

Theory of Change

1 Situation

The Ludus initiative will address the under representation of young people from disadvantaged backgrounds progressing to HE, with a particular focus on increasing applications from disadvantaged students to Loughborough's UG programmes. For the purposes of this document disadvantaged is defined as students who meet at least one of the following criteria: reside in a Q1 or Q2 postcode, in receipt of free school meals (FSMs), eligible for the pupil premium, a target student for Uni Connect

2 Aims

The overarching aims of Ludus are to:

- Support Government goals to increase number of students from disadvantaged backgrounds progressing to HE
- Increase number of students from disadvantaged backgrounds applying to one of Lboro's UG programmes
- For 2020/21 to engage with 180 Gold students (60 per key stage strand)
- for 80% of Gold students to meet the defined WP criteria for the initiative (to increase to 90% and 100% in years two and three)
- For 75% of the KS5 Gold students (45) to successfully complete the compulsory modules leading to a reduced offer
- To support all students to develop key transferable study skills
- To break down common misconceptions of HE, supporting students to make well informed decisions about their future
- Fulfil Lboro's civic duty to support disadvantaged students, their families and schools to deliver a strong and comprehensive careers curriculum

7 Inputs

5 Activities

6 Outputs

Process

This is a large scale, resource intensive initiative.

Tangible: delivery staff, dedicated annual budget, physical space on campus, accompanying website, accompanying resources (digital and hard copy), promotional materials

Intangible: insight/knowledge of project staff and contributors, buy in from internal and external stakeholders, strong working relationships with partner schools and the CEC

Ludus will offer a range of progressive activities for students in KS3 - KS5. There will also be resources to support their families and teaching/careers staff to deliver their curriculum. All activities will be designed to help increase awareness of HE (and in turn Lboro), the focus of individual activities will vary but across the programme we will: challenge misconceptions of HE, build and reflect on the key transferable skills required to be a successful student and draw attention to the links between academic curriculum and careers

Parents/families:

- Resources to help increase their own knowledge of HE
- Resources to help support them advising their child about HE options

Students:

- Range of online case studies (blogs, vlogs, videos) that can be freely accessed providing HE related advice and guidance and a range of role models
- Online activities to inform students of the range of HE opportunities available to them
- Virtual/face to face taster lectures/masterclasses to increase understanding of HE learning and application of knowledge
- Information clearly linking curriculum learning with careers
- Activities to develop students transferable skills, to include reflection elements to ensure a complete understanding
- Set of activities to complete to secure a reduced offer with Lboro (select students only)

Teachers/careers staff:

- Free to access resources to complement planned curriculum/careers sessions
- Free to access lessons to support in the delivery of the Gatsby Benchmarks

3 Outcomes

4 Impact

Short Term:

- Students/teachers/families will have access to comprehensive suite of activities to support their academic and careers curriculum
- Students/families develop a better understanding of opportunities offered through HE
- Students/families develop a better understanding of the importance and application of transferable skills
- Teaching staff have access to a range of resources to support in the delivery of the Gatsby Benchmarks

Medium Term:

- Students develop a greater understanding of the post 18 options available to them
- Students feel more confident to apply to HE
- National profile of Lboro is raised

Long Term:

- Increased volume of applications to study at Lboro from disadvantaged students
- Lboro contributing towards Government's goals of widening participation in HE

Evaluation to assess the outcomes

Short term:

- Google analytics to measure use of online support/activities
- EMWPREP consent forms to log numbers of physical attendees at events and demographics of cohort
- Pre and post activity surveys to measure understanding
- Analytics to measure the numbers of online activity downloads

Medium term:

- Focus groups/interviews/annual surveys with Gold students to track attitudes/perceptions of HE and Lboro
- Analytics to record interactions with schools/colleges based on their geographical location
- Inclusion of "recommend Lboro" question in post event surveys (to be fed into central reputation monitoring)
- Inclusion of Lboro resources in national guides for best practice (offered by CEC) alongside opportunities to present at related conferences

Long term:

- Tracking of students (via SCRUM) from programme into Lboro's admissions database
- Fuzzy matching report demonstrating the progression rates and destinations of participating students

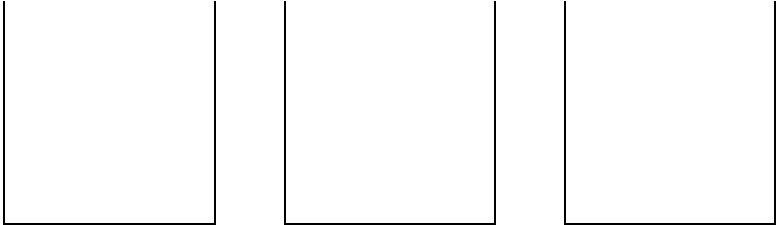
8	Evidence and Mechanisms
---	-------------------------

Lboro is committed to supporting students from disadvantaged backgrounds to achieve their academic ambitions and pursue the opportunities offered to them via HE. Evidence from existing national (Realising Opportunities, UniConnect) and local (REACH, NNCO, Lboro specific interventions) WP initiatives clearly demonstrates the positive impact that progressive and sustained programmes can have when targeted and delivered effectively. Research into existing programmes has yielded elements of best practice that have been incorporated into Ludus to create an informed and unique offering for students and schools. Success will be measured by the rates of students choosing to apply for a HE course after engaging with Ludus. An additional measure will be added, tracking the numbers of Gold KS5 students opting to apply to a Lboro UG course.

9	Rationale and Assumptions
---	---------------------------

It is assumed that students engaging in Ludus are aware of some, but perhaps not all, of the benefits associated with HE. For many, there will be additional challenges/barriers that they may perceive as impacting their ability to progress. In addition, it is assumed that students residing outside of the Midlands will have limited awareness/knowledge of Loughborough.

The SCL Team already offers a comprehensive programme of WP initiatives to schools in the Midlands and London, in recent years this has grown to include virtual activities offered nationally. Working history demonstrates a demand for activities of this type from both students and schools, with high levels of previous engagement from students within our target criteria.



External Factors

There are a number of external factors that may influence our ability to deliver against all of our objectives. These include, but are not limited to:

- Disruption to school/education/on campus activity in relation to COVID 19. This in term may impact our ability to recruit the desired number of Gold students who meet our WP criteria.
- COVID 19 may also impact on our ability to host face to face events (for Gold students) on campus
- A virtual option for the KS5 compulsory modules will be created to mitigate against the above point, but access to technology may be an issue for our target students
- Changes to the student finance system that may be introduced
- Similar programmes that may be offered by our competitors/consortiums
- Lboro's sustained success in league tables (may be seen by some as unobtainable)
- Access to required data from HESA/UCAS (that allows for fuzzy matching) can be delayed, impacting our ability to conduct the research