



What is DANCOP?

DANCOP is the Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire Collaborative Outreach Programme, a partnership of universities and colleges across our two counties working together to raise the aspirations of young people and support them to consider their futures. We aim to inspire and inform young people about their options and encourage them to think about higher education in all forms, including university, college-based higher education, and higher and degree apprenticeships.

What We Do

DANCOP provides targeted outreach activities to schools, colleges and communities based around higher education and raising aspirations. We work with teachers and advisors, parents and carers, and learners to address concerns and break down the barriers that might prevent young people from progressing to higher education.

Overview of Project

DANCOP is part of the Uni Connect Programme funded by the Office for Students, which brings together 29 partnerships of universities, colleges and other local partners to deliver outreach programmes to young people aged 13-18. Our work is focused on local areas where higher education participation is lower than expected given the GCSE results of the young people who live there.*

We support young people to:



2019/
2020
in
numbers



Worked
with
83
schools
and colleges

49,042
learner
engagements



Delivered
2,852
activities

39
%
of Uni
Connect
target
population

63
Target wards



2,563
Parent
engagements



We have
10,805
unique
target
learners

We have
44
activity
providers



2,505
Staff
engagements



*from <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/promoting-equal-opportunities/uni-connect/>

Third Party Providers

DANCOP work with a range of third party providers, who are specialists in their field, to ensure that our schools are receiving bespoke and innovative interventions.

In 2019-20 DANCOP continued to work with trusted providers **Into**University, Siddiqui Education, Brilliant Club, Unifrog, Talk the Talk, Learn By Design and Careers Torch. DANCOP procured the services of a new resilience provider, Beaumont Consultancy Limited who offer a 12 module resilience intervention to targeted groups of DANCOP learners. DANCOP third party providers delivered 13,244 engagements across the academic year with 4602 unique DANCOP learners.

IntoUniversity

IntoUniversity engaged with 867 DANCOP learners across the academic year, delivering a sustained and progressive programme of activities to learners through workshops and 1:1 support. **Into**University delivered a range of virtual and socially distanced face to face activities in response to the pandemic and created a range of resources for learners to utilise during the school closures.

Unifrog

This year we supported 48 schools and colleges to access Unifrog, an intuitive online system allowing learners to record their skill building activities, qualifications and work experience in one place to support with future university applications. Unifrog has also allowed learners to search for courses in the UK and overseas, and explore the full range of options to them at further and higher education level. Over 5000 learners have engaged with the platform in the academic year 2019-20.

Brilliant Club

The Brilliant Club have been working with learners on The Scholars Programme. PhD students delivered a programme of academic enrichment to small groups of learners through a combination of university visits, in-school tutorials and online resources. The programme has helped to develop the skills, knowledge and ambition needed to progress to highly selective universities. In response to the pandemic, Brilliant Club adapted all delivery to be virtual and were able to successfully deliver The Scholars Programme to 26 DANCOP schools.

Careers Torch

Careers Torch delivered 1:1 careers interviews, advice and guidance to 516 learners in the academic year 2019-20. They were able to complete phone interviews and virtual sessions in response to the pandemic and successfully deliver 178 days of careers support across 21 DANCOP schools.



What have we been up to? Activities and Projects

As part of the DANCOP provision we offer schools and college sessions and activities built on our Progression Framework. The DANCOP progression framework is designed to outline key learning objectives that through key sessions and activities, support a learner's journey to making an informed choice about higher education, as well as supporting schools and colleges to meet key Gatsby Benchmarks. Alongside our Progression Framework we offer tailored activities to further support our schools and colleges.

What Can I Do With Sport?

Nottingham Hub learners took part in three activity sessions focussed on helping them to explore qualifications and careers in sport. The programme included a visit to St George's Park where they learnt about England players rigorous routines of physical and psychological training and development.

Medical Me

Mansfield Hub delivered the Medical Me programme which enabled learners to explore careers in medicine and healthcare. It included a visit to the QMC and University of Nottingham School of Medicine where they learned about the qualifications and routes into medicine and healthcare professions.



Future Me

Derby Hub delivered the Future Me event in partnership with Targeted Student Support. The afternoon on campus included a motivational speaker, workshops and a campus tour. The event concluded with a marketplace where learners had the opportunity to speak to local providers and advisors about their future options.

World Challenge Next Steps Residential

Participants from the World Challenge expedition to Morocco in 18/19, now in year 11, were invited to a one-night residential at Mount Cook Adventure Centre. Located in the beautiful Derbyshire countryside, they took part in various outdoor activities, including bushcraft, archery 'tag' and braving the rooftop rider zip wire! These were complemented by bespoke DANCOP sessions on employability, resilience, progression, and study skills. The event supported the learners to reflect on their World Challenge experience and look forward to their post-16 journey and beyond.

Large Scale Events

“It is important to get involved”

learner from Bluecoat Aspley Academy

Employable Me

In November, we invited three groups of post-16 learners to the University of Derby to take part in Employable Me, a day focused on supporting learning to recognise and showcase their skills to universities, colleges and employers. The learners took part in a plethora of challenges designed to test their teamwork, persuasion, problem-solving, time management and digital skills, before spending time reflecting on how they could demonstrate these in the future.

“I have more skills than I thought”

learner from Nottingham Academy

National Apprenticeship Week

We celebrated National Apprenticeship Week in February by holding a joint event with the University of Derby’s Schools and Colleges Liaison and Apprenticeship teams. 41 learners from DANCOP schools joined us to take part in exciting sessions that aimed to increase their knowledge of apprenticeships and higher education, as well as offering them the opportunity to hear from apprentices about their experiences.

“I had a lot of fun and it gave me lots of career choices”

learner from David Nieper Academy

Girls into STEAM

To mark International Women’s Day, we hosted an event at Nottingham College for 42 year 9 and 10 young women. Learners participated in a range of sessions focused on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics) courses and careers, including robotics, architecture and codebreaking. The final reflective session asked learners to consider what International Women’s Day meant to them and why it is important that women are represented in the careers we discussed over the course of the event.

“It was a good day and I learnt new skills”

learner from David Nieper Academy

“This session was really helpful and helped me discover more”

learner from Djanogly City Academy

Outreach Hub

Outreach Hubs have been created within Uni Connect programmes across the country to support learners who are currently underrepresented in higher education. Outreach Hubs provide a legacy when the DANCOP project comes to an end by ensuring outreach support is in place which is sustainable for the future. We do this by signposting schools and colleges to existing outreach provision and providing match funding for bespoke activity to plug gaps which are left unfilled by existing activity.

Successful staffing of DANCOP’s Outreach Hub was accomplished in April 2020. These staff started the project by undertaking a mapping exercise to review existing provision across Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, collating all outreach activity from the HE providers across both counties.

A selection of schools and colleges who were not in receipt of DANCOP’s targeted outreach activity were identified and put into a Tier 1 group based on measures of deprivation. It was more efficient to identify a list of schools and colleges to actively target in the initial stages. These schools were contacted with a survey, asking what they would like to see from the Outreach Hub webpages and what they would like to see in the future in terms of outreach activity.

This was fed into the development of the webpages and resulted in some match funded activity. In July our Outreach Hub webpages launched accompanied with an FAQ document and an animated explainer video.

[Watch our Outreach Hub explainer video here.](#)

[To find out more about the Outreach Hub visit our website.](#)



Partner Teams

DANCOP has team members working across partner institutions who offer a range of activities focusing on both internal learners within our college partners and outreach in local schools. In 2019-20 partner teams engaged with 4479 unique DANCOP learners, 4145 of those were on a progressive and sustained programme of activity. 2470 learner engagements took place virtually in response to the pandemic.

Spark Series

The DANCOP Chesterfield College team delivered a series of events with guest speakers from a range of careers who shared their personal education and career pathway with learners. The programme was adapted to be delivered virtually and included speakers such as Ruth Amos, an engineer and entrepreneur, who has created mobility aids for people with physical disabilities and James Gold, the Cofounder of fashion brand Skinnydip.

Confidence and Resilience Workshops

The West Nottinghamshire College team developed a new workshop in response to the pandemic, focusing on building confidence and resilience skills. Between March and August 2020 the team delivered the session to 35 different groups across the college, engaging with over 500 learners.



The Chesterfield College Group



Industry Weeks

At Nottingham College, the DANCOP team developed a range of activities for industry weeks which take place across the college. The team delivered employability, progression and resilience workshops as well as working collaboratively with third party providers to deliver guest speaker presentations focusing on specific industries. The Nottingham College DANCOP team also delivered a series of 'meet the graduate' workshops. These workshops allowed learners to meet current and recent graduates, often alumni from specific courses or working in those industries, in an aspirational field to talk about their experience, to raise aspirations and broaden horizons.

Study Skills Coaches

Within Derby College Group and West Nottinghamshire College, DANCOP fund Study Skills Coaches to deliver targeted support to learners focusing on study skills needed for their current studies and in higher education. The teams developed and delivered workshops about independent study, revision techniques and critical thinking.

Covid Response

Adapting to the Pandemic

Over the course of the pandemic we have adapted all of our outreach provisions to offer remote and virtual alternatives. We have shaken up our initial offer of in-school and face-to-face activities to support learners and school staff through sessions live streamed directly into the classroom, webinars, pre-recorded videos and much more. You can find out more about our digital resources and how you could use these to support your learners on our [website](#).

Supporting School Staff

The pandemic affected our calendar of events challenging us to adapt our delivery methods. In June, we welcomed 47 delegates from our region and beyond to our first virtual CPD conference. Feedback from schools and colleges about the topics they would find most useful was used to identify the six sessions that were offered on the day, which covered areas such as T levels, barriers to progression to higher education and student finance. The event finished with a networking session to give delegates the opportunity to catch up with DANCOP staff and each other.

Supporting Learners

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“Very informative and great to go into more depth about the policy and research surrounding progression to Higher Education. It was great to hear from different organisations too!”

“Excellent CPD, very informative and good choice of breakout sessions”

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Office for
Students 

 Uni Connect
Programme

