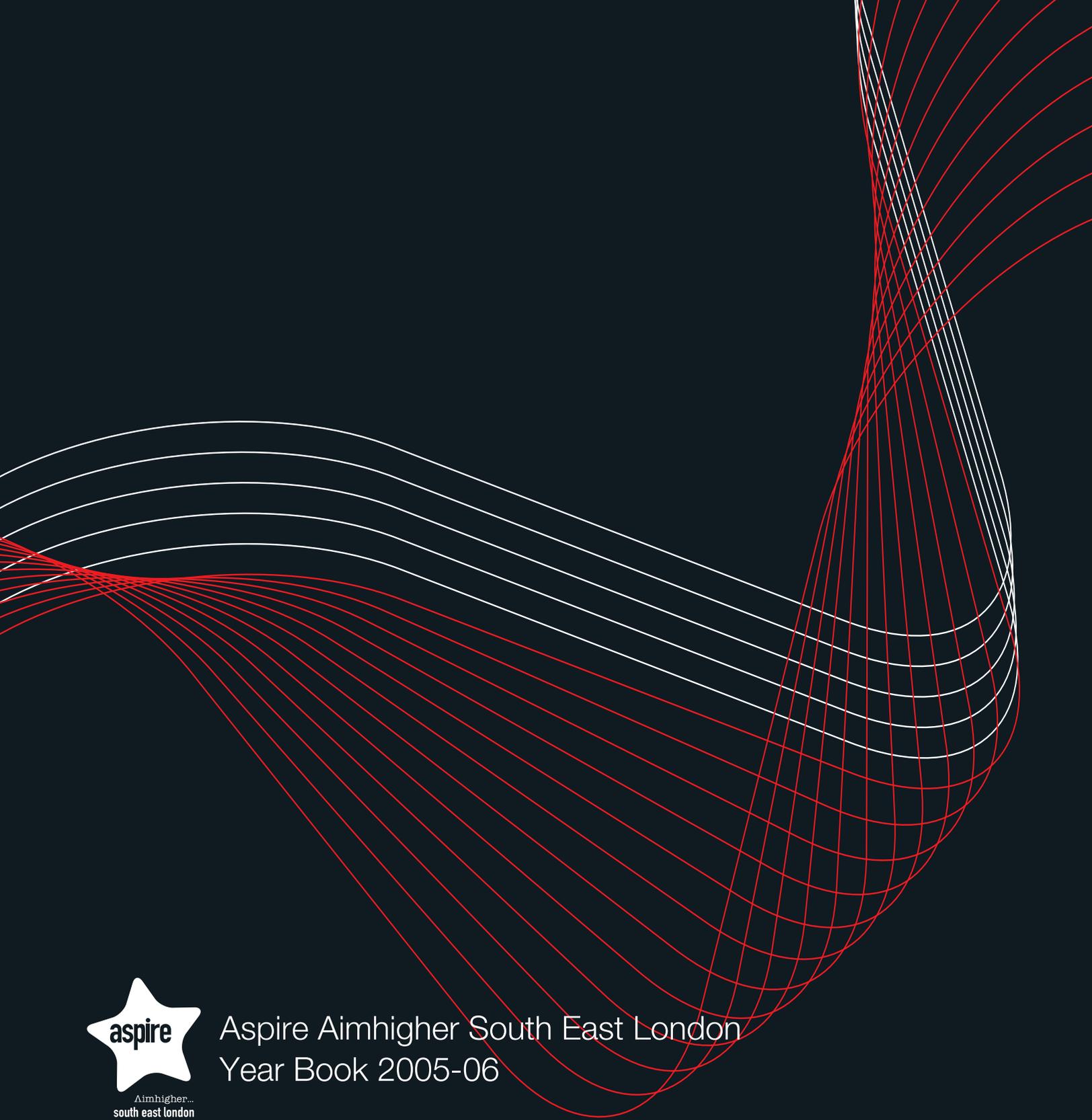


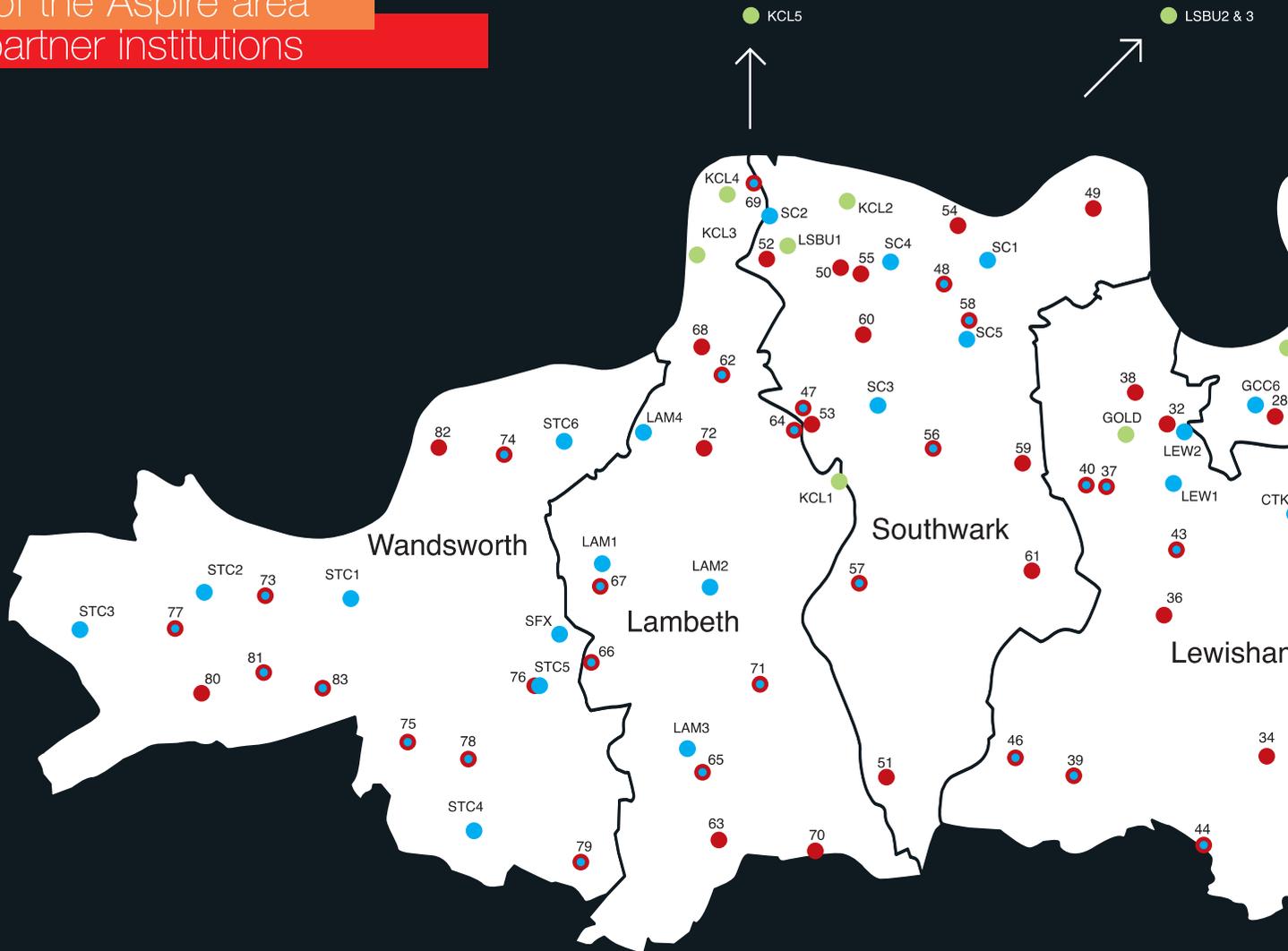
[www.aspire-aimhigher.ac.uk](http://www.aspire-aimhigher.ac.uk)



Aimhigher...  
south east london

Aspire Aimhigher South East London  
Year Book 2005-06

# Map of the Aspire area and partner institutions



Universities	
GOLD	Goldsmiths, University of London
UG1	University of Greenwich Greenwich Campus
UG2	University of Greenwich Avery Hill Campus
UG3	University of Greenwich Medway Campus
KCL1	Kings College London Denmark Hill
KCL2	Kings College London Guy's Campus
KCL3	Kings College London St Thomas' Campus
KCL4	Kings College London Waterloo Campus
KCL5	Kings College London Strand Campus
LSBU1	London South Bank University Southwark Campus
LSBU2	London South Bank University East London Campus
LSBU3	London South Bank University Essex Campus

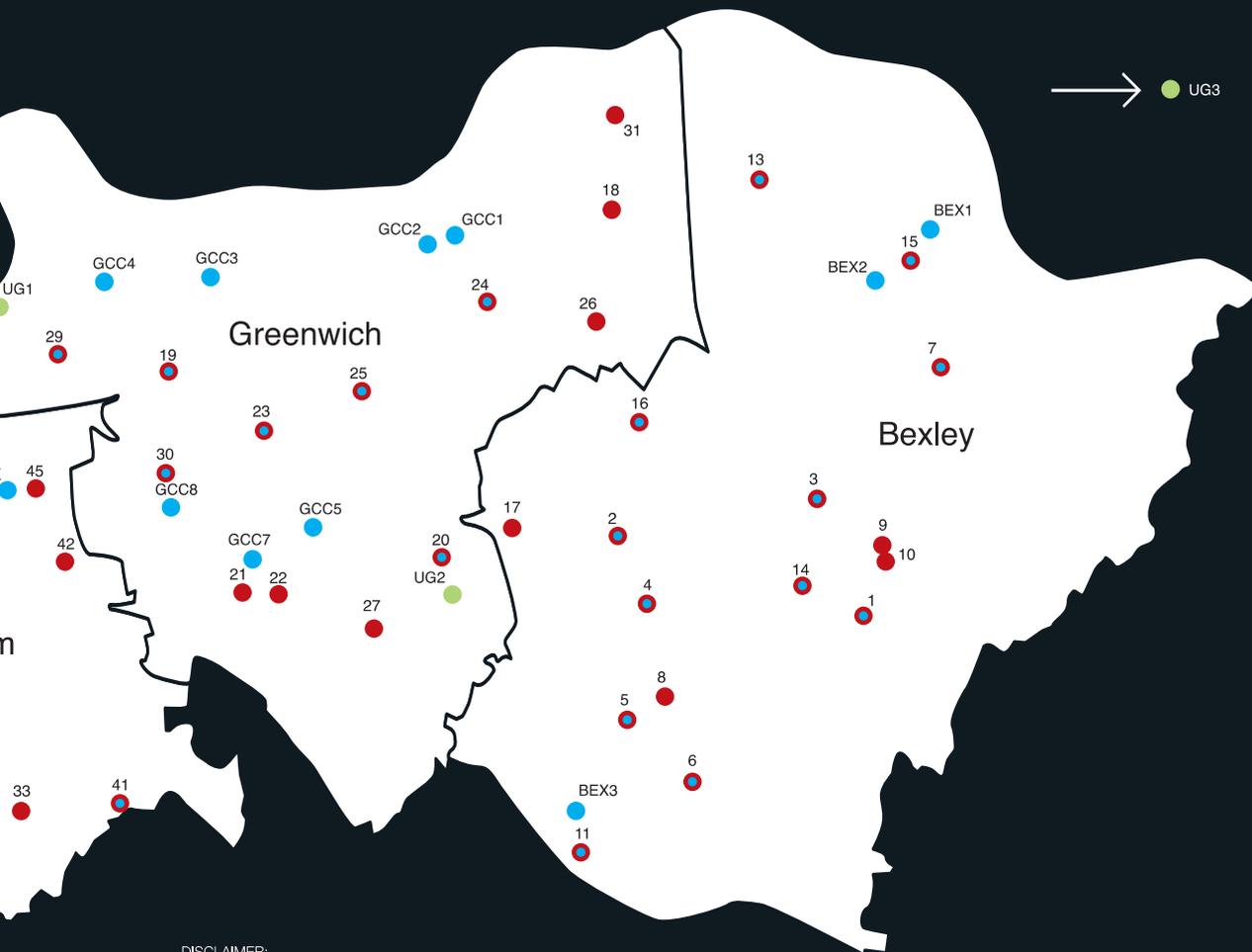
Further Education Colleges	
BEX1	Bexley College Tower Road Campus
BEX2	Bexley College Holly Hill Campus
BEX3	Bexley College Sidcup Campus
CTK	Christ the King 6th Form College, Lewisham
GCC1	Greenwich Community College Plumstead Centre
GCC2	Greenwich Community College Burrage Centre
GCC3	Greenwich Community College Charlton Athletic
GCC4	Greenwich Community College Meridian Music Centre
GCC5	Greenwich Community College Gordon Centre
GCC6	Greenwich Community College Greenwich Park Centre
GCC7	Greenwich Community College Haimo Centre
GCC8	Greenwich Community College New Horizons Centre

Further Education Colleges	
LAM1	Lambeth College Clapham Centre
LAM2	Lambeth College Brixton Centre
LAM3	Lambeth College Adare Centre
LAM4	Lambeth College Vauxhall Centre
LEW1	Lewisham College Lewisham Campus
LEW2	Lewisham College Deptford Campus
STC1	South Thames College Wandsworth Centre
STC2	South Thames College Putney Centre
STC3	South Thames College Roehampton Centre
STC4	South Thames College Tooting Centre
STC5	South Thames College Balham Centre
STC6	South Thames College Battersea Centre
SC1	Southwark College Bermondsey Centre
SC2	Southwark College Waterloo Centre
SC3	Southwark College Camberwell Centre
SC4	Southwark College Grange Centre
SC5	Southwark College The Learning Shop
SFX	St Francis Xavier 6th Form College, Wandsworth

Secondary Schools and 6th Forms	
1	Bexley Beths Grammar School
2	Bexley Bexley Grammar School
3	Bexley Bexleyheath School
4	Bexley Blackfen School for Girls
5	Bexley Sidcup & Chislehurst Grammar School
6	Bexley Cleeve Park School

Secondary Schools	
7	Bexley Erith School
8	Bexley Hurstmere Foundation School
9	Bexley St Catherine's RC 6th Form
10	Bexley St Columba's RC 6th Form
11	Bexley St Mary & St Joseph's RC 6th Form
12	Bexley St Luke's RC 6th Form
13	Bexley The Business Academy
14	Bexley Townley Grammar School
15	Bexley Trinity School
16	Bexley Welling School
17	Bexley Westwood College
18	Greenwich Abbey Wood School
19	Greenwich Blackheath Blue Coat School
20	Greenwich Crown Woods School
21	Greenwich Eltham Green School
22	Greenwich Eltham Hill Technical School
23	Greenwich Kidbrooke School
24	Greenwich Plumstead Manor School
25	Greenwich Negus 6th Form
26	Greenwich Shooters Hill Primary School
27	Greenwich St Paul's Academy
28	Greenwich St Thomas More School
29	Greenwich St Ursula's Convent
30	Greenwich The John Roan School
31	Greenwich Thomas Tallis School
32	Greenwich Woolwich Polytechnic



**DISCLAIMER:**

For the purposes of this map, Further Education Colleges includes FE and 6th Form Colleges administered under FE regulations and funded by Aspire to work with local schools. The name, status and location of each institution has been checked against university, college, school and/or borough websites. We apologise for any possible error.

Schools with FE / 6th form provision

**Schools and 6th Forms**

Foundation School  
 C School for Girls  
 C Boys' School  
 Joseph RC School /  
 n Form College  
 Academy Bexley  
 ar School for Girls  
 ge  
 hool  
 coat CE School  
 hool  
 hool  
 nology College  
 ol  
 or School /  
 Centre  
 Centre  
 st 16 Campus  
 my  
 e RC School  
 vent RC School  
 School  
 hool  
 chnic School

32 Lewisham Addey & Stanhope Secondary School  
 33 Lewisham Bonus Pastor RC School  
 34 Lewisham Catford Business & Enterprise College  
 36 Lewisham Crofton Secondary School  
 37 Lewisham Crossways Academy  
 38 Lewisham Deptford Green School  
 39 Lewisham Forest Hill School  
 40 Lewisham Haberdashers' Aske's Hatcham College  
 41 Lewisham Haberdashers' Aske's Knights Academy  
 42 Lewisham Northbrook CE School  
 43 Lewisham Prendergast School  
 44 Lewisham Sedgehill School  
 45 Lewisham St Joseph's Academy  
 46 Lewisham Sydenham School  
 47 Southwark Archbishop Michael Ramsey Technology College  
 48 Southwark The Harris Academy, Bermondsey  
 49 Southwark Bacon's City Technology College  
 50 Southwark Geoffrey Chaucer Technology College  
 51 Southwark Kingsdale School  
 52 Southwark Notre Dame RC Girls' School  
 53 Southwark Sacred Heart RC Secondary School  
 54 Southwark St Michael's RC School  
 55 Southwark St Saviour's & St Olave's CE School  
 56 Southwark The Academy at Peckham  
 57 Southwark The Charter School

58 Southwark The City of London Academy (Southwark)  
 59 Southwark The St Thomas the Apostle College  
 60 Southwark Walworth School  
 61 Southwark Waverley School  
 62 Lambeth Archbishop Tenison's CE School  
 63 Lambeth Bishop Thomas Grant RC School  
 64 Lambeth Charles Edward Brooke CE Girls' School  
 65 Lambeth Dunraven School  
 66 Lambeth La Retraite RC Girls' School  
 67 Lambeth Lambeth Academy  
 68 Lambeth Lilian Baylis Technology School  
 69 Lambeth London Nautical School  
 70 Lambeth Norwood School for Girls  
 71 Lambeth St Martin-in-the-Fields CE High School for Girls  
 72 Lambeth Stockwell Park School  
 73 Wandsworth ADT College  
 74 Wandsworth Battersea Technology College  
 75 Wandsworth Burntwood School  
 76 Wandsworth Chestnut Grove School  
 77 Wandsworth Elliott School  
 78 Wandsworth Ernest Bevin College  
 79 Wandsworth Graveney School  
 80 Wandsworth John Paul II RC School  
 81 Wandsworth St Cecilia's Wandsworth CE School  
 82 Wandsworth Salesian College  
 83 Wandsworth Southfields Community College

# Contents

01	Map	Map of the Aspire area and partner institutions		
03	Introduction	Working together		
04	People	Involving students 05 Year 9-11 07 Post 16 08 Ambassadors 09 Mature students	Involving the community 10 Open Book 11 Care leavers 13 The Prince's Trust 14 Parents & wider communities	Involving staff 15 The School Aimhigher Coordinator 16 The Role of the Borough Aimhigher Coordinator 18 Developing student ambassadors as staff 20 The academic view
22	Developing skills	23 Choosing the right course and university 25 Time management skills 27 Paying for higher education		
28	Events & activities	29 The GAP Study & Revision Project 32 Vocational Pathways Support Project 33 Subject specific and classroom support 35 Access Spring School 36 Post 16 Gifted & Talented	37 Constance Howard Textiles Project 38 Staff development 39 Explore 2012 40 Ladders Project 41 Aspire communications	
42	Further information	43 Suggested publications 44 A-Z of websites 47 Index		
46	Contact details	46 Local Borough Coordinators 46 Aspire Further Education Project Officers 49 Aspire Higher Education Project Officers		

## Working together...

Welcome to something different from Aspire, the Aimhigher project that covers the area from Bexley to Wandsworth taking in Greenwich, Lewisham, Southwark and Lambeth on the way.

This Year Book replaces our previous Aspire activities brochures and is designed to give people involved in the project something of interest to add to what you know already. It provides background information, reflecting at least some of the diversity of our partners and their client groups. As important, it shows developing good practice. So we have tried to indicate how cross-sectoral networks are emerging, to include basic contact information and to provide some outlines of the sort of information people need to prepare for life at university written both by people who have provided and benefited from Aspire activities.

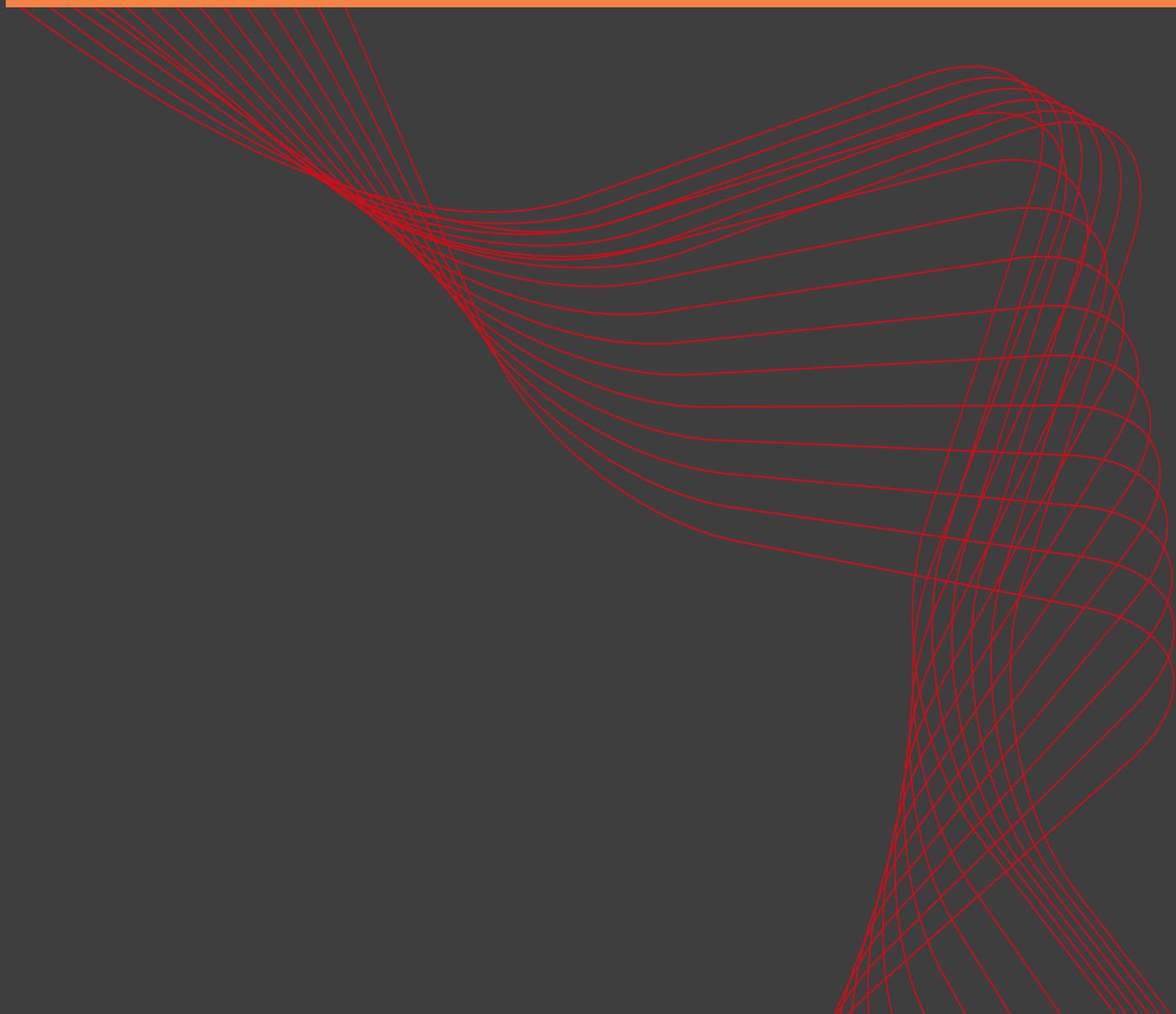
This is just a snapshot of what we have been working on recently. By no means complete or comprehensive, its job is to complement the current information on the new Aspire website [www.aspire-aimhigher.ac.uk](http://www.aspire-aimhigher.ac.uk) as that is where you will now find out about forthcoming activities organised by the boroughs, FE colleges and universities in South East London.

Gwenlian Evans  
Aspire Project Coordinator

Involving people

05 **Students** 10 **Communities**

15 **Staff**



## Neena Patel (BA Psychology & Media Studies) and Ladan Mirzadeh (LLB Law) have been Aspire student ambassadors at London South Bank University for a year and a half and have worked on several generic university taster days with Year 9-11 students from South and East London...

Neena: Working with younger students is always an enjoyable and interesting experience. The activities are usually based on informing the young people about what opportunities are available to them now and in the future and helping them choose their own path to get to their chosen career. Our role is to get involved and talk with the young people as a lot of them have a lot of questions about life as a student at university.

Ladan: Working on a 9 High Day is very satisfying. Most of them are so enthusiastic about being there and ask lots of questions. They get involved with their activities and make us work to our full potential! There hasn't been one time when we have been bored and not liked working with them. They keep us on our toes, make us run around but it's so much fun to work with them, it is by far the best work that I have done for Aspire and I always look forward to working on these events.

Neena: One of the most interesting events I have worked on was a visit from a Year 9 group from Aylwin Girls School in Southwark. The conversations with the girls were interesting and humorous and it reminded me what it was like to be 14.

Ladan: We have a range of activities for them to engage in. It differs slightly each time but we usually have activities such as Jargon Buster which is brilliant as they get to familiarise themselves with university jargon and understand the way a university runs. Then there is London, City of Opportunity, which discusses the jobs and opportunities London presents...

Neena: The groups also do a fun activity called 'Hello Brain', which gets the participants to do various physical and practical exercises to stimulate learning. After that, they have a session with Connexions (Making the Right Decisions) where they get them to think about their GCSE options and what will be available to them when they get to sixteen. Lastly, they spend time with me and the other student ambassadors, finding out what it is like to study at university and set themselves an action plan to show how they can get to university themselves.

Ladan: Our role on these days is to 'supervise' the young people and help with activities; to make sure everyone knows where they are going, make sure the kids keep the noise down whilst moving around the building and help the instructors run the activities. We also try to interact with the students and try to get them involved and enjoy themselves for them to get as much as possible from the event.

Neena: They all seem to enjoy the day. I particularly enjoyed working with one group as the girls were very chatty and wanted to know about what I do and how I got to university. Two girls in particular found the day beneficial and thanked me for all my effort and spending the day with them.

Ladan: I believe it is a great opportunity for kids that age to come into university as they get first hand knowledge of what university really is. They have the chance to talk to lecturers and current students i.e. us! University is very different from both school and college and it is good to make them aware of this so they don't get shocked once they are there, and it



also shows them how and what they have to do in order to get into university.

Neena: When I was in Year 9 I didn't have any opportunities to do this and I think it would have been a great help to visit a university at an early age and hear how students actually made it there.

Ladan: In Year 9 and 10, I had no idea what grades I needed from my GCSEs to get to university or even what I wanted to study once I got there! It would have been great to get a first hand view of it at that stage because what you do then does matter when you get to university, even if it is years away!

Neena: Working with younger students is a very rewarding experience especially hearing positive comments about how grateful they are for the time we spend with them.

Ladan: It is especially fulfilling and satisfying when the young people leave having liked most of the day!

Neena: And I feel far more confident, have met some interesting people and have made a great group of friends...



Milena Popova is currently studying A-levels in Politics, Media, Sociology and German at St Francis Xavier 6th Form College in Wandsworth. She came to the UK from Bulgaria with her family three years ago, at the age of sixteen, and enrolled on King's College London's one year Academic Language Development Programme (ALDP) in January 2005.

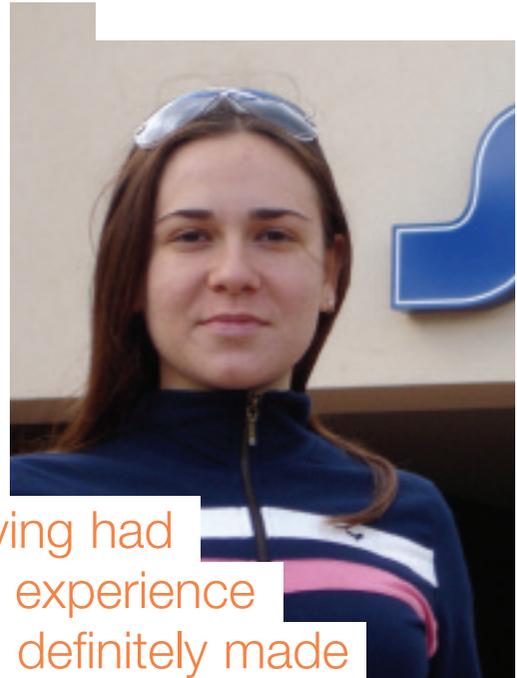
The Academic Language Development Programme (ALDP) at King's College London takes place on Saturday mornings between 10am-1pm, during term time.

The programme was really helpful for lots of reasons. It gave me the opportunity to study English in an academic environment and to meet other students from a wide range of backgrounds. We all had different points of view of English and it was really interesting to hear how people with different experiences of learning English saw things differently.

### It really opened my eyes

We got the opportunity to extend our English in all sorts of situations: group discussions, debates, doing presentations, attending lectures, constructing arguments, analysing language and grammar as well as reading and writing. This meant that the course was never boring because we were always doing something different.

I found the attitude of the teachers to be really helpful too. Because we were giving up our time to be there, we were treated much more like adults than in college. When you're treated as an adult by someone who believes in your abilities, you're much more likely to believe in yourself and succeed. I found this really helped me with my self-belief, and it has helped me study for my A-levels. I know I can do well.



Having had this experience has definitely made me better prepared to go to university....

I now intend to study European Studies and a language at university and subsequently a Masters in International Relations. The ALDP has showed me of the importance of being able to speak other languages - not just English. I now intend to study European Studies and a language at university. King's is top of my list, because I know what it's like to study there and I know the course has a good reputation.

When I go to university I think the ALDP will continue to help me. For example I now know what the relationship between university lecturer and student is like. I think a lot of people might go to university expecting it to be like school or college. Thanks to the ALDP I know what to expect.

I would certainly recommend the ALDP to anyone who wants to improve their academic language. It's an opportunity to learn a lot of really useful stuff, to taste what it's like to go to university and to make good friends. Having had this experience has definitely made me better prepared to go to university.

James Kay is a 1st year Diploma Architecture student at the University of Greenwich. He has been an Aspire-funded student ambassador since 2005 and worked on a range of projects including taster days, FE visits, parents evenings, UCAS fairs and primary events.

I would definitely recommend becoming a student ambassador to every student. I have thoroughly enjoyed working as an ambassador at every activity I have been involved in. It is not just a job, it has become my social life, helped me develop new skills and benefited me within my architecture course.

The variety of work, locations and diversity of students that I've met is incredible. It has really helped with my confidence, meeting and talking to new people as well as public speaking. I still can't believe the amount of times I have stood up in front of a lecture theatre full of students and managed to keep my cool!

Not only have I been involved with workshops and events on behalf of Aspire and the University of Greenwich, I have also designed and organised an architecture and construction taster day. I now run my own events which help students understand what architecture is about and how to become an architect.

The best part of being a student ambassador is meeting and helping with workshops for the younger students. I was recently involved in an arts & crafts workshop at a Harry Potter event for primary schools where they looked up to us as well as accepting us as friends. Meeting older students is just as fun: I went to a local FE College to talk about being an architecture student and show my degree work. It started as a formal presentation and ended up with the students all around me, firing questions at me about my course, student life and architecture whilst looking through all my work.

I prefer talking to students on a one-to-one basis and I feel it's a more effective way for individuals to get the idea of achieving in life through further and higher education. Being available to chat to individuals at careers fairs and parents evenings is also very successful way of passing on information informally.

Over the last few years I have also gained a large amount of experience within my degree and through working in a design office. I feel that I am able to influence and motivate young people through the things I have learnt, which intrigue and interest them.

I have always been interested in teaching and being involved with young people. Helping to inspire, motivate and hopefully encourage young people to attend university has been such an achievement and given me a valuable insight into the teaching profession.

Being  
an Aspire  
student  
ambassador  
is the  
best job  
I have  
ever had

Being an Aspire student ambassador is the best job I have ever had and probably will ever have and I can't believe that I get paid for having so much fun! I am very proud of being a student at the University of Greenwich and being able to promote the University, its partners and higher education in general has been a huge accomplishment.

### Shay Vandertang is Aspire Project Officer at South Thames College in the London Borough of Wandsworth. Here, she and some of STC's mature students talk about their experience of Access courses...

Access courses provide an exciting opportunity for mature students over 19 years who would like to go on to study for a university degree or higher education qualification, but do not have the traditional entry qualifications. Higher education is not just for school leavers! Every year, thousands of adults, many of whom have spent a number of years outside education, choose to develop their lives and careers.

Normally, there is no formal entry qualification for an Access course, but you must be committed and dedicated to sign up for a potential 4 years of study - one year for the Access course and then 3 years for a degree course. You must have reasonable English and Maths skills and be prepared to do some hard work - it is our job to help make you 'university-ready' in just one year.

Along with most other Aspire FE colleges, South Thames College Access students have an excellent track record for progression onto higher education. Students are also given additional careers guidance and help with the UCAS procedure when applying for university.

STC Access courses are validated by LOCN (London Region OCN) and are recognised by universities nationally.

**Patrick Moore**  
Access to Humanities student, South Thames College

*"The initial reason for choosing an Access course was, while attending a computer course at Tooting, I met a careers adviser who suggested that I might try Access. The first objective was to get a basic education, which I had missed out on in my early years. Now that my course is almost finished, it is my hope to continue on at university. I am a mature student, and am very pleased to have taken this course. The lecturers have risen to the challenge of educating me, and my fellow pupils are a very interesting mixed bunch. I have enjoyed every minute of it."*

**Beatrice Muliisa**  
Access to Humanities student, South Thames College

*I was born and raised in Rwanda, one of the poorest countries in the world. I then moved to Uganda when I was nine years old. With the education and experience I have acquired, I realised that one of the problems affecting most African countries is lack of social policies and good management skills. I felt it was logical for me to take up a course which is related to social policy in order to contribute to socially deprived societies. Coming to South Thames College has been a first and successful step towards acquiring the qualification required to implementing adequate social policies in my home country and the world at large. I have found this course very helpful and enjoyable. I have wonderful teachers who are very patient and always there to guide me. My fellow students have also been very friendly and helpful. I strongly recommend the Access programme at South Thames College.*



## Open Book

'On Tuesday, I had a brief, intense conversation about Christianity in fifth-century North Africa at a celebration at Goldsmiths of the work of an astonishing project called Open Book.

Set up by Joe Baden four years ago, Open Book aims to get people from offending, mental health and addiction backgrounds into further (and higher) education. The man who told me he was boning up on Medieval Latin for a doctoral thesis on St Augustine had been a drug addict for 30 years. I also spoke to a former armed robber doing a sociology degree and a playwright on day release from HMP Ford whose work has been commended by the Royal Court. I wish that the people who are so blinkered about the possibility of rehabilitating offenders could see the work organisations like Open Book do. Yes, of course criminals should be punished – but by educating ex-offenders we help them earn a living, pay their debt to society and stop them from creating more victims.'

Will Self, Evening Standard, 17.11.05

Based at Goldsmiths College, Open Book works closely with its Aspire partners, the Students' Union and many agencies that work within the criminal justice and addiction field. The project was set up at Goldsmiths to encourage people who would not normally consider further and higher education to do so. Through regular drop-in sessions and a 24 hour advice line run by fellow students, Open Book prepares its students for higher level learning, helps to find appropriate courses for them and then supports them throughout the duration of their study and beyond. The Students' Union offers the project space and helps facilitate academic support. Open Book also provides a range of other services to ensure that its students have the opportunity to access education at all levels.

The project actively recruits its students from a range of communities, including prisons, and, as a consequence of its success, is beginning to gain a national reputation. In his Guardian article 'Been there, done that' (29/06/04) Stephen Hoare stated, 'Open Book is at the very cutting edge of inclusion' and Chris Bunting, writing for the Times Education Supplement (05/03/04) argued that the project was: 'one of the most exciting widening access programmes in British Higher Education.'

At the heart of Open Book at Goldsmiths is the ethos that every individual in our society has the right to fulfil their academic potential. In supporting this project, Aspire asserts its obligation to serve the whole of society and leads the way in extending the boundaries of widening participation through academic excellence.

Joe Baden  
Goldsmiths, University of London

## Working with care leavers

An estimated 1% of looked after children in England progress to higher education, compared to 37% of the population as a whole, according to a report by the government's Social Exclusion Unit\*. St Christopher's Fellowship Aimhi project, which supports care leavers in Lambeth, set up a pilot project to interest care leavers in higher education following a meeting with the London South Bank University (LSBU) Widening Participation Unit in Autumn 2005. The project, co-funded by Aspire, ran from January - March 06 and is currently being evaluated with a view to planning a project in the next financial year.

The target of the Aimhi project was young people for whom university was a realistic option and it was intended to enable them to learn about the experience of other people who had chosen to go on to higher education so that they might be encouraged and motivated to pursue their career goals by taking a similar pathway. The programme involved some pre-planned core tasks that were linked to aspirations, as well as planning and preparing for the realities of the university experience, and a 'fun' activity which was determined by the participants. Contact was group activity based and an Aimhi member of staff was always present.

LSBU recruited, police-checked, trained the ambassadors and identified 8 to be placed with Aimhi, for the January - March 2006 pilot. Aimhi met with and interviewed/briefed 6 ambassadors. All were women studying law, nursing, psychology and teaching. In the end, 4 ambassadors in total participated in the pilot programme.

Aimhi drew up a 'role' and 'programme' for the ambassadors which took the form of befriending / buddying / sharing experiences. They delivered a preparatory session to the ambassadors which included training on the care and care-leaving 'experience' and the Buttle-funded research report 'Going to University from Care'.

Aimhi selected young people/recipients and provided LSBU with the criteria. In the end, five young people took part. London South Bank University offered a bursary reward for ambassadors, which effectively pays them for time given. Aimhi covered the costs of expenses incurred by young people, and the costs of all activities and resources involved in the contact and the project.

For the young people and ambassadors involved, the feedback indicated the impact was positive. Young people were informed and had questions answered to enable them to feel more confident about attending university. The topic material was relevant and applicable.

Ambassadors felt their involvement was helpful and rewarding and wish to be involved in future. Rochelle Devonish, one of the Aspire ambassadors working on Aimhi said, "I was a bit apprehensive about working with care leavers as I wasn't sure I'd be able to answer all their questions, but in the end I really enjoyed it because I felt like I'd had an impact on their future. For some of them who weren't sure if they wanted to go to uni or not, it was a turning point, for others who knew they wanted to go, it cleared up some issues especially around finance and the application process. We helped to show them that university really isn't that scary once you get there!"

Brianna Strum  
Senior Personal Adviser, St Christopher's Aimhi project

\*Social Exclusion Unit Report, 'A Better Education for Children in Care' (2003)



An  
estimated  
1%  
of looked after  
children  
in England  
progress  
to higher  
education

## The Prince's Trust

As part of Bexley Aimhigher's commitment to creating opportunities for 'hard to reach' groups to participate in the opportunities available, groups of young people from Prince's Trust Bexley have attended a specially designed What's Behind The Walls? day at the University of Greenwich. This was part of their Next Steps week, which is designed to help the participants think about what they will do after their time with the Prince's Trust programme has finished.

As well as taking campus tours and getting an insight into the student lifestyle, the groups chatted with student ambassadors who have taken unconventional paths to Level 4 courses, participated in drama workshops which focussed on the importance of body language and looked at the different routes into further and higher education.

A highlight of the programme was the opportunity to work with Joe Baden, whose Open Book programme has been very successful at encouraging disadvantaged groups into higher education. Students also had the opportunity to discuss issues and concerns with students who had achieved in higher education against the odds and the session, entitled 'Why Bother With Education?', clearly struck a chord with the participating students.

Kate Collins, Prince's Trust Bexley, described the event as a success and went on to say that she thought other young people will benefit from this sort of visit in the future. The most emphatic praise was from the students, with the majority of participants now considering higher education as a possible future choice and some now saying that they will definitely be going on to participate in Level 4 courses. After the success of partnership working with the Prince's Trust, Bexley is now looking at ways that Aspire funding can be further disseminated to hard to reach groups.

Alix Petty  
Former Bexley Aimhigher Coordinator



Students had the opportunity to discuss issues with students who had achieved in higher education against the odds

### Working with parents and community groups

Aspire's commitment to working with parents and communities is not a nicety, an 'add on' or an after-thought. The fact is, as much as taster days, tours of universities, mentoring and visits are a fantastic influence on young people's attitude to higher education, the feelings held towards higher education and the resulting encouragement of students by parents, carers and communities is the major intervening factor in widening participation work.

We can try to convince and motivate the students in the time we have with them but can this overcome the lifetime of influence on attitudes and intentions towards progression developed by parents, carers and wider communities?

To give you an example, over breakfast the other day I found myself saying to my brother, "When you go to university..." This happy event is not on the near-horizon, he is now only 7 but his current craze for supplementing the odd word with the little French he knows led me to encourage him to consider languages at degree level! I mean, this is why support is needed for 'first in family' students who may not have had this drip-feed, over breakfast, university sell, since as early as 7. This is not to suggest that parents have negative attitudes towards higher education, nor that they do not encourage their children but that students may be at a disadvantage to some peers if their parents are not up-to-date, familiar with, or favourable toward, further and higher education.

At Southwark College, we are trying to work with parents and the community. At our recent Student and Parent HE Evening there was an opportunity to visit university stalls and stands, attend talks on university funding and student life, to speak to bilingual current university students and to pick up Aimhigher

literature. Every possible marketing tool was employed to students and their parents from both the college and local schools (flyers, letters home, web announcements, tutorial visits...). There were over 100 attendees and yet only 2 families.

The message I have gleaned from this experience is that generic events for parents might be unlikely to draw large audiences. We cannot escape the catch that interested parents will attend, and are perhaps encouraging their children anyway, and those who are not interested in further or higher education for their families, will not. Our Aspire events should, of course, continue to attempt to draw parents. However, experience would suggest that we should invite parents, carers and communities to events already held for their children and young people. Where suitable we should hold the doors open for mixed age and ability groups, parents and carers, community members, youth workers and anyone else students would like to bring. Rather than separate FE / HE related information for potential students and their parents we should combine events and enable students and their families to investigate FE / HE together. Another benefit of this approach is of course, attracting these adults back into education! Let's take Aspire to parents and community groups (public halls, residence associations, parent evenings in schools) rather than asking these groups to come to us.

**the young people we work with are the 'parents, carers and wider communities' of the future.**

In 2005/06, lots of Aspire effort has been made to work with parents and the community and activities have taken place across the Aspire partnership. The message for 07/08 is that we must persevere aided by an approach of holding events in which young people benefit and are able to bring their parents or other significant adults and keeping our events open to all. We must not forget that providing literature for parents and carers and giving young people a fantastic experience, which motivates and encourages them, is powerful and indirect work with parents. Finally, the young people we work with are the 'parents, carers and wider communities' of the future.

Amelia Aiken  
Aspire Project Officer, Southwark College

The School Aimhigher Coordinator  
As the Aimhigher Coordinator at The  
Business Academy, Bexley, I feel  
very fortunate to have access to a  
wealth of activities and information  
about further and higher education,  
both for my students and myself.

The Business Academy is a relative newcomer to Aspire and we are doing our best to make up for lost time! In the past year, our International Baccalaureat students have attended the Explore 2012 on Business & IT at Laban; Year 12s have explored teaching at Goldsmiths and visited the UCAS HE Convention at Crystal Palace; Year 9s attended a Sports Science Taster Day at LSBU and Year 10 and 11 participated in summer schools in the Aspire region and beyond. In addition, during our post-exam Activities Week, our Year 9 and 10s visited the University of Greenwich for an Architectural and Construction workshop led by their student ambassadors and more Aspire ambassadors came to the school to talk about their lives as students. Year 8 and 9 students have visited Oxford and we've had talks for Year 12 on Choosing the Right Course and Writing a Personal Statement – all funded through Aspire, Aimhigher and the university widening participation initiatives.

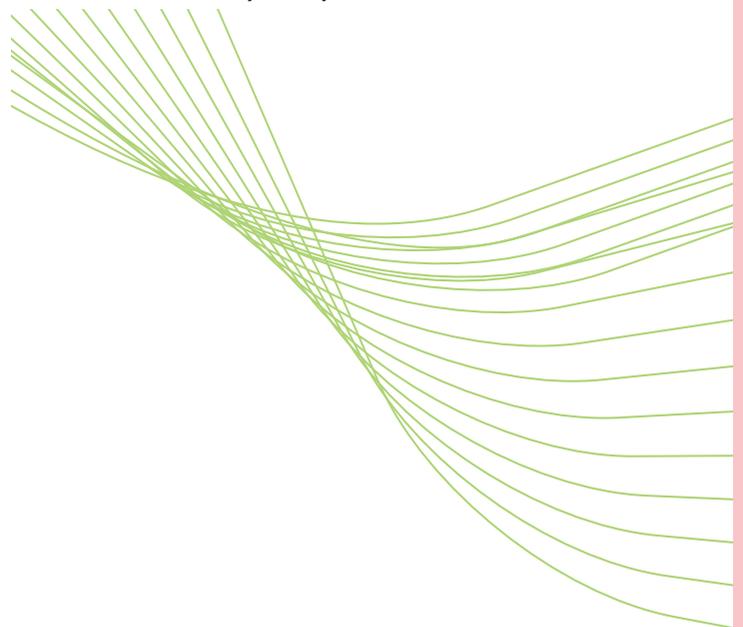
At TBA, we ask our subject teachers to identify and nominate students who have the potential to gain 5 A-Cs at GCSE and whose families have no experience of higher education to attend Aspire Aimhigher events. As Bexley residents have traditionally been very under-represented in higher education, these students are not hard to find. The positive effects of a university visit are evident from their conversations on the trip back home: "Now I've been, I feel I could actually go myself." Not only does a university visit open their eyes to new experiences and give students confidence on the day, it boosts their self esteem and generally makes them realise what they will have to do to get there.

The Aspire network has also been a great benefit to me in my professional development as a Careers Adviser and Aimhigher Coordinator. Throughout the year I've attended various Aspire, Aimhigher and Connexions conferences and seminars on a range of topics, including Supporting Access

to HE, Vocational Pathways and the Aimhigher Coordinators Conference, all of which give school staff the opportunity to meet others with similar interests and challenges. It's also good to meet up with fellow Aimhigher Coordinators at Bexley's Aimhigher meetings, which keep us up to date with forthcoming events, give us advice on applying for extra pots of funding and allow us to share ideas and information about successful events we've set up or attended. Alix Petty, the Bexley Aimhigher Coordinator, also keeps in touch by email and recently introduced me to Zip Theatre Company who are coming in to do a show with workshops on Post 16 options.

Apart from staff events, I learn a lot from attending taster days with the students. For one, the events update me with new information so that I can advise other students better but also because my students are now so much better informed, it's easier for me to guide them toward making their own decisions. I think Aspire can take a lot of credit for that.

Claire Nightingale  
School Aimhigher Coordinator  
The Business Academy, Bexley



## The role of the Aimhigher Borough Coordinator

Each of the six boroughs in the Aspire partnership has a Borough Coordinator whose job it is to 'be responsible for the planning, development, organisation and monitoring of the Borough's implementation of the Aimhigher project in all secondary schools and post-16 institutions' (London Region Aimhigher website). Obviously within such a wide definition each Aimhigher Borough Coordinator has scope to differently focus their time and often this focus changes because of changing demands and strategic priorities. All examples here relate to the author's own borough of Southwark. Worth noting at this point is that no Aimhigher Coordinator in the Aspire area is full-time, some combine this work with Gifted and Talented 11-16 coordination and some are employed elsewhere, meaning everything that follows must be placed in the context of part-time working.

So what does being an Aimhigher Borough Coordinator mean in practice? It means no two days are the same and our time is largely determined by national, regional (London Aimhigher), sub-regional (Aspire), borough and individual schools' plans. Our focus is split between in-depth work with schools to develop practice and capacity and work with outside providers to ensure quality, appropriate activities are delivered in our areas at suitable times within the school calendar. As such we are in touch with a huge amount of people helping organise events, consultations, activities and plans. We are also responsible for feeding back and co-ordinating with local authorities and Aimhigher plans at regional and sub-regional levels.

So, as examples (and this list isn't exhaustive), I am currently working with the following organisations and groups:

- Aspire – meetings to help shape the sub-regional offer and to develop partnership work with individual institutions; planning joint events with staff and student ambassadors. (In Southwark, school Aimhigher Coordinators and subject staff mainly liaise directly with Aspire universities and colleges to set up events, though this may not be the case in all boroughs).
- Specialist providers – such as Geronimo, who run the Roadshow trailer, on the allocation and development of national Aimhigher Roadshow activities; work with independent institutions such as museums and theatres; with business, industry and the Education Business

Partnership; with ASDAN on the development of the Aimhigher module for the Certificate in Personal Effectiveness amongst other things.

- Higher education institutions (HEIs) outside of the Aspire region – developing links based on either specialist subject activities or more generic capacity building activities.
- Local authorities and local LSC partnerships – work on the Pathfinder specialist diploma pathways being developed; attending relevant Southwark Guarantee (our 14-19 Partnership) meetings including twice yearly reports to the Executive of the partnership and regular meetings with the managers (in Southwark we have also amalgamated the Aimhigher Post-16 and the Southwark Guarantee Heads of Sixth meetings and some elements of the work to lessen the administrative and meetings burden on schools); Aimhigher is part of the Excellence in Cities/Education Improvement Partnership and so I also liaise and link up with EIC/EiP activities and strategies.
- Regional and national Aimhigher activities – liaison with the regional thematic partnerships in sport, health and arts and the summer schools' organisation. I represent Borough Coordinators on the Aimhigher Sport thematic and on the South London Health thematic meetings. Liaison with national thematic partnerships including Chemistry: The Next Generation and the National Primary Project.
- Leading own activities – depending on schools' needs we run our own borough activities. For Southwark this includes an annual higher education fair for up to 700 students; a scheme to deliver basic knowledge to all Year 9-11 students in the borough (in pilot stages so far); work on a creative industries and performing arts project for students from 13- 25 to develop their skills, their portfolios and their contacts within the industry and professional development events for school staff. Many of these events have been supported by staff and student ambassadors from the Aspire universities and colleges.

As well as facilitating and managing these different relationships individually, Borough Coordinators are also a catalyst for linking together initiatives so that for our students and our schools there is a joined-up approach. This work might include bringing together related initiatives so that they are working together or ensuring that similar sorts of students are appropriately targeted and activities spread across the area. As such Borough Coordinators have a number of institutional demands placed on them ranging from local and national Aimhigher targets to local authority targets to sub-regional partnership targets to the expectations of external partners and so forth. Essentially we work to the overriding goals of ensuring all students receive opportunity to access the full range of educational possibilities appropriate to them, raising the aspirations and the achievements of young people in the process. In short, encouraging them to Aimhigher.

Dr Louise Livesey  
Southwark Aimhigher Coordinator

Aspire Borough  
Coordinators  
are a catalyst  
for linking  
together  
initiatives so  
that there is  
a joined-up  
approach



### Developing student ambassadors as staff

The University of Greenwich team of over ninety Aspire ambassadors includes students from a variety of study programmes, educational pathways and family backgrounds. Together, as a team, they represent the changing face of university life and seek to encourage potential students into further and higher education.

Within Aspire, we acknowledge the importance of the student ambassador; to an audience they may be the first representative of a further or higher education institution. In order to maintain and strengthen the role of the student ambassador, the University has introduced an Ambassador Development Programme with Aspire funding. As the name suggests, this programme offers developmental training and the opportunity for, amongst other things, the ambassador to feel confident when delivering presentations and to successfully engage with their audience, especially within local schools and colleges; a far cry from when we first employed students to help out with Open Days and act as tour guides. Run through a series of workshops, the Development Programme is optional and in addition to the core two day training and police-check which take place at the beginning of each academic year.

As part of the current programme, student ambassadors are attending a series of advanced presentation skills workshops and have recently been externally assessed by an examiner from the English Speaking Board. Thirteen of our ambassadors are trained on the subject of 'Finance - before during and after university', using a resource pack with case studies to help simplify the reality of each student's financial future. We now have teams of subject-specific ambassadors from the University's School of Computing & Mathematical Sciences and School of Education & Training and four of our ambassadors have recently produced an Architecture Taster Menu which they now deliver in local schools and colleges. Soon to be introduced is a sports ambassadors strand, in conjunction with the University of London Student Union and the Aimhigher Sport thematic partnership.

The development of our student ambassadors not only gives the Aspire colleges and universities a more efficient and motivated ambassador workforce, it also develops their personal skills, enhances their CVs, gives them valuable work experience, helps fund their studies and allows them to reach out to the local community and offer a progression route to those who may not have previously considered further or higher education.

Verna Rhodes  
Aspire Student Ambassador Coordinator  
University of Greenwich



Aspire  
ambassadors  
represent  
the changing  
face of  
university life

### The academic view

Dr Brett St Louis is an academic, lecturing and researching sociology at Goldsmiths, University of London. He has also worked in the USA at the University of California, San Diego and at the University of Bristol where he was Admissions Tutor in Sociology. Here are his views on how the widening participation agenda has developed and affected Goldsmiths Sociology Department's links with local communities over the years.

Support for widening participation is evident at the highest levels. The Higher Education Funding Council for England, emphasises this in recognising that widening participation is 'fundamental in promoting social inclusion and improving the country's economic competitiveness'. At our rather more local level, Goldsmiths has long supported widening participation even before it became known as such in policy circles. Similarly, the Sociology Department at Goldsmiths also has a history of supporting widening participation; our commitment to and involvement in outreach programmes, encouragement of mature and Access to Higher Education course applicants, and fostering a diverse student intake at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels has been a key aspect of departmental policy and identity for many years.

The deeper meaning of this is evident in the practical objectives that Goldsmiths Sociology shares with Lord Dearing's vision for higher education in the 'learning society' formally adopted within HEFCE's own strategic vision and mission statement. The ideals of higher education as inspiring and enabling individuals to fulfil their potential, increasing knowledge and understanding for its own sake, and contributing towards building a democratic and inclusive society are recognisable as objectives at the core of sociology as a discipline. Traditionally, a humanistic sense of sociology as a critic and conscience of society has been a

strong disciplinary self-image and Goldsmiths Sociology readily subscribes to this view within our commitment to widening participation. Indeed, as sociologists, we are interested in not only how knowledge emerges and what actually gets to count as knowledge, but also with which individuals have access to it. Moreover, we believe that if sociology is the discipline charged with developing an understanding of society in its broadest sense then it is paramount that the students and staff that walk the departmental corridors are as broadly representative of the society that exists outside the walls of the university as possible. It is, therefore, our duty to reach out to those for whom higher education seems unattainable despite their ability and potential; we welcome this responsibility not only as an obligation but as a fantastic opportunity both for our students and the department.

## inspiring and enabling individuals to fulfill their potential, increasing knowledge and understanding for its own sake, and contributing towards building a democratic and inclusive society

Having said this it must also be noted that our commitment to widening participation is not one-way traffic; it is not solely a case of us serving the local and broader community by enhancing individual access and opportunity. We also understand widening participation as acting back onto the College and having an important beneficial effect on the Department. Let me take a moment to explain. As society evolves – and we know just how far the world has changed since the ‘founding fathers’ of sociology first understood it during the nineteenth century – sociology also has to adapt to these changes. An obvious way of achieving this is through ongoing social research. Another, perhaps less obvious, way is through engaging with students and teaching. If students have much to learn through studying sociology, sociology too has much to learn from its contact with students. I believe that the commitment to developing a diverse student intake teaches us a great deal about the constantly changing social world ‘out there’ and what new methodological approaches and theoretical analyses are necessary to understand it. As a department, we are only too aware that each year, and with each intake, students ask different questions inspired not only by what they read but also by the lived experiences that they

bring to bear on those very texts. And our support for a ‘reflexive’ version of sociology that takes the relationship between sociologist and society seriously demands that we think deeply about these questions. We confront this not just as teachers but also as sociologists charged with considering the informative impact of students’ questions on the knowledge that we call sociological. In the practical sense then, widening participation transforms sociology as well as individual lives by enabling the valuable experiences and perspectives of students from diverse backgrounds to make an important contribution to the advancement of sociological understanding and knowledge.

The profound impact that widening participation has on sociology can be seen in another important sense. The unique courses that we take pride in offering, that represent critical thinking at the leading-edge of the discipline, are in part the result of our fruitful engagement with a diverse student body that inform us and the discipline of sociology as we teach. In this sense, we are dedicated to a vision of widening participation that not only promotes access but also undertakes to offer a transformative experience for students during their time in the Department. This is manifest in the distinctiveness of our students and their active engagement in their education – indeed, as I’m fond of saying to people outside college, Goldsmiths Sociology students are adept at spotting the controversial implications lurking within a particular argument at forty paces! The success of Goldsmiths Sociology as a department producing research recognised as ‘internationally excellent’ and high quality teaching is, therefore, also a testament to our students who contribute towards this success in no small measure.

Developing skills

<sup>23</sup>Choosing the right course

& university <sup>25</sup>Throw away your clock!

<sup>27</sup>Paying for higher education



## Choosing the right course and university

Choosing which course they want to study and where is one of the most important decisions students will have to make. Where they go and what they end up studying will have a big impact on the rest of their life. Students will need to devote a lot of time and effort to this and should start their research early in the first year of a two year course.

The first thing they should do is decide exactly what it is that they want to study. The good news is that there are over 400,000 different courses and combinations to choose from at over 300 higher education institutions (HEIs). This means that whatever the students' interests are, there should be a course somewhere that will grab them. A quick search on the UCAS website [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) will bring up an incredible variety of courses from American Studies to Zoology via courses with titles such as Gambling, Golf, Knitwear, Motor Sport and Surf Studies. The bad news is that they have to narrow all of this down to a maximum of 6 choices when they complete their UCAS form. Students often find the huge amount of courses available a bit overwhelming. The following suggestions should help make the process less daunting and more manageable:

### Choosing the right course

When choosing what to study students need to think carefully about their long term career plans (if they have any!) and find out whether they have to study a particular course for their chosen career (eg Architecture) or if studying a course will shorten their professional training, eg Law. However, many students are unsure of what they want to do in the future and often use this as a reason or excuse not to get started.

What most students are unaware of is that over 60% of graduate jobs are open to all graduates. Of more importance to employers is the class of degree, transferable skills gained and relevant work experience that a student can offer. The [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) website contains detailed information on a range of graduate topics including average graduate starting pay, what employers are looking for from graduates and destinations of students broken down by subject area. The latter information is particularly useful when faced with comments like "I don't want to do a history degree because I don't want to be a history teacher or work in a museum", as it shows the wide range of careers students progress on to.

Students who aren't sure what career they want to pursue need to choose between studying a favourite school or college subject or choosing something new. If a student chooses to continue studying one of their current subjects they still have a wide range of options to choose from. If, for example, a student is studying a BTEC National Diploma in Business and wants to continue studying Business at university, they can choose from any of the following: American Business, Business Administration, Business Computing, Business Culture, Business Law, Business French, Business History. If a student is interested in studying something new, the emphasis is on them to find out as much about the subject as possible to ensure it's right for them. Most are surprised by the number of subjects it is possible to choose to study with no prior experience. Whether it's a subject that is familiar to them or a new course students need to be aware that courses with the same name can have very different content. If a student is still unsure what they want to study they could try the 'Stamford Test' at [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) or the higher education quiz on [www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk](http://www.ukcoursefinder.co.uk).

Once students have decided what it is they want to study they need to consider what type of qualification they want to apply for (eg degree, Higher National Diploma, Foundation Degree), whether they want to study one subject or combine it with another, and if they want to include a work placement, eg sandwich degree, or study options abroad. Students will also need a clear idea of what grades they expect to achieve so they are realistic about what courses to apply for and find out how the course is taught and assessed. For an easy to use summary of entry requirements by subject area see Brian Heap's 'Degree Course Offers'.

### Choosing the right university

Once students have identified the right course(s) they will need to research which higher education institutions offer them (see [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) 'Course Search') The first decision students will need to make is whether they will be living at home or want to move a way to study. Other factors that should be considered are location, eg town, city or rural location, size of institution, accommodation (if moving away from home), facilities, clubs and societies, and so on. Useful resources to support student research on student life include 'The Push Guide To Choosing a University', 'The Virgin Alternative Guide to British Universities', and 'The Student Book'.\* published by Trotman.

*\*Publication details available on page 43*

With the changes to student finance placing an increased financial burden on undergraduates, students are increasingly shopping around for the 'best product'; in this instance a 'good' university. While league tables can be useful students need to be aware that there are at present no official higher education league tables. Two of the most popular league tables are those produced by The Times and The Guardian newspapers. League tables are produced in different ways and can be based on universities as a whole or by subject area. For example a university could be rated 40th out of 100 overall but have departments ranked in the top ten. League tables rate universities on a range of different criteria including: teaching and research quality, spending on resources, staff student ratios, entry requirements and destination data. Students need to decide what's most important to them. These league tables can be accessed via the newspapers websites or in book form. In addition the recently introduced National Students Survey asked final year students their views on various aspects of their courses. The results are available on [www.tqi.ac.uk](http://www.tqi.ac.uk) and the survey will take place annually.

Finally, it is important to emphasise that students need to be as sure as they can be that the course they have chosen will motivate and enthuse them and that the environment in which they will be learning is right for them and this means there is no substitute for visiting universities. What they won't find the answer to in any league tables is whether the environment and atmosphere feel right to them!

Andrew Jones  
Aspire Project Officer, Lewisham College



## Throw away your clock!

Time management is just one of the skills required of today's students, student ambassadors and education staff. It is a key part of Aspire's student ambassador training programme and can help anyone at any level of work or study to prioritise their workload and personal commitments. Denise Semple, Aspire Project Officer at Lambeth College, offers some time management tips:



Are you working hard but struggling to juggle a part time job, studying, interests, relationships and meet deadlines? Time management skills can develop the organising, planning, and people skills employers and educators are looking for whilst you enjoy the best things in your life.

Skills are anything you can learn to do well, a developed ability. According to personal development guru Stephen R Covey, all people can have effective time management skills. In his life-changing 'Seven Habits...' books, Covey outlines how to develop 'First Things First' skills.

Here are some of his top tips for putting 'First Things First':

- Set goals; ask yourself, "How important or urgent are each of my responsibilities?".
- Draw a large square and put a cross in the middle so you have 4 smaller squares. Give each small square the following titles: then put each of your responsibilities in the following groups:
  - 1) Urgent and important
  - 2) Urgent but unimportant
  - 3) Important but not urgent
  - 4) Unimportant and not urgent

Urgent / Important	Non Urgent / Important
Essay deadline Take moped to garage MOT	Revise notes Friends Relaxation Get a holiday job
Urgent / Non important	Non urgent / Non important
Other people's minor problems	File CDs in alphabetical order

- Consider your own goals and divide them between each square
- Do the urgent and Important tasks so they are out of the way.
- Concentrate on the important-not-urgent: plan and complete these activities
- Decide if and when you need to attend to the urgent but not important activities as they arise. Do not let them override the important-not-urgent activities!
- Next put away unimportant-non-urgent activities. These are distractions!

Covey reminds us, "Important but not urgent activities are easily pushed out by daily planning. These activities are often the things we enjoy doing....but you won't get much satisfaction from fulfilling scheduled commitments if you have to sacrifice the best things."

There are a whole host of time management and other skills secrets that can help us gain respect from peers, improve grades, and achieve personal goals. As well as offering a suggested reading list, Aspire Project Officers can run or arrange training sessions for you, your staff or your students on time management, presentation skills, interview skills, listening skills, working in groups and team building, amongst others. See back page 46 for contact details.

Important but not urgent activities are easily pushed out by daily planning.



## Paying for higher education

### From September 2006, the higher education student finance system is changing...

#### Top-up fees?

Most universities and colleges of higher education will charge up to £3,000 a year in tuition fees. Don't worry! Students no longer have to pay this up-front. They repay it afterwards, and only once they are earning over £15,000 a year.

#### Student loans

Students who live in London and do not live with their parents will be entitled to a student loan of up to £6,170 per year (in addition to the fees loan). For those living at home, the maximum student loan will be £3,415 a year. Student loans attract a very low rate of interest.

#### Paying it back

Students do not have to pay back the loan until they are earning over £15,000 a year. After that, they repay 9% of whatever they earn over that amount. So, if they earn £20,000 a year after they graduate (£1667 per month, before tax), they will pay back £37.50 per month. Students can choose to pay back more than this if they wish and the more they pay back per month, the quicker they will repay the loan.

#### Low income?

For families on a low income or benefits, an additional grant of up to £2,700 a year is available and there are also bursaries offered by the universities and colleges themselves.

#### Extra benefits

If the course is longer than normal, students can receive additional student loan payments of up to about £100 per week. They can also get additional financial help if they have children, a disability or were in care before entering higher education. Some courses – especially teacher training and health-related courses – have additional sources of financial support for students.

#### Assessments

Assessment for all of this is done by your Local Authority; you need to contact them to get the forms you need – or apply online at [www.studentfinancedirect.co.uk](http://www.studentfinancedirect.co.uk).

#### Scholarships and grants

Extra money may be available from the university or higher education college you have applied to through extra grants, bursaries, scholarships or additional loans. Many institutions also have grants and awards for specific activities, courses or types of student. Have a look at [www.scholarshipsearch.org.uk](http://www.scholarshipsearch.org.uk) to find information on these grants and scholarships. If you can't find the information you need, ask the college or university student welfare office.

#### Part-time work

Students may need to find part-time work. Most universities have careers offices or job-shops which advertise local work for their students. Universities also employ students in their catering outlets, libraries, security teams or as student ambassadors. Most students work during their holidays to earn extra money.

#### Part-time study

There are two types of non-repayable grant that part-time students can apply for each year: fee grant (up to £1125) and a books grant (up to £250). Part-time students may also be eligible to help from the Access to Learning Fund, the Additional Fee Support Scheme and income or disability-related benefits.

#### Student welfare

If you have major concerns about whether you or your child can afford to study at university, it is worth going to open days and talking these concerns over with a Student Welfare staff to get some early advice. Once students have accepted a place, they should talk to the institution they will be attending as soon as possible in order to find out about any additional support on offer.

Universities will usually try and find ways to help but you have to let them know that there is a problem first!

Paul Cornell  
Senior Welfare Adviser, King's College London

*This information is also contained in Aspire's leaflet on student finance for parents. For copies of the leaflet, please contact [ali.redford@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:ali.redford@kcl.ac.uk)*

## Events & activities

<sup>29</sup>GAP (Greenwich Achievement Project)

<sup>32</sup>Aspire Vocation Pathways Support

Project <sup>33</sup>Subject-specific & classroom

support in Wandsworth <sup>35</sup>Access Spring

School <sup>36</sup>Lewisham Post 16 Gifted

& Talented Provision <sup>37</sup>Constance Howard

Textiles Project <sup>38</sup>Aspire staff development

<sup>39</sup>Explore 2012! <sup>40</sup>The Ladders Project

<sup>41</sup>Aspire communications

### Greenwich Achievement Project

GAP (Greenwich Achievement Project) was established in September 2004 to support the London Borough of Greenwich Year 11 students to prepare and revise for GCSE and other examinations. It is a partnership project led by Greenwich Aimhigher with the Borough's secondary schools, the University of Greenwich, and City Learning Centres. Greenwich revision activities have been funded for the past three years by Aimhigher, Neighbourhood Renewal and The Big Lottery at around £70,000 per year. Each year the project has been reviewed and improved through consultation with teachers and students.

The project's rationale is to support and encourage students to take revision seriously and to enable them to understand the positive impact sustained and structured revision can have on examination success.

It has the following key elements: support for revision and study skills, revision centres, free access to online revision software, information and guidance for students and parents, incentives and rewards, robust monitoring and evaluation.

The school Aimhigher Coordinators were very important to the success of the project and contributed greatly to its development. We held many meetings to agree the structure of the project and the way it would be 'rolled out'. Their key role was to recruit appropriate students and ensure that GAP had a continued high profile in the run up to the summer examinations.

#### Support for revision and study skills

Working with the City Learning Centre we created a website for GAP [www.achieve.greenwich.lgfl.net](http://www.achieve.greenwich.lgfl.net) which gave students quick links to online revision sites and study support materials from a range of providers. It also has downloadable revision planners and calendars. In the first full year of GAP all Year 11 students received a GAP bag which contained a variety of information from 'Where to revise online in the Borough' to a music-to-revise-to CD. One GAP student said: 'All the information was so useful - nothing was left out'. The bag also included guidance on the best ways to study and how to revise successfully.

#### Free access to online revision software

Greenwich was introduced to SAM Learning through contact with Knowsley CLC which successfully implemented a project to target C/D borderline students with a range of resources including online revision. We negotiated a borough wide three year contract with SAM Learning to provide each secondary school student from Year 7 to Year13 with free access. We followed this up in 2004 with a similar deal with Letts Secondary Zone. The funding for this software came from Neighbourhood Renewal (NR) with the condition that we ensured that students in NR wards were targeted. This was achieved by providing schools with lists of students in Year 11 in those wards.

#### Revision centres

Working closely with partners we established a network of revision centres that enabled students to access centres across the Borough. The purpose of the centres was to give easy access to the online revision software, especially to pupils in NR wards and to all students who had little or no access to the internet at home. School Aimhigher Coordinators targeted these students, particularly focusing on those in the C/D borderline group.

The revision centres were open for three hours for an average of ten sessions and were staffed by teachers, Aspire-trained ambassadors from the University of Greenwich, classroom assistants and technicians. In addition a consultant visited each centre at least once a fortnight and ran group sessions in study support.



Quite often parents would telephone to check if their daughter/son had attended!

Once recruited through the schools, students were managed centrally through the Greenwich Aimhigher team and received letters to their homes regarding dates, venues and even reminders if they didn't turn up. Quite often parents would telephone to check if their daughter/son had attended! "Thanks for letting me know. He told me that was where he was on Saturday morning. I could hardly believe it. It's great that he is revising!"

#### Information and guidance for students and parent/carers

A key part of GAP was to provide information for all Year 11 students and their parent/carers on the best ways to study and revision techniques. The parent/carers' leaflets were either given out at parents' evenings or sent out with school letters. In the first year the students had the leaflets in the GAP bag, however this was changed in 2005 following consultation with students. In 2005 all secondary schools were given a GAP assembly to highlight the key points of the project, and this included distributing the student leaflets and other information.

#### Incentives and rewards

Incentives and rewards play an important part in motivating students to take revision seriously. The project provides 150-300 £5 gift vouchers per secondary school, and each student has a 'Rewards Card' which schools stamp, using a special GAP stamp every time a student attends a revision session, after school or on a Saturday. The schools decide the most appropriate exchange rate for the vouchers and from the feedback students have found these a good reward for taking revision seriously.

We also run a competition with SAM Learning to give prizes to schools and students, last year Thomas Tallis School won £5000 for being the highest using school. Thomas Tallis' Deputy Headteacher commented, "Our students are really proud that their hard work has provided such a great reward. We had a school council meeting and we are going to buy new basketball nets for the playground." The Borough also runs a celebration event for the highest-using students in each school, where they are presented with certificates and more prizes.

#### Marketing

Working with the Greenwich Press Office a marketing strategy was developed to publicise GAP in the local media, including advertisements on local radio during 'school run'

time to remind parents to encourage revision. There was also a series of articles highlighting the Saturday revision centres, including an interview with a parent illustrating the pressure on families during revision time. Charlton Athletic football captain Matt Holland recorded a good luck message on the revision music CD and took part in a promotional event at one of our secondary schools. A teacher at The John Roan School enthused, "Year 11 were really excited about the visit from Matt Holland. It made a particularly big difference to Charlton supporters."

#### Monitoring and evaluation

The monitoring and evaluation process was a requirement of the original bids for funding from NR and the Big Lottery. There were two strands: qualitative and quantitative. Pupil evaluations, regular monitoring visits to the revision centres with an interim and final report combined with a review with school Aimhigher coordinators provided the qualitative evidence. The following points are taken from student evaluations:

- all students felt that the Saturday revision centres were useful and provided a place to study away from home and parental pressure
- 75% of students surveyed said that the leaflet for parents would help adults to understand the difficulties facing GCSE students with revision. One parent who was just about to start supporting her third daughter through GCSEs said, "This is really helpful, sometimes it's difficult to know whether to just keep nagging or give them a break!"
- 83% of students surveyed said that the revision tips contained in the student leaflet were helpful
- 82% of current Year 11 student surveyed considered a £5 gift voucher would be a good reward for attending 5 revision sessions
- 74% of the students said that SAM Learning helped to organise revision

Data from SAM Learning on individual usage combined with local authority pupil data including prior attainment, post codes, entitlement to free school meals, gender and final GCSE results were combined and analysed to produce quantitative data on the impact of the project on examination performance. The following points are highlighted in the data:

- 69% of the students who attended 7 or more Saturday sessions achieved 5 or more A-C grades
- On average, the more time Greenwich pupils spent using

- SAM, the more A\*-C grades were achieved at GCSE
- Overall 53.1% of those pupils who used SAM Learning achieved 5 A\*-C grades compared with 36.6% of pupils not using SAM Learning who achieved 5+ A\*-C grades
  - Just over 50% (51.2) of pupils using SAM were male; of those, 53.8% achieved 5+ A\*-C grades compared with 28% of the male pupils who did not use SAM Learning
  - When compared with all Greenwich students, those who attended Saturday revision centres achieved +5 more points in value added improvement
  - 30.4 % of users were eligible for free school meals

I learnt different ways of dealing with the same maths problems from a girl at another school; it's been really helpful.

Linda Karlsen  
Greenwich Aimhigher Coordinator

## Aspire Vocation Pathways Support Project

The Aspire Vocational Pathways Support Project was set up to develop a variety of curriculum enrichment and support activities for young people on vocational and career-related courses in south east London. The aim was to inspire them about the prospects of higher education and to inform them about the exciting range of careers to which they might then progress.

The project focussed on developing support for learners in six vocational areas: Business, Media, Health & Social Care, Construction, Art and Leisure & Tourism. The learners were all studying on courses in one of the six Aspire boroughs. Altogether around 300 young people in 20 schools and further education colleges took part. All were studying at Level 2 or 3 in Years 10 or 12.

The theme of fostering new and inspiring relationships ran throughout the project: relationships between university students and younger learners; learners and employers; and university lecturers, further education lecturers and school teachers.

The principles of the project were to provide young people with experience of three kinds of activities:

- Getting to know current students at local universities who were studying the same subjects as themselves
- Meeting people who were working in jobs they had got as a result of studying their subject at university
- Taking part in a project which took them out of the classroom, broadened their knowledge of the subject and enhanced their achievement in it.

The project encouraged young people to find out about local opportunities in further and higher education and in employment. At the same time, it aimed to equip them with the progression skills and knowledge that could enhance an application to any university.

### Leisure & Tourism Progression Pathway Project

The South Bank Tour

A class studying AVCE in Travel and Tourism at Christ the King Sixth Form College met a tour guide, and representatives from the South Bank Employers Group and



the Southwark Tourism Information Centre at Southwark Cathedral, where they were provided with the background knowledge to put together their own tour of the area. Student ambassadors went into the College to help the participants prepare their tour. The tour was showcased at LSBU's LEAP Learning Festival in July 2005.

This project was repeated with three schools in the summer of 2006.

One of the students from the tour commented "It was interesting to see how (walking) tour guides work and how they operate...you know there are so many jobs in the tourist industry, so it was like, oh wow! There's another one!"

The impact of the Aspire Vocational Pathways Support Project on the participants (and vocational students' progression in general) was researched by Clare Gartland, Excellence Fellow at London South Bank University. Copies of Clare Gartland's research and further details of Aspire's Vocational Pathways Support Project can be obtained by emailing [mark.ellis@lsbu.ac.uk](mailto:mark.ellis@lsbu.ac.uk).

Mark Ellis  
Aspire Project Officer, London South Bank University

## Subject-specific and classroom support in Wandsworth

'How David Beckham broke his toe', 'Is Dolly the Sheep her own mother?' and 'Holidays on Mars' have all been programmes delivered by university staff to Aspire area school pupils to promote subjects and engage students in planning their future. These workshops and taster sessions have also increased student motivation and contributed to improving results! Teachers in the Aspire region are now really beginning to see the profits of utilising higher education resources in their own classrooms and curriculum time.

Schools in the south east London area are all benefiting from using the wide range of opportunities and innovative practice offered by Aspire to increase student progression to higher education, and to inform pupils that life after school can be exciting, challenging, rewarding and what they had hoped for!

Undergraduate student ambassadors have supported school pupils in homework clubs, with coursework submissions and in curriculum time to make subjects come to life and informally deliver a potential route to higher education in subjects that school pupils are interested in. Undergraduates from Goldsmiths have supported Year 10 & 11 students studying for their BTec Media at Wandsworth City Learning Centre, as part of a collaborative programme including pupils from 3 different Wandsworth schools. The ambassadors supported the pupils in their classes every week, using their own undergraduate portfolios, knowledge and skills to directly influence and shape student understanding and assignments.

Roger Elsgood, a successful drama producer for BBC radio who teaches in Wandsworth stated, "The student ambassadors have been a wonderful complement to the work of the BTEC First Media course at Wandsworth City Learning Centre. They have been ever happy to give our students the benefit of their personal experience, enthusiasms and energy. They have both been terrific role models to the students by showing that media, art and creativity is oh so cool, but equally oh so demanding. And for that and more I look forward to a continuing relationship with them."

Aspire ambassadors have also assisted teachers and supported pupils on visits off site to Battersea Power Station, the Tate Modern, the Media Citizens Centre, The Royal

Observatory and National Maritime Museum Greenwich. Their role here has been invaluable in emphasising the link between work and further study, and identifying progression routes into careers. One Wandsworth student who attended a King's College London Geography taster day, and worked with Kings ambassadors said "This day has made my mind up! I can go to university, and geography isn't dull. I like it and so does Cian, and he's cool!"

Aspire funding has also contributed to the work of Wandsworth's Ethnic Minority Student Achievement Co-ordinator. She has worked with 4 schools/colleges to raise the attainment and aspirations of specifically targeted Post 16 minority ethnic students. This has involved working with 76 students on a variety of strategies including one to one mentoring, a study skills programme, supporting HEI applications and assisting with coursework and subject research. The results of many of the students taking part in the programmes were very encouraging. In one school 2/3 of the students participating exceeded their predicted grades. According to Fany, a Year 12 student at Chestnut Grove School, "Miss Rolle helps with everything! She has made me think about the choices I have after sixth form!"

Recent events have included a stadium tour and study skills session at Stamford Bridge, home of the premiership champions Chelsea FC. Wandsworth Aimhigher students had the chance to see behind the scenes and sit in the dugouts that have recently been occupied by Frank Lampard, Ronaldinho and Thierry Henry! On leaving the famous changing rooms and press area the pupils participated in a study skills session and explored the range of different job opportunities at a Premiership football club, and the qualifications needed to get there. Sports Science ambassadors from London South Bank University (LSBU) were on hand to support the pupils.

LSBU have also supported a Year 10 Health and Social Care class at Southfields Community College. Participants were introduced to a current health issue that has received widespread press coverage: smoking. The pupils worked in partnership with industry professionals and academic staff to explore how different health workers would be involved in tackling this issue. The aim was to bring health sector jobs to life, using a real-life case study. Participants worked in groups to develop their own health campaign targeted at young people; specifically, to produce a poster, leaflet and a 30

second film. An introduction to university life and a workshop on studying health at HE was incorporated into the programme, using student ambassadors and the Ladders Health and Social Care pack exercises.

The benefit of classroom support to school pupils and staff is immeasurable – the difficulty is how to assess the positive impact on students' learning when they have access to a whole variety of events, programmes and interventions from Aspire and other providers to supplement their schooling, any of which are re-igniting the desire and motivation to work towards their goals. However, it is undeniably inspiring to hear students talking like excited children again when participating in taster events like Crime Scene Investigation, Open Neuro Laboratory and Portfolio Digital Photography – all of which have enthused them to enquire about their futures.

Alex Purssey  
Wandsworth City Learning Centre Manager  
(formerly Borough Aimhigher Coordinator)

## University of Greenwich Access Spring School

Around the country there are many summer schools – for school students, university students, special interest groups and, of course, the Open University. However, there are few, if any, summer schools for Access students in further education. There may be many reasons for this but one is that most Access courses finish in June and restart, with a new cohort, in September. Therefore we decided that a spring school was probably more realistic.

Holiday schools can be either residential or non-residential but following much discussion we decided that our spring school for Access students would be non-residential, partly because of the cost but also because many people on Access courses are parents and carers, a residential programme would not be practical.

Having decided on the timing and living arrangements, we needed to agree the format and the type of participants and so a working party was set up, including staff from Bexley College, Aspire and the Widening Participation Unit of the University of Greenwich. The event was to be aimed at Bexley College Access students, which made planning much simpler. The choice of subjects was made by combining our most popular taster days with perceived need within the College. This resulted in three strands: ICT, Teaching and Health & Social Care. Finally, we decided for both financial and practical reasons to limit the number of students on each strand to fifteen.

Once these decisions had been made the organisation switched to production mode and we began to book rooms; discuss timetables and workshop with specialist staff; organise transport; book catering, send out publicity and plan our final, end of school, dinner. This meant that by the beginning of March we had a wonderful programme prepared which would give all students both some specialist sessions on their own subjects plus some general sessions on presentation and study skills. Everything was in place for an excellent event.

As ever, in the event, unforeseen circumstances called for maximum flexibility! Unison called a national strike on 28 March and, following much heart searching and consultation with colleagues in both FE and HE, it was decided that we

had no choice but to cancel the first day. Staff illness at the College led to a lack of information for their ICT students on day two, and on day three, one health lecturer went to the wrong Open Day and another failed to materialise completely! Fortunately in that case, one of our formidable student ambassadors ran an improvised child psychology session based on recent lectures and saved the day!

Fabulous....  
We really  
felt at  
home



Would we do it again? Yes – and cancelled sessions have already been rescheduled – but with modifications in timing and content. Students universally agreed that a winter school would have been more helpful and that we should tie our sessions more tightly into the Access curriculum.

Nevertheless, to quote the evaluation forms: “Fabulous” and “We really felt at home”. Sentiments like that make it all worthwhile and certainly worth repeating.

Janice Larkin  
Aspire Project Officer, University of Greenwich

### Lewisham Post 16 Gifted & Talented Provision

The approach to Aspire-funded Post-16 Gifted and Talented programmes within the London Borough of Lewisham varies from provider to provider. However, moves have been made to develop an integrated and coherent entitlement package, which is ongoing, holistic and developmental and which is designed to challenge and equip each able learner.

An induction package at the start of the course, consisting of focused work within the tutorial and information advice and guidance programme, sets the scene for high expectations and aspirations for both learners and institutions concerned.

Critical Thinking seminars delivered by the universities of Durham and York have paved the way for the take up of Critical Thinking AS and AEA courses for our 17 and 18-year-old able learners. So what kind of feedback has been given by students on these courses?

*“The combination of rigorous thinking and analytical enquiry within Critical Thinking has helped me so much in my other studies. It is a great subject to broaden horizons.”*

*“This subject challenges the way you think, time and time again. I love it.”*

Individual student interviews which set out negotiated learning plans and enrichment choices support the learning of the most able. At Crossways Academy this is facilitated through the Fast Tomato [www.fasttomato.com](http://www.fasttomato.com) package which is specially adapted for Lewisham’s Virtual Learning Environment, whilst at Christ the King Sixth Form College their own computer system uses data handling processes to support both the most able and all other students in this way.

Christ the King Sixth Form College has introduced a tailored programme of study for their gifted and talented cohort. This programme combines a Critical Thinking course with information, advice and guidance, relating to undergraduate studies, being delivered collaboratively by tutors specifically dedicated to this group, the College’s Careers Department and higher education institutions (HEIs) both inside and outside the Aspire partnership.

Both Crossways and Christ the King provide visits to HEIs for this cohort and these two Post 16 providers together with Prendergast Girls and Haberdashers’ Aske’s Hatcham

College have sent groups of their able students to London School of Economics Saturday morning programmes which support learning in a restricted range of academic subjects. Various taster day opportunities and summer school activities have also been made available with this cohort in mind.

Last July, a Saturday UCAS preparation day was held in Lewisham at one of the colleges for approximately 220 Year 12 students as a support and aspiration raising day. It targeted those who had the ability to be accepted on courses at Russell Group and other premier universities. Also, some of the country’s leading employers from the commercial and banking sectors were on hand to give advice. 42% of those who attended were from Lewisham establishments and the feedback from the students and staff was extremely encouraging:

*“Thank you for inspiring us to pursue our goals.”*

*“Thank you very much for improving my confidence and clarifying the importance of a good degree for various degree paths.”*

An Access Officer from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, also gave a talk to Sydenham School, Crossways Academy and Christ the King Sixth Form College students about the Oxbridge application process, what a student with potential could expect to encounter as a member of the Oxbridge community and the career pathways that are available to them on completion of a degree,

Work shadowing has been another feature of the opportunities for some of the Lewisham Gifted and Talented students in this age range. Graduates in various establishments in the City, Canary Wharf, the medical professions and industry gave the students an exciting opportunity to gain insights into the type of work that would be expected of them, should they follow the same progression path as the person they were observing.

Areas for development within the Lewisham partnership are to look at provision for vocationally able and for talented students in the fine arts, performing arts and sport. We are looking to pilot a programme linked to the built environment for able 14-19 year-old students in partnership with the Stephen Lawrence Charitable Trust commencing next academic year.

Mike Sheridan  
Lewisham EIC Development Consultant

## Goldsmiths Constance Howard Textiles Project

The aim of this extended project was to provide support to Northbrook School in Lewisham which lacked some of the facilities to include textiles in the art curriculum. Year 11 art pupils were introduced to a range of textiles techniques to support their GCSE coursework.

This six week project included an initial visit to the Constance Howard Textiles collection at Goldsmiths and five sessions in school with a Goldsmiths visiting lecturer, Dawn Dupree and two student ambassadors from the BA in Fine Art specialising in Textiles.

The sessions provided an initial introduction to the different skills and techniques that students can use to produce textiles. Working with the theme of landscape all the pupils created screen prints. A number also went on to do prints for their GCSE coursework. Some also used their visit to the Constance Howard Collection as a stimulus for further research for GCSE. For example some wrote a biography of Constance Howard and her work, including some of the drawings from their visit. Their work was then displayed at a local art gallery in Lewisham for both teachers and parents to visit.

Year 11 pupils were introduced to a range of textiles techniques

The afternoon visit to the Constance Howard Collection had a great impact on the students. When asked what they really enjoyed the comments included: "The use of colour, imagination and abstract use of graphics." "Seeing the different ways of using materials as textiles ....." "I would like to see more exhibitions like this wonderful display of artwork."

When asked about their favourite part of the project many of them mentioned the screen printing and using different techniques to print their designs. They also felt that they had been given a great insight into university and what it means to be a student.



As well as supporting the GCSE pupils, this activity has resulted in closer links between staff at Goldsmiths and teachers in participating schools as they worked together to develop the programme. The visiting tutor, Dawn Dupree also undertook some staff development work with all the art teachers in Lewisham schools to update them on a variety of textiles techniques. The project took place again in Sydenham School, Lewisham, with similar excellent results.

Mary Stirling  
Aspire Project Officer, Goldsmiths, University of London

### Aspire staff development

The strategic direction of staff development and research is agreed by a cross-sectoral team and activities are coordinated by Mary Stirling, the Aspire Project Officer based at Goldsmiths, University of London. The expertise within the partnership is used to share information and promote collaborative working in a variety of areas, advise staff about new developments in the education sector and also give academic input concerning the purpose and role of widening participation in society as a whole.

#### Staff development for Aspire practitioners

A variety of staff development activities for Aspire practitioners have been organised to enable us all to become more informed in the work that we do. This has included sessions on:

- Organising events
- Progression pathways
- Child protection
- Open Book
- Improving your personal impact
- Sharing activities
- New staff inductions

#### Staff development for teachers & Connexions staff

Several finance workshops have been run for teachers and Connexions staff in the Aspire area to enable them to learn more about the new financial arrangements for students from 2006 including specific bursaries and scholarships from the Aspire universities.

As progression pathways are a key area of concern, a conference was organised to look at the barriers preventing students from progressing into higher education and how staff could work together to overcome these barriers.

Kate Amis launched her Ladders Extension Project in 2006 and a workshop was held to share the extension work with vocational subjects in a practical way with local teachers and Connexions advisers.

A conference was held in the summer of 2006 aimed at school and college Aimhigher Coordinators, staff from schools, college and universities who are involved in widening participation activities and all practitioners involved in the Aspire project. This shared examples of interesting practice and explored ways of working together in the future.

Seminars at Goldsmiths College have aimed to explore the theory behind widening participation with input from local academics. These occasional seminars are designed for teachers, lecturers and other staff involved in widening participation activities who want to find out more about relevant educational research and how this can inform their day to day practice.

## A variety of staff development activities enable us to become more informed

During the academic year 2004-5, Mary Stirling undertook a small scale research project concerning the impact of ambassadors as they support students in schools and colleges. This project concentrated on five different projects both one-off and long-term based in the universities and colleges as well as in the schools. The conclusion of this project was that the student ambassadors were extremely important in the work that they did and were essential in all activities designed to encourage young people to think more about higher education. Further details of this project can be found on the Aspire website.

Mary Stirling  
Aspire Project Officer, Goldsmiths, University of London

## Explore 2012!

In February and March 2006 Aspire partners organised five collaborative one-day events exploring opportunities in vocational employment, education and training in relation to the 2012 London Olympic and Paralympic games.

Throughout Explore 2012, over 500 Post 16 students were given access to talks, events and workshops on course and career opportunities in Urban Development, Business & IT, Sport & Fitness, Media & Marketing and Leisure, Hospitality and Tourism, each at different venues in south east London.

Over 100 students from 6 south east London schools and further education colleges (FECs) attended the first Explore 2012 day, focusing on Leisure, Hospitality and Tourism. Kathryn McColl of the London Organising Committee for the Olympic Games (LOCOG) opened the event and conveyed the exciting opportunities available for participants as a result of the Games. Further talks were given by HE lecturers from partner institutions and practitioners in the leisure industry.

I'm really looking forward to being involved in the Games now. I hadn't thought about how I could be before and how that would affect my future career too...

In the afternoon students were able to choose from a number of workshops and activities including 'Planning an Olympic opening ceremony', the Maritime Museum's Greenwich Heritage Trail, Responsible Tourism and the Career Interests Game for Leisure, Hospitality and Tourism students. Workshops took place at a variety of tourist sites around Greenwich allowing participants to discover the richness of the local area in relation to their chosen careers.

The success of the day was highlighted in feedback with many students commenting on how the day had enthused them, particularly to continue their study into HE. One student commented: "I'm really looking forward to being involved in the Games now. I hadn't thought about how I could be before and how that would affect my future career afterwards too."

As with all the Explore 2012 events, the Leisure, Hospitality and Tourism day was very much a collaborative effort and involvement from a variety of partner institutions and local organisations ensured its success. These included: The University of Greenwich, London South Bank University, Greenwich Community College, Greenwich Leisure Limited, The Ladders Project, Greenwich Council, Southwark Council, The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich Foundation.

Jaime Taylor  
Aspire Project Officer, Greenwich Community College



### The Ladders Project Ladders is a collaborative partnership project between Aspire and Central London Aimhigher partnerships, co-funded by London Central LSC. Kate Amis, Ladders Project Officer at Goldsmiths, University of London, outlines the project's achievements to date...

The initial Ladders project, launched in 2004 set out to identify the skills necessary for successful progression to and through higher education. A range of activities was designed to develop these skills based on the particular needs of each age group from Year 9 to Year 13/FE. For example Year 9s are most concerned with GCSE option choice but for Year 12/FE university choice is most important. The activities were piloted with teachers and students in schools and colleges and were developed into a teaching pack designed to help students build their own progression pathways. The pack has been widely used in London and further afield including Wales where it has been translated into Welsh.

In the second phase of the project activities and materials were developed for six key vocational areas: Media, Creative Arts, Construction, Business, Health, and Leisure and Tourism. Aspire and the Central London Aimhigher partnership worked to bring together cross-sectoral teams of school teachers and FE college and university lecturers to identify the specific progression skills needed for each vocational area.

An evaluation of the first pack has elicited some very positive responses:

- "Ladders fits well with the PSHE curriculum."
- "I use the Careers Interests game to help young people think about the scope of jobs in a specific area."
- "I often use the pack to personally plan activities I deliver to Year 9 and 10 students."
- "Aimhigher Derbyshire will be offering all of the workshops in its schools and colleges from next year onwards."

- "The work fits beautifully and has created another useful way of delivering careers education guidance work in schools."
- "The activity on presentation skills and effective listening worked very well for our students, they were more focused with UCAS applications this year - they 'got it'!! Look forward to the new pack."

The evaluation also calculates that from those who have responded over 6,000 pupils have benefited from Ladders sessions. This is in addition to the very healthy 2,000 plus students to whom Ladders has been delivered directly this academic year.

Ladders continues to run activity sessions in schools, colleges and at university outreach sessions. Training for student ambassadors, teachers and widening participation staff has been organised to increase the number of sessions that can be offered. New areas for development being considered at the moment include Sports, Performing Arts, and the Environment. A recent development has been to offer sessions to work-based learners and it is hoped to expand this provision in the future.

## Aspire communications

2005-06 has been a busy year for the Aspire partnership. After much consultation all round, we have created a new website and trained all partners to use it; updated ambassador training packs and t-shirts; produced display panels, finance leaflets for parents, student certificates, Explore 2012 posters, leaflets and response cards; garnered local and national press coverage; judged the Heist Awards and run seminars on successful partnership work - as well as producing this Year Book. This is also the final year for Aspire's dedicated marketing strand. However, we believe we have put a range of systems and templates in place to encourage partners to promote the work of the partnership as a whole, their own strand groups and the institutional activities of each organisation post 2006.

The website, [www.aspire-aimhigher.ac.uk](http://www.aspire-aimhigher.ac.uk), is now written on content management system software, which means that all Aspire Borough Coordinators, HE and FE Project Officers as well as the Aspire Project Office at Greenwich can add and amend their own organisation's activities, news, school requests, meeting information, links and FAQs. The site also has a section for downloadable documents (including case studies, ambassador training information and various forms and reports) and general information about the partnership. Staff are now fully trained to update the website and we are currently developing Phase 2, which should include an email alert system for anyone hoping to find out about forthcoming events and activities for schools and colleges and the possibility of a staff message board.

We've also created templates for posters and leaflets (downloadable from the website, given prior access to the certain fonts!); supported the production of some wonderful reports, leaflets, invitations, questionnaires, training and progression packs created by other strands and worked with colleagues across the partnership to improve all our resources.

More people-orientated work has come via our attempts to raise awareness about FE and HE to groups that are currently under-represented. This has led to work with the Year 10 boys and staff at Newhaven Pupil Referral Unit (London Borough of Greenwich), visits to groups of potential students in HMP The Mounts and Wandsworth as part of the inspirational Open Book project and supporting highly motivated student groups Do The Smart Thing (King's) and Believe It! (University of Greenwich) with their own aspiration-raising campaigns.

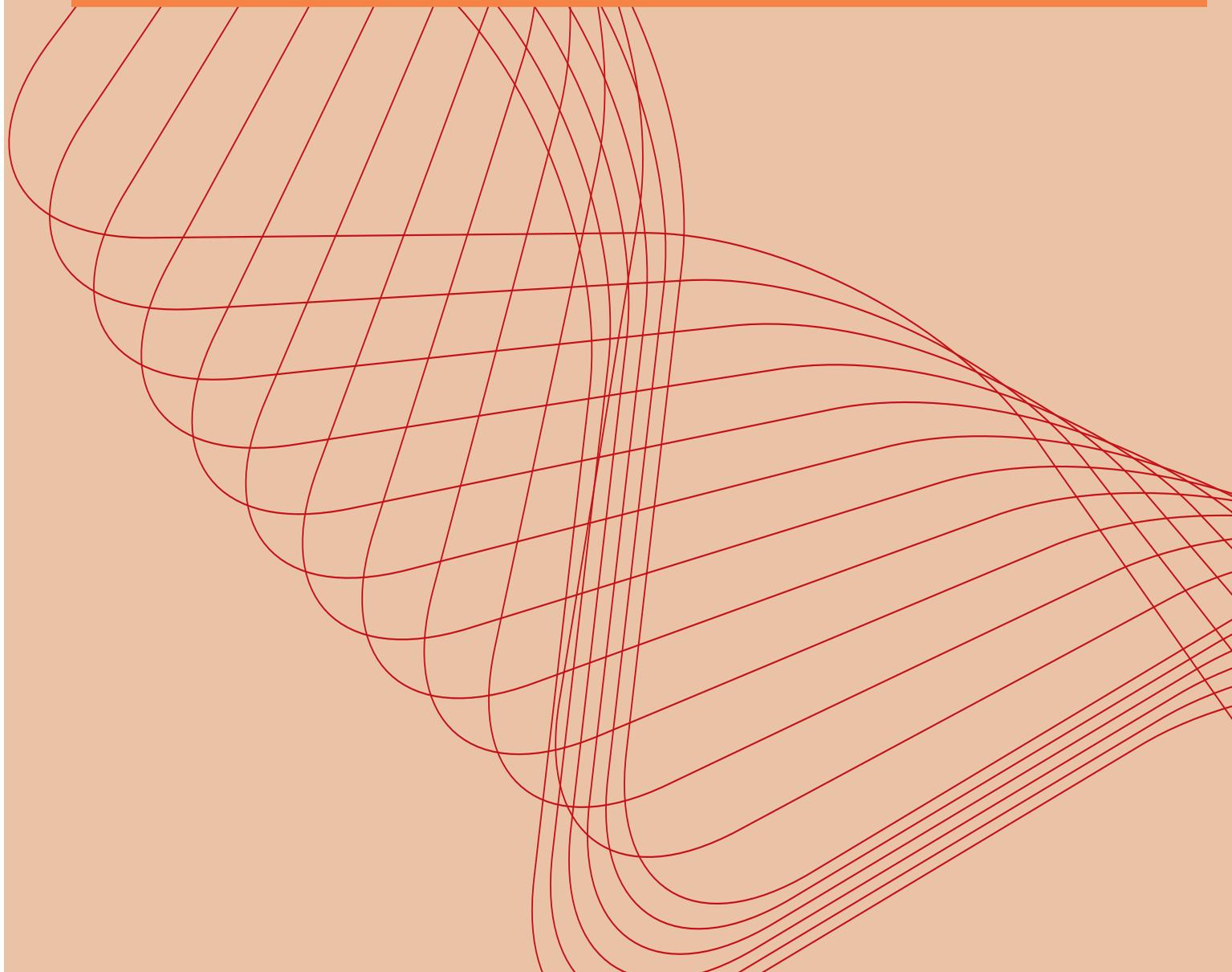
Most of this would not have happened without the patience and talent of Nitesh Mody at Moot Design and the strong support of Gwen Evans (Aspire Project Coordinator), Linda Karlsen (Greenwich Aimhigher Coordinator), Samantha Paxton (WP Manager, King's) and Isabel Gill (WP Manager, University of Greenwich). My thanks to them and all other partners for their support this year.

Ali Redford  
Aspire Communications Officer, King's College London

## Further information

43 Suggested publications

44 Suggested websites 47 Index



### Suggested publications

British Qualifications: A Complete Guide to Professional, Vocational and Academic Qualifications in the UK  
Kogan Page 2005

Build Your Own Rainbow: Workbook for Career and Life Management  
Barrie Hopson et al, Management Books 2000

Cheeky Guide to Student Life  
CheekyGuides Ltd 2002

Choosing your A Levels and Post 16 Options  
Gary Woodward, Trotman 2006

Choosing your GCSEs  
Alan Vincent, Trotman 2004

Degree Course Offers: 2007 Entry  
Brian Heap, Trotman 2006

Directory of Vocational and Further Education  
Pearson Education 2006

How to Spend a Year Abroad: Taking Time Out from Study or Work  
Nick Vandome, How to Books 2004

Manage Your Student Finances Now!: Balancing the Budget at University and College  
Keith Houghton, Vermilion 2003

Nosh 4 Students – A Fun Student Cookbook  
Joy May, InTrade (GB) Ltd 2002

Student Life : A Survival Guide  
Natasha Roe et al, Lifetime Careers (Wiltshire) Ltd 2002

Student Survival: The Push Guide to Money  
Johnny Rich et al, Nelson Thornes 2004

Student Survival Guide: What to Expect and How to Handle It: Insider Advice on University Life  
Lucy Clarke et al, How To Books 2001

Students' Money Matters  
Gwenda Thomas, Trotman 2006

The Gap-year Guidebook 2006  
Alison Withers, Peridot Press 2006

The Guardian University Guide 2007 – What to Study Where to Study and How to Get There  
Jimmy Leach et al, Guardian Newspapers Ltd 2006

The Push Guide to Choosing a University  
Johnny Rich et al, Hodder Arnold 2006

The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People  
Stephen R Covey, Franklin Covey Co 2006

The Student Book 2007  
Klaus Boehm et al, Trotman 2006

The Times Good University Guide 2007  
John O'Leary et al, Times Books 2006

The Virgin 2007 Alternative Guide To British Universities  
Piers Dudgeon, Virgin Books 2006

University Interviews Guide  
ISBN 0-9548245-004, A very comprehensive guide to the types of questions students may encounter, produced by practitioners and funded by Brent Aimhigher

*Some of these publications may have since been updated or discontinued. Details of other useful publications are available on the Aimhigher website: [www.aimhigher.ac.uk](http://www.aimhigher.ac.uk)*

### A-Z of websites for staff, parents and students

Aimhigher – [www.aimhigher.ac.uk](http://www.aimhigher.ac.uk) – The government's national initiative to encourage more young people into university. The site lists all the universities in the UK and gives advice on finance, career options and lists useful publications

All About U – [www.allaboutu.org.uk](http://www.allaboutu.org.uk) – a virtual experience of student life

Aspire – [www.aspire-aimhigher.ac.uk](http://www.aspire-aimhigher.ac.uk) – forthcoming activities, news, FAQs and weblinks for students, staff, parents, communities and ambassadors in south east London

BMAT – [www.bmat.org.uk](http://www.bmat.org.uk) – website that helps students to prepare for the Biomedical Admissions Test

Connexions – [www.connexions.gov.uk](http://www.connexions.gov.uk) – the former Careers Service. This site gives young people directions towards their next step...

DfES – [www.dfes.gov.uk](http://www.dfes.gov.uk) – the government's Department for Education and Skills webpages

Greenwich GAP – [www.achieve.greenwich.lgfl.net](http://www.achieve.greenwich.lgfl.net) – London Borough of Greenwich's GAP project website with links to other major revision sites

Ladders Project – [www.laddersproject.org.uk](http://www.laddersproject.org.uk) – progression and career planning resource programme and packs developed by Aspire and Central London Aimhigher

London Gifted & Talented – [www.londongt.org](http://www.londongt.org) – website for London's gifted & talented students, their parents and teachers

London Colleges – [www.londoncolleges.com](http://www.londoncolleges.com) – a list of all London FE (further education), AE (adult education) and 6th form colleges with all the courses available at each

NAGTY – [www.nagty.ac.uk](http://www.nagty.ac.uk) – the National Academy for Gifted & Talented Youth

National Student Survey – [www.tqi.ac.uk](http://www.tqi.ac.uk) – find out what students really think of their institutions

Parents Centre – [www.parentscentre.gov.uk](http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk) – website that gives parents advice on how to help their children throughout their education

Prospects – [www.prospects.ac.uk](http://www.prospects.ac.uk) – information on graduate destinations and other topics

Scholarship Search – [www.scholarshipsearch.org.uk](http://www.scholarshipsearch.org.uk) – a list of scholarships students can access to help pay for their time at university

Student Finance Direct – [www.studentfinancedirect.co.uk](http://www.studentfinancedirect.co.uk) – all you need to know about current and forthcoming finance arrangements for university

Study London – [www.london.gov.uk/londonissues/education.jsp](http://www.london.gov.uk/londonissues/education.jsp) – Greater London Assembly advice and information on studying in London, including finance information

UCAS – [www.ucas.com](http://www.ucas.com) – information about applying to university from the organisation that looks after all university applications

UK Course Finder – [www.ukcoursefinder.com](http://www.ukcoursefinder.com) – register your interests and they will find your dream course

UniAid – [www.uniaid.org.uk](http://www.uniaid.org.uk) – the students' charity site, including All About U, a virtual experience of student life; Student Survivor, surviving on a student budget and Accommodation Bursary including applications for financial help with living expenses

Uni4me – [www.uni4me.com](http://www.uni4me.com) – Open University website encouraging more people into higher education. Great jargon buster pages!

XB4U – [www.xb4u.co.uk](http://www.xb4u.co.uk) – consortium of South and East London boroughs giving advice on careers and education with links to university and Connexions websites

*All these websites are also on the Links pages of the Aspire website: [www.aspire-aimhigher.ac.uk](http://www.aspire-aimhigher.ac.uk)*



Thanks to all involved for the photographs from London Borough of Greenwich; Goldsmiths, University of London; London South Bank University; Bexley Council; King's College London.  
Aspire area map devised by Darren Walker and Nerissa Knightley, University of Greenwich.

### Local Borough Coordinators

#### **Bexley**

Bexley Education Services Hill View Hill  
View Drive Welling Kent DA16 3RY

#### **Aimhigher Borough Coordinator**

tba

Tel 020 8836 8231

Fax 020 8836 8232

#### **Greenwich**

Greenwich Children's Services

8th Floor Riverside House

Woolwich London SE18 6DF

#### **Senior Inspector, Children's Services**

Kenneth Miller

ken.miller@greenwich.gov.uk

#### **Aimhigher Events Coordinator**

Naomi Young

Naomi.young@prospects.co.uk

Tel 020 8921 4776

Fax 020 8921 4795

#### **Lambeth**

Lambeth Excellence in Cities

10th Floor Blue Star House

234 Stockwell Road London SW9 9SP

#### **Aimhigher Borough Coordinator**

Rosemary Butcher

rbutcher@lambeth.gov.uk

Tel 020 7926 0364

Fax 020 7926 9715

#### **Lewisham**

Lewisham Excellence in Cities

c/o Monson School

Hunsdon Road London SE14 5RD

#### **EiC Development Consultant**

Mike Sheridan

sheridan\_mk26bf@runbox.com

Tel 020 7635 3382

Fax 020 7732 4263

#### **Southwark**

Southwark Excellence in Cities

Victory School House Rodney Road

London SE17 1PT

#### **Aimhigher Borough Coordinator**

Alix Petty

louise.livesey@southwarkeic.org.uk

Tel 020 7252 7548

Fax 020 7703 6981

#### **Wandsworth**

Wandsworth Excellence in Cities

Professional Development Centre

Franciscan Road London SW17 8HE

#### **EiC Development Officer**

Fran O'Neill

foneill@wandsworth.gov.uk

#### **Consultant Support Officer**

Hazel Hardy

hhardy@wandsworth.gov.uk

Tel 020 8871 8625/8111

Fax 020 8682 0740

### Aspire Further Education Project Officers

#### **Bexley College**

Tower Road Belvedere

Kent DA17 6JA

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

tba

Tel 01322 404242

Fax 01322 448403

#### **Christ the King 6th Form College**

Belmont Grove London SE13 5GE

#### **Aspire Project Officer /**

#### **Aimhigher Coordinator**

Rosemary Farrer rfa@ctksfc.ac.uk

Tel 020 8297 9433

Fax 020 8297 1460

#### **Greenwich Community College**

Room F203 95 Plumstead Road

London SE18 7DQ

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

Jaime Taylor jaimet@gcc.ac.uk

Tel 020 8355 3950

Fax 020 8488 4899

#### **Lambeth College**

Room C124 Clapham Centre

45 Clapham Common Southside

London SW4 9BL

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

Denise MA Semple

dsemple@lambethcollege.ac.uk

Tel 020 7501 5383 / 07879 236 929

#### **Lewisham College**

Room B336 Lewisham Way SE4 1UT

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

Andrew Jones

andrew.jones@lewisham.ac.uk

Tel 020 8694 3224

Fax 020 8694 3272

#### **South Thames College**

Room E26 50-52 Putney Hill

London SW15 6QX

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

Shay Vandertang

shay.vandertang@south-thames.ac.uk

Tel 020 8918 7245

Fax 020 8918 7185

#### **Southwark College**

Room BA211 Keetons Road

Bermondsey London SE16 4EE

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

Amelia Aiken ameliaa@southwark.ac.uk

Tel 020 7815 1734

Fax 020 7815 1525

#### **St Francis Xavier 6th Form College**

Malwood Road London SW12 8EN

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

tba

#### **Aimhigher Coordinator**

Mike Quinlan m.quinlan@sfx.ac.uk

Tel 020 8772 6000

Fax 020 8772 6099

## Aspire Higher Education Project Officers

### **Goldsmiths, University of London**

Room MB131 New Cross  
London SE14 6NW

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

Mary Stirling m.stirling@gold.ac.uk

#### **Ambassador Coordinator**

tba

#### **Administrator**

Silka Warrick s.warrick@gold.ac.uk

#### **Ladders Project Officer**

Kate Amis k.amis@gold.ac.uk

#### **Open Book Coordinator**

Joe Baden j.baden@gold.ac.uk

Tel 020 7919 7306 / 7114

Fax 020 7919 7379 aspire@gold.ac.uk

### **King's College London**

Widening Participation Office

Rm 4.23 James Clerk Maxwell Building

57 Waterloo Road London SE1 8WA

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

DO Richards daniel.richards@kcl.ac.uk

#### **Ambassador Coordinator**

DO Richards daniel.richards@kcl.ac.uk

#### **Access to Medicine**

Gavin Brown gavin.p.brown@kcl.ac.uk

Tel 020 7848 2711 (Aspire) / 6972

& 6768 (Access to Medicine)

Fax 020 7848 1510 aspire@kcl.ac.uk

## General Enquiries

### **Aspire Project Office**

Room 162 Queen Mary Court

University of Greenwich Park Row

London SE10 9LS

#### **Aspire Project Coordinator**

Gwenlian Evans g.evans@gre.ac.uk

#### **Aspire Activities Coordinator**

Nerissa Knightley n.knightley@gre.ac.uk

#### **Aspire Project Administrator**

Linda Collins aspire@gre.ac.uk

#### **Aspire Communications Officer**

Ali Redford ali.redford@kcl.ac.uk

Tel 020 8331 8776 / 8105 / 8911

Fax 020 8331 8735 / 9173

### **London South Bank University**

Widening Participation Unit

103 Borough Road London SE1 0AA

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

Mark Ellis mark.ellis@lsbu.ac.uk

#### **Aspire Events Officer**

& Ambassador Coordinator

Frankie Grant sheedfa@lsbu.ac.uk

Tel 020 7815 6783 / 6713

Fax 020 7815 7035

### **University of Greenwich**

Widening Participation Offices

F212 Fry Building Southwood Site

Avery Hill Road London SE9 2UG

#### **Aspire Project Officer**

Janice Larkin j.larkin@gre.ac.uk

#### **Ambassador Coordinator**

Verna Rhodes v.e.rhodes@gre.ac.uk

Tel 020 8331 8318 / 9845

Fax 020 8331 9173

Subject	Page(s)
Academic language	7
Access course(s)	9, 20, 35
Admissions	20
ASDAN	16
Battersea Power Station	33
Buddying	11
Canary Wharf	36
Care leavers	11
Careers	8, 9, 15, 23, 32, 33, 36, 39, 40
Chelsea FC	33
Child protection	38
City Learning Centres	29, 33
Community	10, 11, 13, 14, 18, 20
Connexions	5, 15, 38
CRB (police checks)	11, 18
Disability	27
Education Business Partnership	16
Employers	23, 25, 32, 36
English Speaking Board	18
Ethnic minority students	33
Evening Standard	10
Excellence in Cities	16, 36
Ex-offenders	10
Foundation degree	23
Gifted & Talented	16, 36
Guardian (The)	10, 23
Harry Potter	8
HEFCE	20
HM Prison(s)	10, 41
Holiday (summer) schools	15, 16, 35, 36
Homework club(s)	29, 33
Ladders Project	33, 38, 39, 40
League tables	23
Learning & Skills Council (LSC)	16, 40
London Olympic & Paralympic Games	39
Mature students	9, 10, 20
Mentoring	14, 33
Monitoring & evaluation	16, 29
National Maritime Museum	33, 39
National Students Survey	23
Open Book	10, 13, 41
Open days	18, 23, 27
Oxbridge	15, 36
Parents/carers	8, 14, 27, 29, 37, 41
Part-time work	25, 27

Subject	Page(s)
Pathfinder (14-19)	16
Personal statement(s)	15
Post 16	7, 15, 16, 23, 29, 32, 33, 35, 36, 39, 40
Primary schools	8, 16
Prince's Trust (The)	13
Progression routes	13, 15, 32, 38
Publications	43
Pupil Referral Unit(s)	41
Revision	25, 29
Royal Observatory (The)	33
Russell Group	36
Scholarships and grants	27, 38
Staff development	37, 38
Student ambassadors	5, 8,13,15,16, 18, 25, 27 29, 32, 33, 35, 37, 38, 40, 41
Student loans	27
Student Union	10,18
Student welfare	27
Study skills	29, 33, 35
Subject specific work	32, 33, 35, 37, 39
Summer schools	See Holiday schools
Tate Modern	33
Thematic partnerships	16, 18
Time management	25
Times Education Supplement	10
Times (The)	23
Tuition fees	27
UCAS	8, 9, 15, 23, 36, 40
Year 9	5, 15, 16, 29, 40
Year 10	15, 16, 29, 32, 33, 41
Year 11	16, 29, 37
Year 12+	See Post 16
Vocational pathways	15, 32, 36, 38, 39, 40
Websites	44
Work shadowing	36