



Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a Uni Connect activity run by Next Steps South West (NSSW). We provide students activities, advice and information on the benefits and realities of going to university or college. Our aim is that access to higher education (HE) is not limited by a students' background, location, or characteristics.

Who are we? NSSW is the Uni Connect partnership for Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset based at Plymouth University.

What is the purpose of these activities? Our activities aim to increase the number of young people in HE by providing information, support and skills to GCSE and FE level students. We aim to support learners to broaden their horizons and make informed decisions about their future educational and career choices.

How will you be involved? You will be invited to attend activities that will help explain your post-18 options, target specific skills, or aim to raise your attainment, confidence, and/or aspirations.

How will you help evaluate these activities? You may be asked to complete a survey, join a focus group, or participate in an activity with an assessment to help evaluate our sessions. This will allow us to assess their usefulness, whether they impact on your views about HE, and how they can be improved. Your responses or assessment marks may be used if the research is published, but you will not be identifiable.

What will happen with the information collected?

- Your personal data (first and last name, date of birth and postcode) will be collected by the NSSW.
- We will use your personal data to record your attendance of our activities on a secure database called the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT). This will allow us to track you progress onto HE.
- Your data will be used to produce monitoring reports and may be shared with the Department for Education (DfE) and the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).
- We will remove all personal data from HEAT if you do not take part in NSSW activities by the time you leave Year 13, FE Level 3 Year 2 education (or equivalent).
- All surveys are collected anonymously, and student responses are aggregated in final reports.
- We may collect your written assessments which will be marked anonymously by an external examiner, and upon grading, the results may be shared with your school.
- We may collect your predicted or actual GCSE results to assess the impact of our activities on your attainment. If collected this data will be stored on a secure server at the University of Plymouth.
- Audio recordings of focus groups will be transcribed and once transcribed audio files will be deleted.
- You will not be identified in survey responses, transcriptions of discussions or evaluation reports.
- NSSW and its partners will not use your personal data in a way that would affect you individually and will not release data to any unauthorised third parties.
- We will handle all data securely in line with the Data Protection Act 2018.

Controlling your personal information

If you are concerned your personal information is not accurate and wish to have it corrected or, wish to be forgotten you can contact the Evaluation Team at evaluation.nssw@plymouth.ac.uk to discuss this further.

Please be aware that if you do decide to withdraw from the Next Steps South West project, it is not possible to withdraw any data that has already been committed to research publications.

Our full Participants Privacy Policy can be found at <https://nextstepssw.ac.uk/your-privacy-matters/>