

2020 | 21



THE YEAR IN BRIEF



A VIEW FROM THE TOP

"Aimhigher West Midlands works to support young people to make informed decisions about their future educational and career choices, regardless of their background. The 2020/2021 academic year was particularly challenging for all of us and ensuring young people were supported has been at the forefront of our approach. The Aimhigher partnership worked hard with our stakeholders, schools and local communities to respond to school closures, delivering a blended offer and creating new and innovative activities. This review is a celebration of the hard work and achievements of everyone that makes our unique partnership possible. The resilience and commitment shown by all in the education sector has been exemplary and we would like to thank everyone involved."



Baljinder Rana,
Aimhigher West Midlands Manager



WHO WE ARE



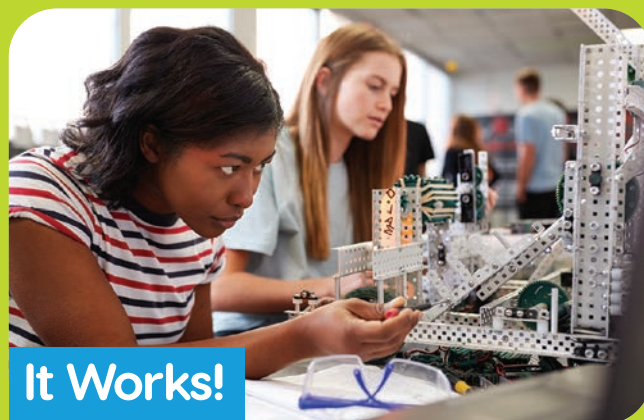
Aimhigher West Midlands is a partnership of universities, schools and colleges who work together to improve social mobility by widening participation in all forms of higher education.

Based at some of the region's leading universities and colleges, a team of Aimhigher staff support our programmes working with hundreds of colleagues in schools, careers organisations, charities, and employers. Aimhigher inspire, inform and encourage young people to think about their future educational and career choices.

We help young people to:

- ➊ Become motivated and confident about their learning and career progression
- ➋ Explore the world of higher education and what it might mean for them
- ➌ Make informed decisions about their future

We provide a vast range of activities to help young people explore higher education and how it might help to fulfil their career ambitions. Every week hundreds of young people benefit from our work, exploring campuses, working with academics and being mentored by current and former university students.



Our research shows that the students we work with have more aspirational career plans and are more motivated to succeed. Aimhigher students that engaged within one or more Aimhigher activities were 1.5 times more likely to enter higher education than young people from similarly disadvantaged backgrounds who did not.

Aimhigher helps to address many barriers that young people face in terms of progressing to HE by increasing their knowledge in higher education and dispelling common myths students may believe about higher education. Subsequently, students report that they are now more likely to progress to higher education.

Some of the wider benefits reported include improvements in learners' behaviour, school attendance, confidence, motivation and school attainment, all of which could help to increase the likelihood of future progression to higher education.

The 2020/21 academic year was another challenging one with school closures, lockdowns and virtual working but we are proud to share that we were still able to support young people across the West Midlands.

IN 2020/21 WE...

WORKED WITH

141



REGIONAL
SECONDARY
SCHOOLS AND
COLLEGES

SUPPORTED

22,101

YOUNG
PEOPLE



SUPPORTED

328

PARENTS
& CARERS



SUPPORT FOR PARENTS AND CARERS



IN 2020/21 WE DELIVERED A SERIES OF WEBINARS TO SUPPORT OVER **247** PARENTS AND CARERS OF OUR YOUNG PEOPLE. THESE WEBINARS INCLUDED TOPICS SUCH AS APPRENTICESHIPS, STUDENT FINANCE AND THE BENEFITS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.

MENTORING

ENABLED

25

UNDERGRADUATE
AND GRADUATE
MENTORS TO
SUPPORT **157**
STUDENTS



SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS AND ADVISERS

AIMHIGHER
CONFERENCE **5**
TALKS **26** ATTENDEES



EVENTS

DELIVERED OVER



800

ACTIVITIES

INCLUDING:

187



MASTERCLASSES
FOR **11,961**
STUDENTS

4

CAMPUS
VISITS FOR
OVER **145**
STUDENTS

WE ALSO RAN VIRTUAL
CAMPUS VISITS WHERE
LEARNERS WERE
UNABLE TO TRAVEL TO
A UNIVERSITY CAMPUS.



REVISION
RESIDENTIALS FOR

70



STUDENTS

ENGAGED

325



STUDENTS
WITH THE MYTUTOR
PROGRAMME

ENGAGED

1,142



STUDENTS WITH
THE SPEAK OUT
CHALLENGE AND
RAN A VIRTUAL
SPEAK OUT
CHALLENGE FINAL
TO SUPPORT OUR
LEARNERS WITH
THEIR PUBLIC
SPEAKING AND
CONFIDENCE.

HIGHLIGHTS

GET AHEAD:

AIMHIGHER MAGAZINE VOLUME 2

Earlier this year we released the second edition of our Aimhigher magazine: Get Ahead. Why not share this resource full of useful and insightful articles with your learners? Our articles cover a range of topics such as future careers, studying languages, getting motivated and a graduate spotlight from a Junior Doctor.

UNIFEST 2021

We delivered a range of virtual and on-campus events for our summer schools this year, supporting 151 learners as they explored higher education and gained insight into university life. Students took part in a wide range of activities including subject masterclasses, workshops and engaged with lecturers and student ambassadors from universities across the West Midlands.

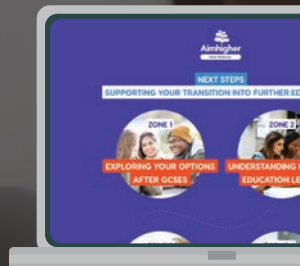


UniFest helped me gain knowledge on courses at university and what life would be like.

NEXT STEPS PLATFORM

We recently launched our brand new online platform, Next Steps, which aims to support learners transitioning from year 11 into further education. Divided into five zones, learners can find support in exploring their options after GCSEs, applying to college or sixth form, how to gain life skills as young adults and much more.

www.nextsteps.aimhigherwm.ac.uk



STUDENT VOICE

With representatives from secondary schools across the West Midlands, we empowered students as they took part in our Student Voice programme. Student Voice members took part in workshops, gained new skills and learnt how to create positive change.



The Student Voice Programme with Aimhigher has given me such a confidence boost and it's proven to me that even us young adults have a voice.



FUTURE PLANS

As schools return for the 2021/22 academic year, the Aimhigher partnership will continue to deliver a blended approach for our activities and events. We will offer a range of virtual, in-school and on-campus activities which can be tailored to meet individual school and college needs.

WHAT LEARNERS SAY...



It has given me such a confidence boost.



It has given me a clearer idea of life at university and disproved the stereotypes.



I enjoyed being able to participate in the event and expand my knowledge.



Aimhigher has really helped me to understand what I want to do when I'm older and what paths I have available to me.



It helped me decide I definitely want to go to uni.



I found the event very engaging and useful.

GET INVOLVED

Aimhigher West Midlands are your single point of contact for higher education outreach in the region. Don't hesitate to get in touch for support and email us at aimhigher@contactts.bham.ac.uk.

You can book Aimhigher activities on our website:

www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/search-for-activities

Simply type in the name of your school or college to view all of the upcoming events and activities available.

Chat to us online

The Aimhigher team are still available to chat online and answer questions. If young people or their parents/carers have questions about school, college or higher education - our team are available to help!

www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk/ask

CONTACT US

For more information about Aimhigher, visit our website www.aimhigherwm.ac.uk

Email us: aimhigher@contacts.bham.ac.uk



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Aimhigher West Midlands



Uni Connect
Programme

