					Probably				
	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12
Pre event	13%	9%	10%	20%	15%	30%	29%	25%	24%	34%
Post event	33%	26%	30%	44%	39%	38%	37%	38%	28%	40%
Attitude change	21%	17%	20%	24%	24%	8%	9%	13%	4%	6%

Post event there was a 25% increase in the proportions of learners that were definitely/probably clear on which HE institutions to apply for

% I understand how the UCAS application process works

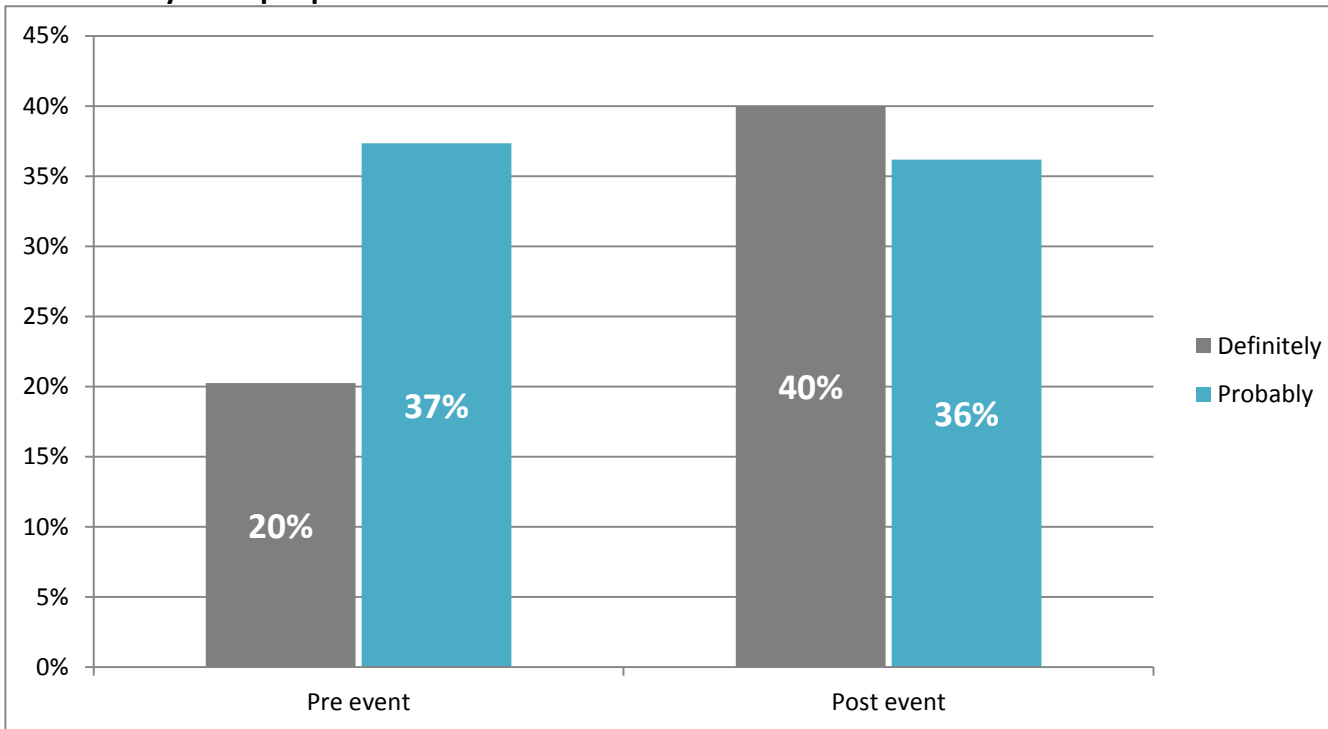


% I understand how the UCAS application process works

Year group	Definitely					Probably				
	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12
Pre event	9%	6%	0%	25%	9%	17%	12%	12%	25%	26%
Post event	33%	19%	23%	50%	46%	35%	37%	33%	25%	41%
Attitude change	24%	13%	23%	25%	37%	18%	25%	21%	0%	15%

Post event there was a 42% increase in the proportions of learners that definitely/probably understood how the UCAS application process works

% University is for people like me



% University is for people like me

Year group	Definitely					Probably				
	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12	All years	7 to 9	10	11	12
Pre event	20%	27%	10%	8%	23%	37%	42%	40%	38%	33%
Post event	40%	40%	36%	26%	44%	36%	38%	40%	39%	36%
Attitude change	20%	13%	26%	18%	21%	-1%	-5%	0%	2%	2%

*Post event there was a **19% increase** in the proportions of learners that definitely/probably felt that university was people like them*

What Difference Did it Make?

94% of learners reported that taking part in the mentoring scheme had improved their **aspirations** for the future

Also making me want to go into further education even more, being completely sure that is what I want to do.

I now know how HE will be like. I am now more interested in HE.

I think that I am more interested in uni & have a better idea of my aspirations for the future. I am confident that I will try my hardest to get into HE & definitely use the help I have acquired from Aimhigher. Also I have got more confidence in speaking to others and my mentor.

88% of learners reported that taking part in the mentoring scheme had improved their **attainment**

This scheme helped me write up a revision plan and this has improved my grades

The mentoring scheme has benefited me because my skills have improved which means I achieve better in tests.

90% of learners reported that taking part in the mentoring scheme had improved their **study skills**

The scheme has benefited me by improving my attainment & studying skills

88%

of learners reported that taking part in the mentoring scheme had improved **confidence in their academic ability**

The mentoring scheme has increased my confidence level, and helped achieve what I thought I couldn't

The scheme has made me more confident to do what I would like to do after I leave school.

The scheme has made me realise that I need to be confident and work hard to achieve good grades.

The scheme has made me realise that I need to be confident and work hard to achieve good grades. Also, the collaboration between the mentor and myself improved my confidence of putting myself out there instead of being afraid to do things like standing in front of a crowd and reading something out.

91%

of learners reported that taking part in the mentoring scheme had improved their **motivation to succeed**

The scheme has motivated me to achieve more in life and to continue with education as it will lead me into a clear future with ambitions I wish to succeed in.

The scheme has benefited me really well it has motivated me a lot more into looking into further education and has made me realise my aspirations are easier to achieve than I thought.

Motivation towards my current studies has gone up since I started the scheme.

My attitude and behaviour to learning has improved - by realising that that success is for everyone.

84%

of learners reported that taking part in the mentoring scheme had improved their **attitude and behaviour to learning**

I plan to increase my amount of revision and knowledge of other subjects even after my mentoring has finished.

Aimhigher has helped me a lot because before it started I was putting barely any effort into my lessons and I had never revised. Now I have learnt how difficult life will be with no qualifications and the information I need to achieve my future goals.

I do more past papers which has improved my grades.

It taught me all the benefits of going to university and motivates me to go into higher education and be what I want to be. It has also improved my behaviour and decreased my number of detentions

93%

of learners reported that taking part in the mentoring scheme had improved their **knowledge of higher education**

I now have a better knowledge on how to apply for HE and the benefits of it.

Learn't more about the course I want to study & gained an undersatnding of what university life will be like. My mentor was amazing!

I have more knowledge on what qualifications you need for a specific course. I have also begun to underand about finances and loans.

Barriersto HE

16%

post mentoring increase in learners that were confident in getting the grades to get into HE

14%

post mentoring increase in learners that were confident in their ability to cope with learning in HE

14%

post mentoring increase in learners that were confident that they could afford to go to HE

Learners were asked how satisfied they were with the mentoring scheme and findings are summarised below. Learners were asked to elaborate on their responses in an open ended question. Most learners (299) responded to this question and the vast majority of responses were positive (95.7%) and only a few suggested improvements (4.3%). The most prominent themes from learner feedback was that the scheme had provided them with a better understanding of student life in HE (22.5% - 77 comments), improved their understanding of future options (18.1% -62 comments), helped with school work/improved grades (16.7% - 57 comments), improved confidence (7% - 24 comments) improved understanding of how to apply to HE (5.6% - 19 comments), improved motivation (4.1% - 14 comments). Most improvements focused on making mentoring sessions longer or more frequent (7 comments). Quotes from learners are summarised below and throughout the report

An eye-opening experience that has provided me with an extensive amount of knowledge for my future education.

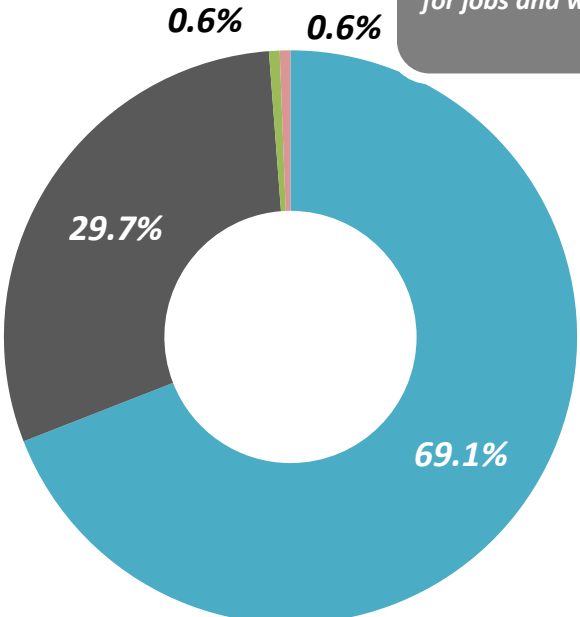
I have learnt a lot about aspects of university life that I was not aware of before and it has allowed me to see other options that are available to me

I have managed to create a personal statement, chose my uni course, get the info needed by recommended sites from the mentor and gain valuable info e.g. finance

I feel more confident about what I can do in the future, and I also feel like I have more options going onto and out of college.

I have now learnt about qualifications and how to apply for jobs and work experience.

The support has made me think about my future and the steps I need to take.



98.8% of learners were very satisfied / satisfied with the scheme

I feel like it's helped me a lot and made me more aware of what I can and can't do. Also I am now more aware about available jobs.

I feel a lot more confident in making decisions for my future and have a clearer understanding of what I need to do.

The scheme has taught me what to do after school and has also helped me with my personal statement and shown me how to give in the best course work I can.

■ Very Satisfied ■ Satisfied ■ Dissatisfied ■ Very Dissatisfied

This scheme has benefited me a lot, it has shown me a lot of different career pathways that I can take.

I feel my mentor understood how I felt and opened my eyes to new opportunities.

Before I came into the mentoring scheme I didn't know what I wanted to do when I left school but now I have some idea about it..

