

February 2016/02

Special initiative

Monitoring report

This report sets out the findings of the first year of monitoring of the National Networks for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO) scheme.

This report is for information

NNCO monitoring 2014-15 report

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To	Heads of HEFCE-funded higher education institutions Heads of HEFCE-funded further education colleges
Of interest to those responsible for	Widening Participation
Reference	2016/02
Publication date	February 2016
Enquiries to	Gemma Cadogan and Alex Lewis, tel 0117 931 7410, email cadoganlewis.jobshare@hefce.ac.uk

Executive summary

1. This report sets out the findings of the first year of monitoring of the National Networks for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO) scheme. The monitoring exercise sought to understand the progress that local networks, national networks and network projects had made over the first funded period of the scheme, which covered January 2015 to September 2015.
2. The NNCO scheme was established with £22 million of funding made available by the Government in 2014-15 to create networks which would bring together higher education institutions (HEIs) and further education colleges (FECs), to enable their individual outreach activities to be co-ordinated for the benefit of all state-funded secondary schools and colleges in England. Co-ordination is managed by a Single Point of Contact (SPOC) appointed by each network, who acts as the main liaison point for schools and colleges in the network's area. Each network is also expected to create and maintain a website which promotes the outreach activity offered by network members.
3. The scheme was funded at £11 million each year between January 2015 and December 2016.
4. The scheme has funded 34 local and four national or wider regional networks, which between them cover over 97 per cent of state-funded secondary academies, colleges, free schools and local authority maintained schools. About half of the networks are new, with the other half extending the activity of existing collaborative partnerships. A number of projects have also been funded which seek to explore delivering outreach in particular geographies (for example rural and coastal areas), in new contexts (for example encouraging progression to higher apprenticeships) or through new means.
5. Networks report significant work to co-ordinate the outreach offer of network partners. Activity 'audits' have been carried out enabling SPOCs to understand the types of activity offered by partners, where this is duplicated and where there are gaps. Similar work has been undertaken to establish which schools received outreach, sometimes from many partners, and which had little or none. National and wider regional networks have done work to understand and promote the opportunities to broaden their reach through local networks, thus ensuring that their specific expertise can be shared widely across the country.

6. Virtually all networks report that they have launched a website, and all have been actively promoting their offer to local schools and colleges. Schools have welcomed the proactive and co-ordinated approach offered by networks.

7. There have been challenges in establishing the networks. The timescale in which networks were expected to become established and active was considered very short, given issues relating to appointing SPOCs, building new or extended networks or adapting existing partnerships to accommodate the NNCO model. The funding timeframe of two years was also considered challenging, with concerns expressed over sustainability, and some issues relating to network partner, and indeed school and college, buy-in to a scheme which could be short-lived. The model used to allocate funding presented difficulties to some networks, although others' members have accepted pooling and other mechanisms to extend the use of their allocation across the network.

8. An unlooked-for gain from the NNCO scheme has been the opportunity for networks to work with other local partners, for example local authorities, local enterprise partnerships and third-sector bodies with an interest in progression to higher education and careers education. Existing partnerships often had these relationships in place, but the extension of collaboration and co-ordination offered through the NNCO scheme has broadened this ability to connect, particularly in new networks.

9. We expected national networks to work with and through local networks to broaden the scope of their work, and this is happening. However, a further gain from the scheme has been the capacity and willingness of local networks to work together across regions. This has brought opportunities to share effective practice in widening participation, as well as tangible benefits such as joint development of resources and wider co-ordination of outreach to schools and colleges.

Introduction

10. This report sets out the findings of the first-year monitoring of the National Networks for Collaborative Outreach (NNCO) scheme. The monitoring exercise sought to understand the progress that local networks, national networks and network projects had made over the first funded period of the scheme, which covered January 2015 to September 2015. The monitoring report sets out how networks are seeking to achieve the aims of the scheme, how they are organised and how they have used allocated funds. It also reports on the networks' perceptions of the benefits and challenges of the scheme and their planned approaches to sustainability.

11. The NNCO scheme is funded until December 2016. The second, and final, monitoring report will be issued early in 2017.

Background and overview of scheme

12. In November 2013, the Government announced funding of £25 million for the development of a national outreach programme¹. The purpose of the programme was to support collaborative approaches in the delivery of higher education (HE) outreach activity to all state-funded secondary schools and colleges in England. The funding was subsequently confirmed in the Government's grant letter to HEFCE in February 2014².

13. A call for proposals and indicative allocations for the programme was published in June 2014. This confirmed that £22 million would be delivered over two years to establish the National Networks for Collaborative Outreach scheme. The remaining £3 million would be used to develop a national student tracking system, through the roll-out of the Higher Education Access Tracker service³.

14. The funding period for the scheme ran from January 2015 until December 2016. A primary aim of the scheme was to simplify, and to ensure that all state-funded secondary schools and colleges understood, how they could access HE outreach activity. The aim was to be achieved through establishing networks for collaborative outreach which incorporated local single points of contact (SPOCs) for HE outreach throughout England. The purpose of the funding was to support the infrastructure underpinning collaboration which would thus enable the co-ordination of existing outreach activity. The NNCO funding enabled institutions to enhance existing outreach networks, and to develop new networks where these did not exist.

15. The sector responded constructively to the call, and we were able to confirm funding to 34 local networks in January 2015. Covering the whole of England, these networks operate at the local level, serving schools and colleges in their vicinity.

16. As well as local networks, we funded a number of networks and projects operating at the national or wider regional level. These offer a particular approach to specific aspects of widening participation and cover:

- looked-after children

¹ See

www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/cm201314/cmhansrd/cm131128/wmstext/131128m0001.htm.

² See www.hefce.ac.uk/news/newsarchive/2014/Name,93996,en.html.

³ See <http://heat.ac.uk/>

- adult and part-time learners
- advice to students wishing to progress to Oxbridge
- resources to support teachers in helping students progress to selective institutions
- co-ordination between the three existing London networks (assisted through a pan-London network)
- employer-based learning
- students progressing into higher apprenticeships.

17. An expectation placed on the national and wider regional networks is that they work with, and in some cases through, local networks to ensure that links with schools and colleges are known and co-ordinated at the local level. This also ensures that effective practice, materials and resources are shared between all networks.

18. Early in the scheme, we identified the importance of location-specific approaches to outreach, and noted the particular challenges faced by institutions working in rural, coastal and urban areas. In 2015, additional project funding was provided to eight networks to support work which would practically and effectively tackle some of the persistent problems encountered when attempting to conduct outreach in rural settings, coastal settings and urban conurbations as these areas can display significant and multi-layered aspects of disadvantage.

19. Further information about national and wider regional networks and projects may be found at www.hefce.ac.uk/sas/nnco/projects/.

The role of a network

20. We were clear that networks should work with the partner HE providers they are serving, so institutions themselves have determined their structures and management arrangements, and also their priorities for outreach. A minimum requirement was that information should be provided to all state-funded secondary schools and colleges, but some networks chose to go further, for example offering outreach to primary schools or mature learners. In summary, the requirement of a network is to:

- provide a single point of contact
- establish a web presence, which will hold details of the individual and collaborative outreach activity available from each member institution
- act as a source of information to all state-funded schools and colleges within its sphere of activity
- actively seek to reduce duplication, identify gaps in provision and help its partner institutions to deliver more co-ordinated, coherent and sustained outreach programmes
- identify itself as part of a national 'brand'.

Funding

21. Funding was allocated to networks in two ways:

- a. A proportion of the funding was made available at a flat rate of £120,000 per network per year, to enable the networks to establish the role of the SPOC and to develop their

web presence⁴. This funding was allocated to a nominated 'lead' higher education institution (HEI). The lead institution normally hosts the SPOC and the network's hub.

b. The rest of the available funding was delivered through a formulaic allocation to individual institutions, based on the methodology used to allocate the widening access element of HEFCE's Student Opportunity funding. This funding enabled institutions collectively to support the network.

The monitoring process

22. Networks were issued with a draft of the monitoring form at the same time as their award letter early in 2015, ensuring that they were aware of HEFCE's requirements at the beginning of the scheme. Final monitoring forms and guidance were issued on 20 August 2015 with a return date of 30 October 2015. We also produced an online video for networks of general guidance on how to complete the monitoring submission. A copy of the monitoring return template is at Annex A.

Outcomes from the monitoring process

23. Networks offered substantial feedback through their monitoring returns, such that we have a good overall picture of the structure of networks, how they operate with schools and colleges and each other, the challenges that they face and the benefits that have so far been realised through the scheme.

How networks have been structured

24. Local networks have been formed by institutional partners to suit the needs of their local region. We placed no expectations in terms of size of network, although we were keen to achieve full coverage of schools and colleges across England in line with the Government's aims.

25. The local networks which have formed vary in size and scope. Geography, and the number of institutions in a local region, have a major bearing on how many partners are likely to be involved in a local network. This means that networks operating in urban areas tend to be larger than those in more rural areas. Linking London, a partnership of 31 further education colleges, is the largest network in terms of member institutions, while AccessHE, also operating in London and formed of 25 partners, covers the greatest number of schools and colleges at 624. Aimhigher West Midlands, based in Birmingham, closely follows, covering 516 schools and colleges through a network of 12 institutions.

26. A full list of networks and NNCO projects is at Annex B. This shows the institutional and other partners in each network, as well as the type of schools and colleges each covers.

27. Of the 34 local NNCOs, half (17) built on partnerships already established prior to the NNCO scheme. A number of these were originally formed under the Aimhigher or Lifelong Learning Network programmes, so in some cases have been in place, in one form or another, for over a decade. Three local NNCO networks were already established, but added to their membership as a result of NNCO scheme. In some cases further education colleges (FECs) have become core members of the network where previously they were peripheral or not involved. The remaining 14 local NNCO networks are new and have been established to meet the needs of the scheme.

⁴ The flat rate was raised to £136,000 for 2015-16.

28. Those networks with established partnership arrangements were able to respond rapidly to the NNCO call by drawing on existing contacts in the partner institutions and by using the governance mechanisms already in place quickly to agree principles. For example, the Western Outreach Network states that:

‘Four HEI members have previously established relationships through their collaboration on the delivery of a number of activities and are all members of the [Western Vocational Progression Consortium]. This previous experience in working collaboratively has enabled a swift formation of the Western Outreach Network.’

29. There is evidence of a move towards pre-existing collaboration becoming more strategic in some of the networks which pre-dated the scheme:

‘The NNCO funding has provided a catalyst to review the work of [Higher Education Access Rewarding Transforming (HEART)] and reinvigorate[d] the interest of partners in one of our agreed aims, “continuous improvement in our partnership practice”. This has been evidenced at Board and practitioner level and is particularly driven by the need to explore and agree means for sustainability. We are confident that the HEART partnership will be stronger and more active than it was prior to receipt of NNCO funding and will sustain a remit as a single point of contact for schools (this being additional to our original remit).’

30. The 14 newly formed networks bring together institutions which have not been involved in collaboration for a number of years, and in some cases never before. While this has provided some challenge, accounts in the monitoring return point to a willingness among institutions to work together to harness the opportunities offered by the scheme and extend collaborative outreach activity across local schools. The Aspire Network notes that:

‘As a new network the time to set up the collaboration and get this working as a partnership has taken longer than predicted. But this is seen as vital to ensuring that the network is not only meeting its aims but fits the needs of local schools and colleges.’

31. Of the national networks, two were operating as different entities prior to the NNCO scheme. The Open University national network, which works with adult learners and promotes part-time learning, extends the work of the university’s Social Partnerships Network. The National Network for the Education of Care Leavers (NNECL) is a practitioner-led group supporting young people in care and their progression into HE. It has established a function under the NNCO scheme which brings together resources and practice to support outreach for young people in care and their teachers and advisers, including virtual head teachers.

32. The Oxford and Cambridge collaborative national network, while not an established network, builds on a regional system of outreach that existed at both institutions working through their colleges. The NNCO has enabled the two college outreach programmes to work together to facilitate collaboration between the two universities in delivering outreach and widening participation schemes and activities to support progression to Oxbridge.

33. The newly formed Higher Education in London Partnership network provides a centralised source of information about HE providers’ outreach activity across London, and covers activities managed by the three London local NNCOs – all of which were previously established networks.

School and college coverage

34. To assess and ensure coverage we asked networks to supply a list of state-funded secondary schools and colleges with which they would work at the beginning of the scheme in January 2015. The Edubase data on which the schools and colleges list is based is dynamic and regularly updated by the Department for Education, as new schools are established or schools change to become academies. We have used an annual snapshot of the database to measure coverage.

35. Importantly, the lists supplied by networks provide the basis of the school and college linking tool on the HEFCE website. This allows schools and colleges to find their local network or networks by typing in their postcode. Networks regularly update their lists of coverage to reflect newly emerging relationships within this changing landscape and ensure that the linking tool is kept current.

36. Networks updated their lists as part of the 2014-15 monitoring. Table 1 reports coverage at October 2015 and shows that 89 per cent of schools and colleges in England are covered under the scheme.

Table 1: Overall summary school and college coverage

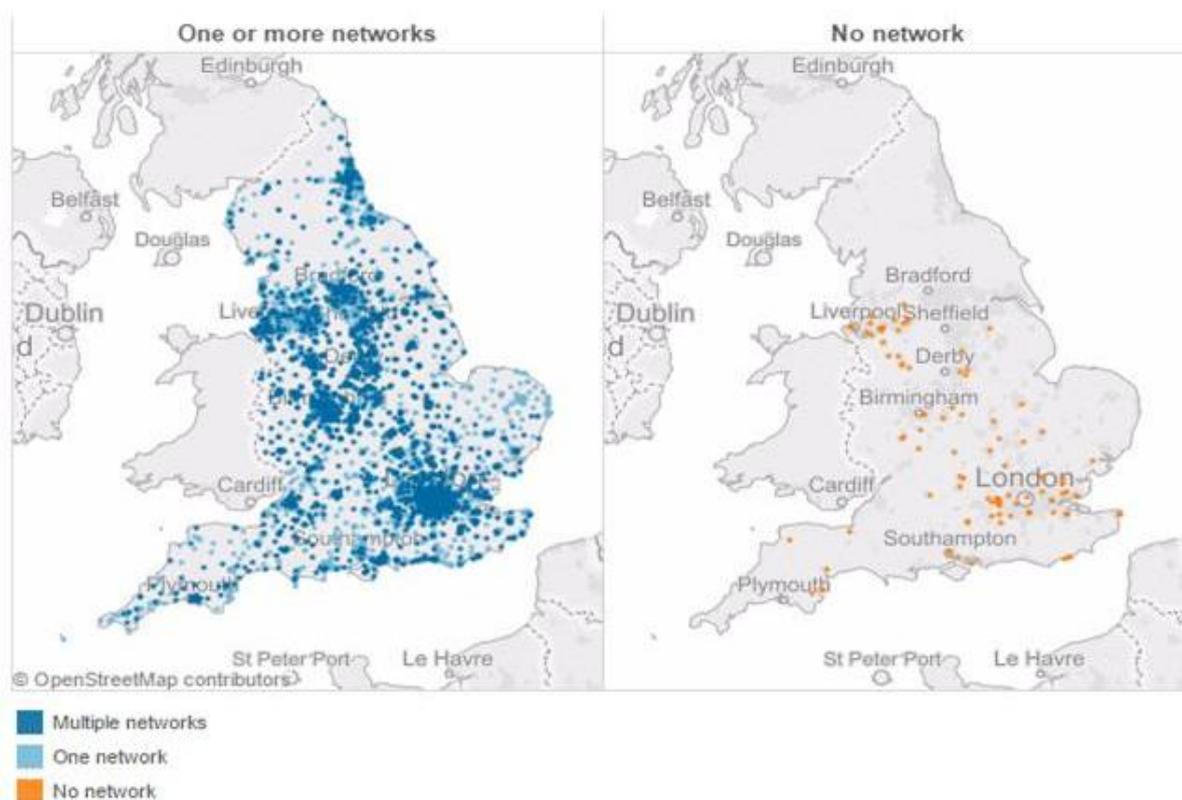
	Overall		Local networks only	
	Number of schools	Proportion	Number of schools	Proportion
Total number of schools and colleges in England	5,100	100%	5,100	100%
Schools and colleges within a network	4,550	89%	4,490	88%
Schools and colleges without a network	550	11%	610	12%
Schools and colleges within multiple networks	1,996	39%	908	18%

37. The 'Overall' numbers relate to those schools and colleges covered by local, regional and national networks. As can be seen, the majority of overlap is due to the distinctive outreach support offered by national and regional networks. Nearly 2,000 schools and colleges are the focus of this additional support.

38. The overlap between local networks is just over 900 schools and colleges, or 18 per cent. Overlap is not necessarily an issue where some schools and colleges naturally sit on network boundaries or have existing relationships with HEIs in different networks. Networks are aware of the issues of overlap and have reported that they are working either to reduce it or to ensure that schools and colleges understand how outreach is co-ordinated across boundaries.

39. Figure 1 shows school and college coverage across England – schools covered by one or more networks and schools not covered by a network.

Figure1: NNCO network coverage (monitoring 2014-15)



Note: The map showing schools not covered by networks excludes pupil referral units, special post-16 institutions and special schools.

40. More critical is the issue of schools and colleges without a network. Table 2 shows which types of schools and colleges were covered and uncovered by networks in October 2015.

Table 2: Breakdown of school and college types by NNCO coverage

School or college type	Overall	Within a network		Without a network	
	Total	Number	Percentage of type	Number	Percentage of type
Academies	2,127	2,064	97%	63	3%
Colleges	365	358	98%	7	2%
Free schools	224	201	90%	23	10%
Local authority maintained schools	1,251	1,240	99%	11	1%
Pupil referral units	277	205	74%	72	26%
Special post-16 institutions	69	42	61%	27	39%
Special schools	787	440	56%	347	44%
Total	5,100	4,550	89%	550	11%

41. This table demonstrates that over 97 per cent of state-funded secondary academies, colleges, free schools and local authority maintained schools are covered under the scheme (3,863 of a total of 3,967). The majority of uncovered schools (446) are special schools or pupil referral units. Some of these organisations are not suitable to receive HE outreach, and we did not expect networks automatically to cover them. Nevertheless, many networks have decided to offer support to these types of school and college meaning that 56 per cent of special schools, 61 per cent of special post-16 institutions and 74 per cent of pupil referral units receive coverage under the scheme.

42. We will be in touch with networks to understand the position of the 2 per cent (104) of schools and colleges which remain without coverage, with a view to drawing them into the scheme where possible.

Expenditure

43. Funding for 2014-15 was delivered as a single payment in January 2015. Establishing the networks within the relatively short timescale of six months has proved challenging for institutions. Most networks took some time to appoint their SPOCs following the first allocation of funding. This has meant that full operation, including making websites live, has largely come about late in the 2014-15 academic year (up to July 2015). All networks are now fully operational and have planned actions and expenditure up to December 2016 when funding for the scheme is due to end.

44. We asked networks to report how funding had been spent, or was planned to be spent, against broad headings in the first and second years of operation. Table 3 shows how funding is being utilised.

Table 3: How networks have utilised expenditure

Description	2014-15 expenditure %	Planned expenditure to December 2016
Staffing	55%	38%
Collaborative projects	12%	29%
Costs of lead institution	11%	6%
Establishing and maintaining a website	10%	4%
Other	7%	9%
NNCO events for schools and colleges	5%	14%
All	100%	100%

45. As can be seen, staffing accounts for a significant proportion of the costs in both years. Before being able to appoint SPOCs, most networks began by deploying senior staff from the various partners, notably from lead institutions or existing networks, to establish the necessary structures and strategy. This may account in part for the higher proportion of expenditure on staffing in the first part of the scheme. Most networks reported underspend from 2014-15 which will be rolled forward into 2015-16, meaning that staffing is a higher ratio of a smaller sum in the earlier year.

46. The table also demonstrates that expenditure becomes more focused on the full spectrum of activity once networks are fully established in the second year.

47. Most networks have also established new websites (rather than extending current partnership sites), some with interactive capability to help schools and colleges find relevant activities and events. This cost is front-loaded, with expenditure dropping in the second year when costs move towards maintenance. The website is a key promotional tool for networks, allowing them to share information and resources with school partners and advertise available outreach activity. All the websites contain information about the collaborative outreach and activities being offered by partner institutions, resources on offer, contact details and links to the partner websites. Many local networks also promote the work of the national networks and vice versa; for example the NNECL works closely with SPOCs in local networks to collate information on local events for children in care and care leaver which can be included on the NNECL website, and states that:

‘It is important to link with the [local] networks to signpost users to wider outreach events in their area where children in care/care leavers may be included as one of the target groups. Reciprocal links have been requested with [local] networks and many networks have added links to NNECL on their websites which is helping to bring traffic to the website.’

48. Websites are also becoming a rich source of other, more generic, information, for example for students, teachers, parents and carers on student finance, apprenticeships, progression routes and differences in qualifications; and careers-related information in the form of toolkits,

quizzes, films and news. It seems networks also aim to make their websites 'one-stop shops' for information, including links to UCAS, Unistats, the Student Loans Company and so on.

Working with other partners and local structures

49. Of the 34 local networks, 15 have recruited further support from other organisations. This includes working with local, and sometimes national, third-sector bodies with a remit to widen participation, for example the Brightside Trust, the Titan Partnership and the Children's University.

50. In addition, a number of the networks are actively working with partners in supporting careers choices. For instance, the Merseyside Network for Collaborative Outreach is planning a pilot project with the local chambers of commerce, local enterprise partnerships (LEPs) and education-business partnerships aimed at Year 8 pupils. This will develop a series of activities designed to support young people with their GCSE option choices and future employment pathways. The South-West-based networks have access to Careerpilot, a website which provides impartial information and support on the routes to higher-level study – Careerpilot is aimed at 13- to 19-year-olds and is managed by the Western Vocational Progression Consortium.

51. The majority of these 15 networks also list local councils as partners and are aligning their activities, for example with councils' approaches to improving attainment.

52. Only four networks specifically list LEPs as network partners, although others have noted plans to liaise with their LEPs in the second year of the scheme and will explore the opportunities to apply for European Social Funding. To support networks in positioning themselves within the wider skills agenda of their region, we have funded a project to look at the approaches being taken by two networks to work with wider regional bodies such as LEPs and Local Authorities. The funding allows additional resource to be dedicated to building the necessary relationships within the local area and to working with local businesses to support their requirements in terms of skills. The project outcomes will be shared across the networks.

53. A number of networks report that they have made contact with their LEPs to build relationships with the enterprise co-ordinator appointed as part of the Department for Education's Careers Enterprise Company initiative⁵.

54. The Think Higher Coventry and Warwickshire network has gone further in aligning itself with the broader skills strategy developed by the LEP:

'An early milestone for the work was to align the network with broader regional strategies and themes of work by embedding Think Higher within the structure of the LEP. The Think Higher Steering Group is thus now a sub-group of the LEP Jobs and Skills Business Group. There is also some overlap in membership as three members of the Thinker Higher Steering Group also sit on the LEP board. This helps to ensure consistency of messages in a two-way flow of information between Think Higher and the key strategic decision makers in the region.'

⁵ See www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/.

The role of the SPOC

55. The monitoring returns highlighted a variety of approaches being taken by networks in establishing the role of the SPOC. The majority (30 out of 34 local networks and all of the national networks) have a single person acting as a network SPOC. However some have approached it differently, with a number of people covering different aspects of the role: for example one being the point of contact for schools, another responsible for making contacts with local business and careers organisations, and another leading on liaison with FECs. For some larger partnerships, the role is being shared by two assistant SPOCs working on a north-south basis under a Senior Project Manager.

56. The monitoring reports highlight the activities led by SPOCs, which can be summarised as follows:

- acting as the point of contact for all schools and colleges in the local area, with information about the HE outreach activity provided by the network partner institutions
- co-ordinating activities to promote the network and its features to schools and colleges in the local area
- mapping outreach activity and identifying gaps – both in terms of types of activity, and which schools and colleges currently benefit from activity
- developing and maintaining the network website
- overseeing the development and co-ordination of the themed projects led by partner institutions
- helping to plan, co-ordinate and deliver new collaborative outreach activity on behalf of the network
- representing the network in meetings with school and external stakeholders and other events (on behalf of all network partners)
- preparing reports and updates to the network's management or steering group
- ensuring that the activities delivered through the network are evaluated and monitored, and reported to HEFCE and other agencies as required.

57. These types of activity were common to networks but the role is expanded in most networks to encompass a wider remit, including developing relationships with external bodies such as local businesses, careers organisations, local authorities and charities.

58. Many networks are using formulaic funding, sometimes pooled by different partners, to develop new activity or resources to meet gaps in the outreach already provided by the individual partner institutions and to respond to teachers' and advisers' requirements. The SPOC is often responsible for leading these developments and for managing related budgets. SPOCs also deliver some generic activity on behalf of their network, for example continuing professional development (CPD) events for teachers, or finance advisory talks to learners in schools.

59. Despite the SPOCs being appointed at different times and working with different types of networks, the monitoring reports point to the significant amount of work they have undertaken and planned over the course of the NNCO scheme. Collaboration – whether bringing together a

group of institutions or working more closely with schools – takes time and commitment, and we do not underestimate the pivotal role that SPOCs play in the success of each network.

Identifying areas of need

60. Through the co-ordination offered by the networks, institutions have shared information which has enabled SPOCs to ‘map’ and ‘gap’ what outreach activity was already taking place through individual institutional activity and where, and importantly where it was missing. This provides a basis for reducing duplication of outreach to the same school by a number of institutions, and to identify schools not currently benefitting from activity. The Higher Horizons network describes how this has benefited their area:

‘An astonishing piece of work was done by the SPOC’s team to reveal that for a number of schools in “cold spot” areas (such as Burton, Shrewsbury and Warrington) at least six schools had had no outreach activity at all from any of the 12 FE/HE partners in our Network in the last five years. Interestingly, all schools were around 20 miles from any HEI and the feeling was that they had greatly been ignored for being “a little bit too far away” from each HEI. The space that the SPOC has had to explore these quirks has led to work being done in these areas.’

61. Through sharing information, networks have produced inventories of the activities currently available for different audiences including students, parents and carers, and teachers and HE advisors. Intelligence has also been gathered regarding the types of outreach and resources that different audiences find most effective. Resources which are already available can be rolled out across the network as appropriate, and where there is a perceived activity or resource gap, new provision can be developed. Information-sharing through the network has helped partners to plan and target their resources more effectively. The Merseyside Network for Collaborative Outreach (MNCO) outlines how the mapping process has supported the network’s work:

‘Mapping of existing activity – This enabled us to gain a clearer picture on HE outreach activities and the level to which schools are interacting with these. This was in itself not a small undertaking and one which would not have taken place without the network. This information is of value to all partners, as it is clear that there are some schools receiving a great deal of duplicated activities from various partners, whereas some schools aren’t receiving anywhere near the same level of support. An interesting aside was that LEPs have been given cold spot schools for levels of [information, advice and guidance] support from local businesses in schools⁶, so MNCO now has something to cross-reference this data against.’

62. The North East Raising Aspiration Partnership (NERAP) has extended the benefits of mapping to identify 10 strands of activity that it views can be better served delivering in collaboration:

‘The strands and specific target groups have been identified based on where it was felt as a Partnership, we could add most value to the existing provision at each Partner university:

‘Strand	Activity
‘1: Supporting information, advice and	Development of website to create [a] single point of contact.

⁶ Part of the Department for Education’s Careers and Enterprise Company programme.

guidance	Creation of a NERAP Mini Guide to support work in schools. Marketing materials in to promote the Partnership in schools
'2: Raising Aspirations (Secondary)	Co-ordinated younger age group visits to schools delivered by our team of NERAP Graduate Ambassadors.
'3: Raising Aspirations (Primary)	Creation of additional events to engage Primary pupils – focus on attainment raising. Creation of a Primary School webpage.
'4: Looked after Young people	Development of the Choices Event for years Y8 – Y11, a progressive programme of support which engages [looked-after young people] in higher education. Further development of training for Foster Carers in the Region.
'5: Parents and Carers	Collaborative regional events for Parents and Carers to promote a greater understanding of higher education. Attendance at Parents' evenings.
'6: Supporting young people with [special educational needs] or disabilities	Targeted activity for young people with [special educational needs] and disabilities in schools including bespoke events with specialised information, advice and guidance.
'7: Access to the Professions	Pilot activity to develop progression pathways to the Professions.
'8: Higher Education Teachers and Advisers Conference	The delivery of CPD events in the Region to improve awareness and understanding of higher education progression.
'9: Supporting under-represented groups	To identify additional under-represented groups in the region and develop or signpost to areas of support.
'10: Young Carers	Work with the Regional Network for Young Carers to identify a cohort of young pre-16 learners and develop a progression programme to support their engagement with higher education. Explore opportunities to better support young carers post 16 and into university.'

Working with teachers and advisers

63. The SPOC plays a critical role in engaging with schools and colleges to promote the outreach opportunities available. The way in which contact has been established with schools and colleges varies between networks. Some networks have been able to meet face-to-face with

schools and colleges, and others have had telephone conversations with contacts. Not all networks can feasibly meet all their schools and instead have chosen to extend coverage by working through school groups, for example, the local Association of Head Teachers. The Devon Network is seeking to establish contact with the Devon Association of Secondary Head Teachers and the Plymouth Association of Head Teachers while the Gloucestershire Reaching Out with Schools (GROWS) network is promoting its work through established groups including secondary heads.

64. Networks are also using emails and bulletins targeted at head teachers, teachers and other school contacts to provide updates and maintain relationships. Several are also investing time in social media (including Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn) as a means of reaching out to schools.

65. Networks are seeking to build efficiencies into the way in which outreach is delivered – for example partners representing the whole network at events. This has resulted in institutions being represented at a wider range of events, a more representative and impartial view of HE options being provided, and greater consistency in messages to schools. The Lincolnshire Outreach Network (LON) reported a planned extension of this generic approach:

‘We have a number of collaborative events that the partners will offer to their existing student ambassadors, however, when they attend one of these events (or anything funded by the Lincolnshire Outreach Network) they will wear the LON Student Champion branded uniform and will offer HE information and advocacy neutrally on behalf of the network. To build in a sustainable approach to this we are possibly looking at a version of CPD for the existing Student Ambassadors within the partners – to add on to the training they already receive.’

66. In addition to promoting the work of the collaborative networks, SPOCs have been canvassing ideas from schools and colleges about outreach activities they consider would be of most value. Aimhigher South London notes that:

‘The pool of HEIs has a wide breadth of experience in delivering elements of this work, but have not until now had the opportunity to pull these together to deliver a well-rounded and thought-out programme. The funding has been used to target two projects: Working with parents and learners in the care of the Local Authority.

The projects were identified in consultation with our partner schools and HEIs with the supporting evidence of our own prior development of Aimhigher activity and current needs analysis.’

67. There is recognition that schools can be overloaded with information from many sources and may not have sufficient resources in place to understand individual HE providers’ outreach offerings. As such, the role of the SPOC in providing impartial advice to schools on the variety of activities offered by network partners is attractive. The Higher Horizons network fed back the following:

‘The website and presence of the SPOC has received excellent feedback thus far, with the phrase “This is just what we have needed since the demise of Aimhigher!” being said on numerous occasions by teaching colleagues from around the region.’

68. The Explore University network included the following feedback from a teacher:

'The SPOC contacted me when I was struggling to find an appropriate university visit and promptly and efficiently liaised with colleagues to facilitate one'

69. GROWS – the network for Gloucestershire – noted that:

'All schools contacted regarding the offer of enhanced support reacted positively and were keen to engage with the programme highlighting the perceived need for this type of work.'

Cross-network collaboration

70. The monitoring returns show that over half the networks have experienced benefits from being involved in cross-network collaborations.

71. A cross-network collaboration in the North involves the Greater Manchester Network, Higher Horizons, Merseyside Network for Collaborative Outreach, the Cumbria Outreach Network and the Lancashire Collaborative Outreach Network. This collaboration meets regularly (1-2 months) and also meets with Aimhigher West Midlands less frequently. The group includes three completely new networks as well as very experienced partnerships. They meet to share best practice and to reduce duplication and overlap.

'The Greater Manchester Higher SPOC works closely with other SPOCs from across the North West (MNCO, [the Lancashire and Cumbria networks] and Higher Horizons) to share best practice and discuss ideas. This has been very beneficial in overcoming challenges and fostering best practice within our network, and in reducing duplication and overlap across networks. This has also led to innovative cross-network collaboration to support cold spot areas such as Warrington.'

72. Cross-regional work can also increase the capacity and reach of individual networks, which benefits recipients and drives up efficiency. Across the South and West of England, 10 networks have come together to form a working group, the Southern Collaborative Network, which shares ideas and works collaboratively on projects. The group has developed a webinar programme for CPD teachers and advisors that will be rolled out over the coming months. This will make possible the provision of 12 different webinar topics twice during the year.

Challenges

Challenges inherent in the NNCO model

73. The Government set the parameters for the scheme and HEFCE established the approach. All of the networks have reported challenges resulting from the guidelines put in place for the scheme, the setup to the scheme or both. The challenges fall under the following categories:

- challenges external to the programme
- challenges affecting specific regions of networks
- challenges posed by the timescales of the scheme
- challenges posed by the funding model
- challenges of engaging with schools.

Challenges external to the scheme

74. The broader policy landscape and external environment in which they are working has posed challenges for networks.

75. Competition versus collaboration has been a consistent theme running through the scheme. Competition in recruitment, both between specific HEIs and between HEIs and colleges, can act as a barrier to collaboration between institutions. Networks consider that this challenge has been compounded by the introduction of student fees and the removal of the student number control. Networks are taking different approaches to working around this obstacle, many choosing to focus on Years 8 to 11, as targeting these cohorts avoids the tension which could arise between partners offering similar HE programmes.

76. Uncertainties relating to government policies have affected the way in which networks approach sustainability. The outcomes of the recent government green paper 'Fulfilling our potential: Teaching excellence, social mobility and student choice'⁷, and the joint Spending Review and Autumn Statement⁸ are pertinent to networks, in that they have a bearing on future policy and funding to support widening participation. Networks welcome the positive approach to widening participation and access demonstrated in the green paper.

77. The area-based reviews of post-16 provision by the Departments for Education and Business, Innovation and Skills have the potential to significantly reshape the technical and skills provision delivered through the further education sector. The reviews are affecting the capacity of some FECs to engage with the NNCO programme.

Challenges affecting specific regions or networks

78. As the context and environment of the networks varies widely, they all have challenges which are specific to them. Examples include:

Combined Universities in Cornwall Outreach Network: 'Cornwall constitutes a long narrow county and there is approximately 75 miles from the tip of Land's End to the border of Devon. This gives Cornwall the challenge of offering consistent and equitable services across a widely dispersed population with different demographic profiles and different types of needs associated with local issues. In addition Cornwall has significant pockets of deprivation, a dispersed population and relatively poor transport links.'

Kent and Medway Collaboration Network: 'Alongside this challenge was the need to balance widening participation, and what we understand to mean by "outreach", with a requirement to reach out to all state-funded schools and colleges, including grammar schools, which have always been outside the remit of the pre-existing partnership. The term "outreach" has different meanings within different institutions in the partnership, who all have a strong widening participation agenda, and one of the first discussions was around defining the network's mission to meet the aims of both the network as a whole, and the constituent partners.'

⁷ Department for Business, Innovation and Skills 6 November 2015, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/higher-education-teaching-excellence-social-mobility-and-student-choice>.

⁸ 25 November 2015, available at <https://www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/autumn-statement-and-spending-review-2015>.

Challenges posed by the timescale of the scheme

79. Building the infrastructure of a network takes a significant amount of time. For example:
- a. Putting governance structures in place, establishing systems for the network, building relationships, agreeing network aims and evaluation strategies, and developing a website are all time-consuming processes.
 - b. Recruitment within institutions is also a lengthy process, thanks to internal policies and procedures. Recruitment of staff on a time-limited contract also brings concerns that staff will leave their post before the end of the scheme, as they will need to find alternative employment.
 - c. It is time-consuming but crucial to consult with stakeholders (teachers and HE advisers, parents and carers, students) to provide outreach which meets their needs.
 - d. The mapping of available outreach provision and establishing where gaps exist, both in terms of type of activity and where it is delivered, is also a time-consuming process, but critical to reducing duplication and identifying schools and colleges which do not receive outreach.
80. Although this process is less involved for networks built on pre-existing partnerships which already have an infrastructure in place, pre-existing networks have still found the timescale challenging. The Kent and Medway Collaborative Network provides a summary of some of the challenges and risks:
- ‘The relatively short timescale of the project – the requirement to plan the infrastructure, recruit and develop staff, build a web presence, develop productive working relationships, deliver the project, evaluate impact, and build in sustainability, in less than two years for a project of this size with considerable funding, is a significant challenge. Having a pre-existing network and a history of collaboration in the area certainly helped, but also added a level of complexity in terms of ensuring that work under the NNCO funding added to, and did not undermine, current arrangements.’
81. The Oxford and Cambridge Collaborative Network notes that there are issues relating to sustainability arising from the short-term nature of the scheme:
- ‘Another challenge has come from planning how best to use the funding towards establishing systems and products that are sustainable beyond the limited timescale of the HEFCE funding, and how to best manage expectations of schools and colleges who may receive targeted events through this scheme that may not be financially viable in the absence of further funding after December 2016.’
82. Networks also view the timescale as too short to be able to fully evaluate the impact of the scheme. This potentially has a knock-on effect on sustainability, as it is difficult to make the case to institutions or external organisations for continuation funding if there is no strong evidence of the value of the networks. The Federation of Regional Colleges for Engagement comments:
- ‘The short timescale of the NNCO project does impose limits on what we can achieve with the funding available. It also impacts the scope for evaluation as evidence of progression to Higher Education will not be able to be collected in the timeframe of the funded project, though tracking will be commenced with use of [the Higher Education Access Tracker].’

The timescale of the programme also influences the type of outreach activities which can be carried out, as NERAP comments:

‘The challenge has been to creatively use the funding provided by the NNCO Scheme to identify collaborative activities that are sustainable post December 2017. A longer delivery timescale, January 2015 – July 2017 for example, would have been more beneficial to share the learning of the collaboration and better inform discussions in sustainability’

83. The timescale of the programme also affects attitudes towards involvement from stakeholders. Varying levels of engagement and commitment are reported among institutions and schools, even where they are committed to the principles of widening participation. This is because it takes time to develop meaningful relationships within a large and complex network, and some institutions and schools perceive the timescale of the programme to be at odds with this.

Challenges posed by the funding model

84. Part of the complexity of building the NNCO scheme in the required short timescale was applying a suitable funding methodology to the scheme. In the event it was not possible to wait for networks to coalesce and then model funding to meet their chosen geographic areas of activity. Instead, we aimed to create a funding method which would encourage institutions to become partners within a network by offering them a ‘stake’ to invest in collaborative activity. This was backed up by an element of flat-rate funding to support the network hub infrastructure of the SPOC, a website and other costs. Using this model had the benefit of speed, and meant that institutions had certainty about the level of funding they could expect to receive if they joined the scheme. However, the model does not directly recognise the different scale of coverage in terms of the numbers of schools and colleges in a local area, or other factors such as local levels of disadvantage.

85. In some networks the differences in formulaic allocations created tensions between the partners. The formulaic allocations that institutions receive affect the extent to which an institution can become involved in the network, and also influence how engaged with the network they might be:

HEART: ‘The HEART Board decided, on award of SPOC/NNCO status that they would retain their own formula funding and not pool this centrally. The significant disparity in funding allocated to individual institutions has inevitably had consequences on the degree of involvement that some partners have been able to have. Those partners with no/low-level allocations tend to be institutions with little or no resource for outreach activities and therefore have essentially been restricted to attending planning and task and finish groups and contributing to ideas for progressing plans and activities. Despite this, some of these partners have committed to supporting a number of activities going forward.’

86. Eighteen networks have pooled some or all of their funding to counter this, or have set up a separate funding pot for all partners to access. For example the North East Midlands Collaborative Outreach Network has decided that:

‘In order to address the disparity between the formulaic funding received by partners and to enable those that received small amounts of funding (or none at all) to contribute time and resource to the network as well as develop new activity which they previously lacked

the resources to do, 10 per cent of the formulaic funding awarded to three of the partner universities has been allocated to a “shared pool” of funding for all partners to access.

‘A process has been put in place for partners to access the ‘shared pool’ of funding that will monitor and record expenditure of funds and also ensure that aims of the network in terms of key priority themes are being met.’

87. Networks noted that differences in allocation levels could cause tensions in the network, as institutions receiving smaller allocations felt they had less influence than institutions receiving larger allocations.

Challenges of engaging with schools

88. A third of local networks reported difficulty in contacting schools. The main challenges were seen to be the competing demands that schools and colleges have to cope with, leading to limited time. Engaging with higher education is not necessarily a priority for schools and colleges, especially if they have pressures such as exam results. Building relationships is a long process and engaging with schools who are new to a network can take more time as the reputation of the network is an unknown quantity.

89. The changing schools landscape is a further challenge to engagement. Aimhigher London South notes:

‘In addition many of the schools in the area have become academies and this has resulted in an increasing number withdrawing from involvement or communication. In addition there has been an increase in free schools that are in turn difficult to identify and difficult to engage in discussions. Further to this reluctance to communicate, the subsequent scope, spread and number of academies and free schools stretch our staff resources.

‘The great issue here is that the proliferation of new schools and increasing structural and staffing changes in both schools and colleges has brought about a loss of institutional memory of the need to engage with HEIs and outreach. Therefore management teams faced with other pressures are not able or do not have enough understanding of why it is important to make contact with our network or networks.

‘The challenge will be to first of all to engage with institutions on a level that they understand. This will require our most experienced staff, who are able firstly to communicate in the language that schools and colleges understand, to persist and talk directly to senior management teams. This is heavily resource-intensive.’

90. Networks have expressed concern that they will not be able to meet the demand placed on them by schools, or adequately manage their expectations regarding the end of the programme and the provision available after this point.

Sustainability

91. Although at an early stage of exploring options, 33 networks have begun to consider sustainability, either in terms of legacy of resources or the actual network itself. Over one-third of networks make a link between sustainability and evidence in that the future of the networks will depend on evidence of their outcomes and impact. If there is enough evidence it may be possible to make a case for further funding from stakeholders. Think Higher Coventry and Warwickshire notes:

'Sustainability is at the heart of the work the network undertakes. This will be approached in two principal ways:

- 'Doing work (both in terms of new outreach and the streamlining of information flows around existing outreach) that demonstrates to partners the clear value in continuing to support the network through institutional funds.
- 'Securing additional external funding for the network, with [European Social Funding] funding being the most immediately promising source.'

92. Networks also note that, while impact will be fundamental to making a case for funding, sustainability will also rely on the policy environment, organisational priorities, and the costings and resource involved.

93. As well as exploring options to sustain the infrastructure provided by the networks, monitoring submissions discussed the level of sustainability that might be achieved through the influence of changes or refinements made as a result of the scheme – for example targeting, new or strengthened relationships, and changes to the outreach offer based on innovative outreach activities.

94. Further opportunities to build a legacy of outreach resources were often stated as a baseline goal. Websites were often mooted as having the potential to survive at minimal cost, although they would need to be kept updated with continuing input from partners.

Working with the networks

95. Establishing a new scheme offered us the opportunity to work with colleagues in the sector in new ways.

96. We have commissioned IPSE (Institute for Policy Studies in education, London Metropolitan university) and CEIR (Centre for Education and Inclusion Research, Sheffield Hallam University) to evaluate the scheme. As part of this remit they also offer advice to SPOCs and others about how to evaluate the activity co-ordinated through the networks, thus spreading experience and expertise of evaluative practice.

97. In managing the NNCO scheme we have sought to open channels for SPOCs and others involved in the scheme to share information and resources, and have established a JISCMail forum to facilitate this. This is regularly used by colleagues, for example to ask questions of other networks, share ideas and resources and canvass support for projects exploring different aspects of widening participation activity.

98. To enable network colleagues to have access to information from HEFCE we have put in place network briefings every six months. These offer the opportunity for colleagues to network and share ideas and practice. We have also broadcast two PowerPoint presentations through YouTube. The first explained the background and expectations of the scheme, and the second talked through our monitoring requirements at the end of the first phase. The broadcasts offer a cost-effective way of reaching many people with the same information at a time which suits them. We followed up the initial broadcast with a teleconference, enabling colleagues to ask questions and share views.

99. We have also found networks to be a valuable means of sharing information with the sector. For example, we invited the Student Loans Company to present to the network briefing session in October, and have been able to share information about the DfE's Careers and

Enterprise Company initiative which should offer valuable links between HE outreach and the careers information offered to schools by employers.

Next steps

100. This report marks the end of the first period of the NNCO scheme. Having launched, networks are now able actively to work with schools and colleges in their area.

101. The second period of the scheme will complete in December 2016. We will carry out further monitoring to capture the networks' achievements. The monitoring process will launch in September 2016, with returns due in January 2017. We will publish a final monitoring report in early spring 2017, alongside a report from IPSE and CEIR offering a summative evaluation of the scheme.

List of abbreviations

CEIR	Centre for Education and Inclusion Research
CPD	Continued professional development
DfE	Department for Education
FEC	Further education college
GROWS	Gloucestershire Reaching Out with Schools
HE	Higher education
HEFCE	Higher Education Funding Council for England
HEI	Higher education institution
IPSE	Institute for Policy Studies
LEP	Local enterprise partnership
LON	Lincolnshire Outreach Network
MNCO	Merseyside Network for Collaborative Outreach
NERAP	North East Raising Aspirations
NNCO	National Networks for Collaborative Outreach
NECL	National Network for the Education of Care Leavers
SPOC	Single point of contact

Annex A: Blank monitoring template

Part 1: Written submission

This is the monitoring template which networks used to submit information back to HEFCE for the first period of operation up to 30 September 2015.

Section A: Contact details

Name of network:

Network lead/co-ordinating institution:

Network contact details:

Section B: Background and overview

1. Set out the agreed aims of your network (guide 500 words)
2. Describe the context of the area your network covers, highlighting any geographical challenges or unique characteristics (guide 500 words)

Section C: Network finances

3. As network lead/co-ordinating institution, you received £120,000 'flat rate' funding in 2014-15 to establish an infrastructure for the network, including a Single Point of Contact and a web presence. Please confirm that this funding was spent on pursuing these goals and describe what the flat rate funding has achieved in 2014-15 (up to 30 September 2015) (guide 200 words)
4. Please describe how the formulaic funding awarded to each institution has supported the aims of the network in 2014-15 (up to 30 September 2015) (guide 500 words)
5. We will allow for unspent funds from 2014-15 to be carried over into 2015-16. However, all HEFCE funding associated with this scheme must be spent by the end of the monitoring period, 31 December 2016. If any of the grant monies remain unspent at the end of this period, you will need to return them to us. More detailed expenditure information will be captured in Form C.
 - a. Please confirm below whether you will carry over unspent funds from 2014-15 into 2015-16, and if so how much will be rolled over. Please note that where underspend is a high proportion of the 2014-15 allocation we may need to contact you for further

details, for our records.

No

Yes, please specify the amount £

- b. If your answer to question 5a was 'yes', please confirm that funds carried forward will be used to meet the aims of the NNCO scheme and will be spent by 31 December 2016.

No

Yes

6. Has your network accessed or leveraged additional funding, for example through a Local Enterprise Partnership? Please describe the level of funding secured, from which source, and how it will support the aims of the network (for example, if it was secured to support specific work or projects) (guide 200 words)

Section D: Network features

7. Please confirm that a 'Single Point of Contact' (SPoC) has been established by your network? Briefly describe the role of your SPoC (guide 200 words)

8. Please confirm that a functioning website is in place for your network which holds details of the individual and collaborative outreach available from each member institution in your network (guide 200 words)

9. Please describe how the network is acting as a source of information to all state-funded secondary schools and colleges within its sphere of activity (guide 500 words)

Section E: Effectiveness of the network

10. Please describe the benefits the network has delivered over and above arrangements previously in place to organise and deliver outreach to schools and colleges including, where possible, evidence of the impact of your network on the schools and colleges in your area (guide 500 words)

11. Please describe the benefits the SPoC has delivered in co-ordinating and streamlining the

provision of outreach information for schools and colleges (guide 500 words)

12. Are there challenges you have encountered that you would wish to draw to our attention, for example the ability of the network to manage the volume or nature of demand, or difficulties in engaging schools or colleges? (guide 500 words)

13. Is your network able to comment upon arrangements for the sustainability of the network after December 2016? Are there points you would wish to bring to our attention in relation to the effectiveness of networks for collaborative outreach? (guide 500 words)

14. Has your network been able to engage with your local LEP(s)? If so, how have you engaged and what impact is this having on the network and its activities? If not, do you have plans to do so in 2015-16?

15. Please use this space to record any other information about your collaborative network which you think will be useful for us in drawing together findings about the scheme, for example unforeseen benefits or challenges.

This monitoring report should be signed off by a senior manager who has budgetary responsibility for this collaborative outreach network at the lead/co-ordinating institution.

Name:

Position:

Signed:

Date:

Annex B: Partner organisations and schools

Source: National Networks for Collaborative Outreach monitoring 2014-15.

Network	Total schools and colleges	Breakdown of school and college types in network						
		Academies	Colleges	Free schools	Local authority maintained schools	Pupil referral units	Special schools	Special post-16 institutions
AccessHE	624	236	55	39	161	33	95	5
<p>Institutional partners: University of London, Brunel University London; Courtauld Institute of Art; Heythrop College; Institute of Education, University of London; Kingston University; London Metropolitan University; London South Bank University; Loughborough University; Middlesex University; Ravensbourne; Rose Bruford College of Theatre and Performance Ltd; Royal Holloway, University of London; St Mary's University, Twickenham; The City University; The Royal Veterinary College; The University of Hull; The University of West London; The University of Westminster; Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance Ltd; University College London; University for the Creative Arts; University of Bedfordshire; University of Greenwich; University of Sussex</p>								
<p>Other partners: Greenwich School of Management London, The University of Law</p>								
Aimhigher London South	382	178	44	13	126	3	18	0
<p>Institutional partners: Kingston University; Goldsmiths' College; London South Bank University; Roehampton University; St Mary's University, Twickenham; St. George's, University of London; The Royal Veterinary College; The School of Oriental and African Studies</p>								
<p>Other partners: London Borough of Croydon; London Borough of Hammersmith; London Borough of Harrow; London Borough of Kensington and Chelsea; London Borough of Kingston and Richmond; London Borough of Merton; London Borough of Sutton; London Borough of Wandsworth; London Borough of Westminster; London Borough of Fulham</p>								
Aimhigher West Midlands	516	243	43	20	151	23	27	9
<p>Institutional partners: The University of Birmingham; Aston University; Birmingham City University; Hereford College of Arts; Newman University; Solihull College; South and City College Birmingham; Staffordshire University; The University of Wolverhampton; University College Birmingham; University of Worcester; Walsall College</p>								
<p>Other partners: Action on Access; Aspire Birmingham Children's Hospital; Birmingham Careers Service; Birmingham Looked After Children's Education Service; Black Country Partnership for Learning; Black Country Training Group; Heart of England NHS Trust; Prospects (National Careers Service West Midlands); STEMNET Birmingham and Solihull; Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council; Solihull Specialist Careers Service; Student Loans Company; The Bar Council; The Black Country NHS Apprenticeship Academy; The Brightside Trust; Titan Partnership; UCAS</p>								

Aspire Northamptonshire	56	41	3	3	6	1	2	0
Institutional partners: The University of Northampton; Moulton College; Northampton College; Tresham College of Further and Higher Education								
Other partners: Aimhigher Northamptonshire; Libraries plus								
Bedfordshire and Milton Keynes Network for Collaborative Outreach	179	86	38	5	40	1	9	0
Institutional partners: University of Bedfordshire; Barnfield College; Bedford College; Central Bedfordshire College; Milton Keynes College								
Other partners: 4YP; Bedford Borough Council; Central Bedfordshire Council; Chamber of Commerce; Federation of Small Businesses; Luton Borough Council; Nuffield Partnership; SEMLEP; The Learning Partnership								
Cambridgeshire and Peterborough	48	34	5	3	4	2	0	0
Institutional partners: Anglia Ruskin University; University Centre Peterborough								
Other partners: The College of West Anglia (all sites); The Skills Service (Peterborough)								
Combined Universities in Cornwall (CUC)	46	25	2	1	15	0	3	0
Institutional partners: Falmouth University; Cornwall College; Truro and Penwith College; University of Plymouth								
Other partners: CASH Cornwall Association of Secondary Heads; Cornwall Council; Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership; RASS Raising Aspirations and Achievement Strategy								
Coventry and Warwickshire	71	42	7	4	14	0	4	0
Institutional partners: the University of Warwick; Coventry University; North Warwickshire and Hinckley College; Warwickshire College								
Other partners: Coventry City Council; Coventry and Warwickshire Local Enterprise Partnership; Warwickshire County Council								
Cumbria Collaborative Outreach Network	53	19	6	2	18	3	5	0
Institutional partners: University of Cumbria; Accrington and Rossendale College; Blackpool and the Fylde College; Carlisle College; Edge Hill University; Furness College; Kendal College; Lakes College west Cumbria; Lancaster and Morecambe College; Myerscough College; The University of Lancaster; University of Central Lancashire								
Other partners: Newton Rigg								
Devon Collaborative Outreach Network	84	56	0	5	22	0	1	0
Institutional partners: University of Plymouth; City College Plymouth; Petroc; Plymouth College of Art; South Devon College; Strode College; University of St Mark and St John								
Other partners:								

Essex Collaborative Outreach Network	108	86	9	3	10	0	0	0
Institutional partners: The University of Essex; Anglia Ruskin University; Colchester Institute; South Essex College of Further and Higher Education; Writtle College								
Other partners: Essex County Council								
Explore University	123	50	11	2	41	8	11	0
Institutional partners: The University of Wolverhampton; Harper Adams University; Staffordshire University; Telford college of Arts and Technology; The University of Keele								
Other partners:								
Federation of Regional Colleges for Engagement (FORCE)	144	68	11	4	33	12	14	1
Institutional partners: The University of Hull; Bishop Burton College; Doncaster College; Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education; Hull College; North Lindsey College; Rotherham college of Arts and Technology; Selby College								
Other partners:								
Gloucestershire Reaching Out with Schools (GROWS)	63	36	4	1	5	4	9	4
Institutional partners: University of Gloucestershire; Gloucestershire College; Hartpury College; South Gloucestershire and Stroud College; The Royal Agricultural University								
Other partners:								
Greater Manchester Higher	209	65	21	9	93	21	0	0
Institutional partners: Manchester Metropolitan University; Ashton Sixth Form College; Bolton College; Holy Cross College; Hopwood Hall College; Royal Northern College of Music; Salford City College; Stockport College; The Manchester College; The Oldham College; The University of Bolton; The University of Manchester; The University of Salford; Wigan and Leigh College								
Other partners: Greater Manchester Colleges Group								
Higher Education Access Rewarding Transformation (HEART)	179	71	11	12	54	10	19	2
Institutional partners: The University of Leeds; Bradford College; Calderdale College; Kirklees College; Leeds Beckett University; Leeds City College; Leeds College of Art; Leeds College of Building; Leeds Trinity University; The University of Bradford; The University of Huddersfield; Wakefield College								
Other partners:								

Herts AHEAD	118	61	1	5	22	7	21	1
Institutional partners: University of Hertfordshire; Hertford Regional College; North Hertfordshire College; Oaklands College of Further Education; The Royal Veterinary College; University Campus St Albans Limited; West Herts College of Further Education								
Other partners: Hertfordshire Apprenticeship Network; Hertfordshire County Council; Hertfordshire LEP; Herts for Learning								
Higher Education Progression Partnership Collaborative Outreach (HEPP&CO)	160	70	10	4	39	7	27	3
Institutional partners: Sheffield Hallam University; Barnsley College; Chesterfield College; Dearne Valley College; Doncaster College; North Nottinghamshire College; Rotherham College of Arts and Technology; The Sheffield College; The University of Sheffield								
Other partners: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council; Bassetlaw District Council; Bolsover District Council; Careers Inc.; Chesterfield Borough Council; Doncaster Metropolitan Borough Council; HEPP, as distinguished from Sheffield Hallam as Lead; North East Derbyshire District Council; Northern College; Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council; Sheffield City Council; Sheffield Futures								
Higher Horizons	154	60	17	6	61	8	2	0
Institutional partners: The University of Keele; Harper Adams University; Macclesfield College; Manchester Metropolitan University; Reaseheath College; Staffordshire University; University of Chester; University of Derby; University of Oxford								
Other partners:								
Higher York	79	14	8	0	41	5	10	1
Institutional partners: York St John University; Askham Bryan College; Craven College; The University of York; York College								
Other partners: Children's University; City of York Council; North Yorkshire County Council								
Kent and Medway Collaboration Network	125	84	7	4	28	0	0	2
Institutional partners: Canterbury Christ Church University; Canterbury College; East Kent College; Hadlow College; Mid-Kent College; North West Kent College; The University of Kent; University for the Creative Arts; University of Greenwich; West Kent and Ashford College								
Other partners: Kent Local Authority; Medway Local Authority								
Lancashire Collaborative Outreach Network	162	34	12	9	68	11	27	1
Institutional partners: University of Central Lancashire; Accrington and Rossendale College; Blackburn College; Blackpool and the Fylde College; Burnley College; Carlisle College; Edge Hill University; Lancaster and Morecambe College; Preston College; Runshaw College; The University of Lancaster; University of Cumbria								
Other partners: Newton Rigg								

Lincolnshire Outreach Network	120	82	10	2	11	1	14	0
Institutional partners: University of Lincoln; Bishop Grosseteste University; Boston College; Grantham College; Grimsby Institute of Further and Higher Education; Lincoln College; New College Stamford; North Lindsey College								
Other partners:								
Linking London	45	1	44	0	0	0	0	0
Institutional partners: Birbeck College; Barnet and Southgate College; Bexley College; Bromley College of Further and Higher Education; City and Islington College; Goldsmiths' College; Harrow College; Havering College of Further and Higher Education; Hillcroft College; King's College London; Kingston University; Lambeth College; Lewisham Southwark College; London South Bank University; Middlesex University; Morley College Limited; Newham Sixth Form College; Ravensbourne; Redbridge College; Sir George Monoux College; The College of Haringey, Enfield and North-East London; The College of North West London; The Royal Central School of Speech and Drama; The School of Oriental and African Studies; The University of Westminster; University College London; University of East London; University of Greenwich; Uxbridge College; Waltham Forest College; Westminster Kingsway College								
Other partners: City and Guilds; GSM London; OCN London; Pearson; Union Learn								
Merseyside Network for Collaborative Outreach (MNCO)	120	58	0	7	55	0	0	0
Institutional partners: The University of Liverpool; Edge Hill University; Hugh Baird College; Liverpool Hope University; Liverpool John Moores University; Riverside College; St Helens College; The City of Liverpool College; The Liverpool Institute for Performing Arts; University of Chester; Wirral Metropolitan College								
Other partners:								
North East Midlands Collaborative Outreach Network	198	124	15	5	47	1	4	2
Institutional partners: University of Derby; Bishop Grosseteste University; Central College Nottingham; Chesterfield College; Derby College; Loughborough College; New College Nottingham (NCN); Nottingham Trent University; Stephenson College; The University of Nottingham; West Nottinghamshire College								
Other partners:								
North East Raising Aspiration Partnership	282	101	19	6	92	17	42	5
Institutional partners: University of Newcastle Upon Tyne; Teesside University; University of Durham; University of Northumbria at Newcastle; University of Sunderland								
Other partners:								
REACH	93	56	8	0	19	0	10	0
Institutional partners: The University of Leicester; De Montfort University; Leicester College; Loughborough College; Loughborough University								
Other partners:								

Southern Universities Network (SUN)	211	89	26	7	73	4	11	1
Institutional partners: The University of Southampton; Bournemouth University; Southampton Solent University; The Arts University Bournemouth; University of Portsmouth; University of Winchester								
Other partners:								
Study Higher	176	93	12	8	35	5	23	0
Institutional partners: Oxford Brookes University; Abingdon and Witney College; Activate Learning; Amersham and Wycombe College; Aylesbury College; Buckinghamshire New University; Ruskin College; Swindon College; The University of Reading; University of Oxford								
Other partners:								
Suffolk and Norfolk Collaborative Network	157	71	12	10	35	14	14	1
Institutional partners: University Campus Suffolk Ltd; City College Norwich; Norwich University of the Arts; The University of East Anglia								
Other partners:								
Sussex Learning Network	125	40	22	5	53	4	1	0
Institutional partners: University of Brighton; Northbrook College Sussex; The University of Chichester; University of Sussex								
Other partners:								
Western Outreach Network (WON)	213	110	17	8	32	11	30	5
Institutional partners: The University of Bath; Bath College; Bath Spa University; Bridgwater College; City of Bristol College; Hartpury College; Strode College; University of Bristol; University of the West of England, Bristol; Weston College of Further and Higher Education; Yeovil College								
Other partners:								