

NEON 'SUPPORTING BTEC STUDENTS' WORKING GROUP

Wednesday 4th September – University of Lincoln

INTRODUCTION & AGENDA

- The story so far – Work of the group to date
- Overviews on progress to date – Sub groups one and two
- Prospectus mapping – Alex Blower
- Using the NERUPI Framework to map activity to support BTEC students across the ‘Student Lifecycle’
- Group discussions & Feedback
- Next steps for the group & AOB

THE STORY SO FAR

TIMELINE OF GROUP ACTIVITY TO DATE

September 2018 – Initial meeting in London
– Input from around 30 HEIs

January 2019 – Second meeting at
University of Suffolk – ToR established and
decision made for Group to focus on two
specific work streams

March 2019 – Sub groups established – Sub
group one (IntoUniversity & University of
Leeds) – Development of IAG resources to
support learners and young people
Sub group two (Lancaster University &
NERUPI) – Mapping of activity to support
BTEC students across Student Lifecycle

JULY MEETING

TRANSFORMING TRANSITIONS

The Research Problem:

UCAS data indicates that entering universities, such as those presented in this project, are less likely to recruit BTEC students from their own traditional applications. In the same time, recent research highlights differential outcomes for BTEC students as they progress through university. In terms of first outcomes, A level students are more likely to achieve a first or 2:1 at least an upper second than students using an Applied A level. Evidence also suggests that BTEC students are more likely to drop out of university when compared with those who follow traditional academic pathways, which is not accounted for prior attainment. BTEC students in Russell Group universities are less likely to complete their three semesters, and the subject gap between BTEC students and traditional students, although narrowing, is significant and is largest in Russell Group universities.

Computer Science

A-LEVEL VS BTEC: THE TRUTH!

Aims of the Project:

The purpose of the project is to develop evidence-based interventions to transform the transition of BTEC students into HE and in the way to include differential educational outcomes. The project aims to better understand and reduce the differential educational outcomes of BTEC students by identifying universities by:

- 1) conducting an investigation intervention to explore BTEC students educational experiences across the FE/HE transition.
- 2) designing, implementing and evaluating evidence-based interventions to address identified issues of transition.

The Project Team:

University of Exeter
Exeter College
University of Birmingham
Hartford South Frame College
Loughborough University
Leicester College
Queen Mary, University of London
City and Islington College
Pearson

What are we going to do?

Phase 1: Investigation

- 1) An in-depth exploration of the issue through:
 - 1) a statistical analysis of success, progression and employment of BTEC students in Sports Science, Business, and Computer Science
 - 2) a discursive analysis of curriculum content and assessment practices in the degree subject and in the corresponding FE accessing subjects both A level and BTEC.
 - 3) a specific analysis of humanity and history expectations in these subjects.
 - 4) an analysis of pedagogical approaches in these subjects through focus group interviews with teaching staff and students in both FE and HE settings.
 - 5) an analysis of student experiences of transition from FE to HE and the learning outcomes they have experienced through focus group interviews with Year 1 students.

Phase 2: Design and implementation

- 1) Drawing on the findings of Phase 1, we will:
 - 2) Design and develop a suite of interventions to address identified issues.
 - 3) Develop a Theory of Change model for the interventions.
 - 4) Implement the interventions in at least two of the partner institutions.

Phase 3: Evaluation

- 1) Developing an Evaluation Framework to evaluate the interventions.

Legacy and Impact

- 1) Partner Symposium to disseminate recommendations from the project, and a dissemination and publications strategy.
- 2) A Practitioner/Participation seminar in each institution bringing together Deputy Vice-Chancellors with responsibility for Education, Widening Participation teams, and relevant subject academics to consider the final report and determine substantive actions as a consequence for each institution.
- 3) Host a cross-institutional and cross-center (FE/HE) National BTEC Transitions Conference with Pearson, to be held beyond the project timeframe to bring together key stakeholders to share, discuss and consider the implications of our work.

BTEC
edexcel | PEARSON



SUB GROUP ONE OVERVIEW

Rebecca Sykes – University of Leeds

AIMS OF THIS GROUP

Overarching aim: To work in partnership with IntoUniversity & University of Leeds to develop a set of shared resources which can be used on a national basis to support the progression of BTEC learners into HE

- Identify the fundamental challenges these resources will support with
- Bring together a body of institutions that share provision ideas and agree on a set of best practices for supporting BTEC learners (years 11- 13 and beyond) and university educators (staff/academics) transitioning to HE
- To map out, plan and create of a free and accessible resource pack (or bank of resources) to support and prepare BTEC learners across their journey from FE to HE. This could be two resource packs - one for educators and one for students
- To ensure these resources can be delivered in a workshop or 1:1 format and piloted to BTEC learners through IntoUniversity centres

PROGRESS OF GROUP TO DATE

Developed a session plan and workshop based around 'Transitioning into HE' for BTEC students

Workshop includes a carousel of activities designed to support students:

- 'Getting University Ready' – A skills audit which BTEC students can complete encouraging students to recognise their skills and identify how they can use these at university
- A section on 'Supporting academic writing styles'
- A section on 'My first week/term' exploring common themes which students will encounter during their first week and term

SUB GROUP TWO OVERVIEW

Chris Bayes – Lancaster University

AIMS OF THIS GROUP

Overarching aim: To work in partnership with NERUPI to develop a set of 'guiding principles' which can be used on a national basis to support BTEC learners access HE, succeed when on course and progress beyond their time at university

- Identify and agree on the fundamental challenges facing BTEC learners at each stage of the 'Student Lifecycle'
- Bring together a body of institutions to share provision ideas and agree on a set of 'guiding principles' for supporting BTEC learners during years 11- 13 and to work with university educators (staff/academics) who support BTEC learners transition into HE
- To work with Sub-Group One to support the delivery of the set of resources developed and piloted by Into University
- To work with Sub-Group One to produce an agreed set of criteria which can be used to evaluate the success of these resources

PROGRESS OF GROUP TO DATE

- Two calls for details of provision supporting BTEC learners across the lifecycle – To date, we have had a limited number of responses.
- Have begun to map details of these interventions onto the NERUPI Framework – Started by using Level 4 ‘Transition’
- Developed a set of sub headings for ‘guiding principles’ as follows:
 - Championing fair admissions practices for BTEC students
 - Conducting meaningful outreach activity with BTEC students in schools and colleges
 - Supporting the transition and student success of BTEC students at university
 - Understanding the needs of BTEC students through engagement with research

BTEC STUDENT ADMISSIONS

Alex Blower, University of Wolverhampton

BTEC snobbery?

The Observer
Higher education

Michael Savage

Sun 28 Jan 2018 00.05 GMT



46 203

Top universities accused of BTEC snobbery

Poorer and ethnic minority students who take vocational qualifications are missing out on college places



▲ 'BTECs don't provide an appropriate preparation for most courses, where the emphasis is more academic than vocational,' says Cambridge University. Photograph: Peter Kinderley/Bloomberg via Getty Images

Top universities have been accused of “institutional snobbery” for failing to recognise vocational qualifications increasingly used by poorer teenagers as a route to higher education.

Almost half of white working-class and black British students in England are now reaching university with qualifications such as BTECs, according to new research from the Social Market Foundation thinktank. However, some of Britain's most prestigious universities still fail to recognise the qualification. Campaigners warn that it creates a barrier to entry for disadvantaged students and acts as a brake on social mobility.

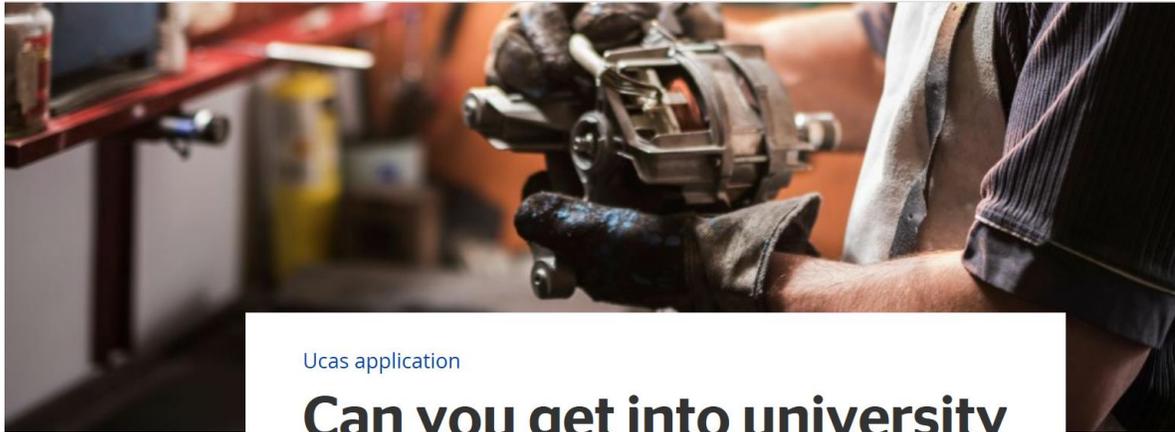
The context

Which? University

Find a course ▾

Where to study ▾

Get advice ▾



Ucas application

Can you get into university if you're studying BTECs?

By Higher Education
Liaison Officers Association
(HELOA)

26 June 2018

3 min read

More than 100,000 BTEC students apply to UK universities each year, and BTEC HND students can progress directly into the final year of more than 70% of degree programmes.

Do all universities accept BTECs?

Ninety-five per cent of universities and colleges in the UK accept BTEC students, including competitive universities from the [Russell Group](#). In 2015, over a quarter of students accepted into higher education held at least one BTEC.

Nearly all universities accept BTECs in relevant subject areas, similar to how they would with equivalent A-level qualifications.

BTEC students can often be better prepared in terms of the independent studying that's required at degree level, due to the portfolio-based nature of BTEC courses. The time management and self-organisation you'll pick up on a BTEC course can also give you an added edge.

Institutional approaches to BTEC

Prospectus scoping exercise with 30 higher tariff institutions (Russell Group +6 more) covering the following areas:

Which qualification types are uniformly featured on course pages?

Are BTEC entry requirements featured on course pages?

Is a clear approach to admissions relating to BTEC qualifications described?

If I were studying a BTEC Extended Diploma would I be able to understand my eligibility to apply based on the information given in the prospectus?

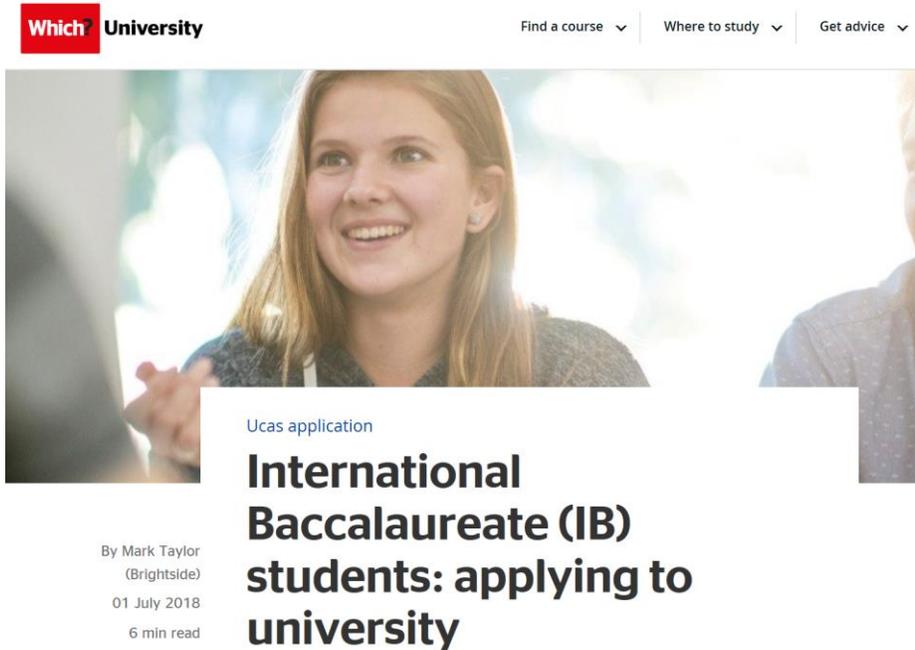
The findings

- Of the 30 prospectuses reviewed, **13** detailed a clear approach to admissions relating to BTEC applicants.
- Of the 30 prospectuses reviewed, **10** had BTEC qualifications uniformly featured on each of their course pages
- Of the 30 prospectuses reviewed, **10** held information regarding BTEC entry requirements which would be specific enough for students to understand their eligibility given the information available.

- Of the 24 RG prospectuses reviewed, **8** detailed a clear approach to admissions relating to BTEC applicants.
- Of the 24 RG prospectuses reviewed, **6** had BTEC qualifications uniformly featured on each of their course pages
- Of the 24 RG prospectuses reviewed, **8** held information regarding BTEC entry requirements which would be specific enough for students to understand their eligibility given the information available.

University of Birmingham
University of Bristol
University of Cambridge
Cardiff University
Durham University
University of Edinburgh
University of Exeter
University of Glasgow
Imperial College London
Kings College London
University of Leeds
University of Liverpool
London School of Economics and Political Science
University of Manchester
Newcastle University
University of Nottingham
University of Oxford
Queen Mary, University of London
Queen's University Belfast
University of Sheffield
University of Southampton
University College London
University of Warwick
University of York
University of Leicester
Loughborough University
Lancaster University
University of St Andrews
Royal Holloway, University of London
Aston University

By way of comparison....

A screenshot of a 'Which? University' article header. At the top left is the 'Which? University' logo. To the right are three navigation links: 'Find a course', 'Where to study', and 'Get advice', each with a dropdown arrow. Below this is a large photograph of a smiling young woman with long blonde hair. Overlaid on the bottom left of the photo is a white box containing the text 'Ucas application' in blue, followed by the main title 'International Baccalaureate (IB) students: applying to university' in bold black. To the left of the title, in smaller text, is 'By Mark Taylor (Brightside)', '01 July 2018', and '6 min read'.

**IB Entry Requirements
were uniformly featured
in 26 of the 30
prospectuses**

The number of students applying to higher education with the IB has doubled in the last decade; in 2008 there were 1,035 acceptances, while in 2017 there were 2,190 acceptances – a figure that has remained pretty stable for the last few years.

Examples of good practice

Manchester

COURSE	UCAS code	Course length	Typical entry requirements				Additional A-level, IB and GCSE/GCSE requirements Applicants must demonstrate a broad general education including acceptable levels of literacy and numeracy, equivalent to at least grade C/4 in GCSE/GCSE English Language and Mathematics. English Literature will not be accepted in lieu of English Language.	English Language IELTS Requirements Non-UK applicants**	Page no.
			A-level	Maths (including appropriate applications*)	BTEC	IB**			
ACCOUNTING AND FINANCE									
Accounting (BSc)	N400	3	AAA	AAB	▶	35 points overall with 6,6,6 at HL	IB: students without GCSE/GCSE Maths at Grade A/7 and English Language at B/6 will need 6 in SL Maths and 5 in SL English Language A, English Language and Literature or Language A: Literature). If Language B, English is offered at SL, we would need you to achieve 6. We do not currently accept Maths Studies for BSc (Hons) Accounting applicants for the purposes of meeting our Maths subject requirements. GCSE/GCSE: to include Maths at Grade A/7 and English Language at Grade B/6.	6.5 with no less than 6.0 in any individual component.	55
Accounting and Finance (BAEcon)	N445	3	AAB	ABB	●	35 points overall with 6,6,5 at HL	A-levels: to include at least one of the following A-level subjects: Accounting, Anthropology, Business Studies, Classics, Economics, English Language/Literature, Further Maths, Geography, History, Law, Maths, Modern Languages, Philosophy, Politics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology and World Development. IB: applicants offering Maths or Maths Studies at SL or HL must achieve a minimum of 5. Applicants taking English Language A must achieve 4 at HL or SL. Applicants offering English Language B must achieve 5 at HL and 6 at SL. GCSE/GCSE: to include Maths at Grade B/6.	6.5 with no less than 6.0 in any individual component.	55
Accounting with Industrial/Professional Experience (BSc)	N401	4	AAA	AAB	▶	35 points overall with 6,6,5 at HL	IB: students without GCSE/GCSE Maths at Grade A/7 and English Language at B/6 will need 6 in SL Maths and 5 in SL English Language A, English Language and Literature or Language A: Literature). If Language B, English is offered at SL, we would need you to achieve 6. We do not currently accept Maths Studies for BSc (Hons) Accounting applicants for the purposes of meeting our Maths subject requirements. GCSE/GCSE: to include Maths at Grade A/7 and English Language at Grade B/6.	6.5 with no less than 6.0 in any individual component.	55
Economics and Finance (BAEcon)	N415	3	AAB	ABB	●	35 points overall with 6,6,5 at HL	A-levels: to include at least one of the following A-level subjects: Accounting, Anthropology, Business Studies, Classics, Economics, English Language/Literature, Further Maths, Geography, History, Law, Maths, Modern Languages, Philosophy, Politics, Psychology, Religious Studies, Sociology and World Development. IB: Applicants offering Maths or Maths Studies at SL or HL must achieve a minimum of 5. Applicants taking English Language A must achieve 4 at HL or SL. Applicants offering English Language B must achieve 5 at HL and 6 at SL. GCSE/GCSE: to include Maths at Grade B/6.	6.5 with no less than 6.0 in any individual component.	55
Finance (BAEcon)	N300	3	AAB	ABB	●	35 points overall with 6,6,5 at HL	IB: Applicants offering Maths or Maths Studies at SL or HL must achieve a minimum of 5. Applicants taking English Language A must achieve 4 at HL or SL. Applicants offering English Language B must achieve 5 at HL and 6 at SL. GCSE/GCSE: to include Maths at Grade B/6.	6.5 with no less than 6.0 in any individual component.	55

BTEC KEY

- ▶ BTECs considered (in relevant subject).
- BTECs only considered when combined with other qualifications such as A-levels.
- BTECs not accepted

Birmingham

Biochemistry with Professional Placement (BSc)	C102	4	AAA	0, 0, 0	■	✓	A level Chemistry and a second science*. Minimum of five GCSEs to include Mathematics, English and double award science at grade 4/C.	www.birmingham.ac.uk/C102
Biochemistry with Study in Continental Europe (BSc)	C101	4	AAB	0, 0, 0	■	✓	A level Chemistry and a second science*. Minimum of five GCSEs to include Mathematics, English and double award science at grade 4/C and grade 5/B in a relevant foreign language (French, German or Spanish).	www.birmingham.ac.uk/C101
Biological Sciences (Genetics) (BSc)	C400	3	AAB	0, 0, 0	■		A level Biology/Human Biology and a second science*. Minimum of five GCSEs to include Mathematics, English and double award science at grade 4/C.	www.birmingham.ac.uk/C400
Biological Sciences (Zoology) (BSc)	C300	3	AAB	0, 0, 0	■		A level Biology/Human Biology and a second science*. Minimum of five GCSEs to include Mathematics, English and double award science at grade 4/C.	www.birmingham.ac.uk/C300
Biological Sciences (BSc)	C100	3	AAB	0, 0, 0	■		A level Biology/Human Biology and a second science*. Minimum of five GCSEs to include Mathematics, English and double award science at grade 4/C.	www.birmingham.ac.uk/C100
Biological Sciences (MSci)	C105	4	AAA	0, 0, 0	■		A level Biology/Human Biology and a second science*. Minimum of five GCSEs to include Mathematics, English and double award science at grade 4/C.	www.birmingham.ac.uk/C105
Biological Sciences with an International Year (BSc)	C001	4	AAA	0, 0, 0	■	✓	A level Biology/Human Biology and a second science*. Minimum of five GCSEs to include Mathematics, English and double award science at grade 4/C.	www.birmingham.ac.uk/C001
Biological Sciences with Professional Placement (MSci)	C103	4	AAA	0, 0, 0	■	✓	A level Biology/Human Biology and a second science*. Minimum of five GCSEs to include Mathematics, English and double award science at grade 4/C.	www.birmingham.ac.uk/C103
Biological Sciences with Study in Continental Europe (BSc)	C104	4	AAB	0, 0, 0	■	✓	A level Biology/Human Biology and a second science*. Minimum of five GCSEs to include Mathematics, English and double award science at grade 4/C and grade 5/B in a relevant foreign language (French, German or Spanish).	www.birmingham.ac.uk/C104
Biochemical Materials Science (BSc)	B405	3	AAB	0, 0, 0	■		Two sciences required at A level, one of which has to be Biology or Chemistry	www.birmingham.ac.uk/B405
Biochemical Science (BSc)	B600	3	AAB	0, 0, 0	■	✗	Two science A levels from Biology, Chemistry, Mathematics, or Physics. GCSE grade 5/B in Mathematics, Biology and Chemistry (or double award science)	www.birmingham.ac.uk/B600
Business Management (Year in Industry) (BSc)	N201	4	AAB	0, 0, 0	●	✓	GCSE Mathematics and English at grade 5/B	www.birmingham.ac.uk/N201
Business Management (BSc)	N200	3	AAB	0, 0, 0	●		GCSE Mathematics and English at grade 5/B	www.birmingham.ac.uk/N200
Business Management with Communications and Year in Industry (BSc)	N101	4	AAB	0, 0, 0	●	✓	GCSE requirements are GCSE Maths and English at grade 5/B	www.birmingham.ac.uk/N101
Business Management with Communications (BSc)	N100	3	AAB	0, 0, 0	●		GCSE Mathematics and English at grade 5/B	www.birmingham.ac.uk/N100
BSc Business Management with Marketing and a Year in Industry (BSc)	N203	4	AAB	0, 0, 0	●	✓	GCSE requirements are GCSE Maths and English at grade 5/B	www.birmingham.ac.uk/N203
Business Management with Marketing (BSc)	N202	3	AAB	0, 0, 0	●	✓	GCSE Mathematics and English at grade 5/B	www.birmingham.ac.uk/N202
Certificate in English Law	-	1					Applications are made through the University's International Office	www.birmingham.ac.uk/international
Chemical Engineering (International Study) (MEng)	H001	4	A*AA/AAA	7, 6, 0	■	✓	A level Mathematics and Chemistry required	www.birmingham.ac.uk/H001

● BTEC Extended Diploma considered (in relevant subject) ■ BTEC only considered when combined with other qualifications ◆ BTEC considered on a case-by-case basis ✗ Not accepted * See course folder for details of subjects considered to be a science
 Footnote: IB scores are for Higher Level subjects unless otherwise stated and we require 32 points overall in addition In relation to GCSE reforms we can confirm our position in terms of equivalences: A*=4, A=3, B=2, D=1. For more details, visit www.birmingham.ac.uk/news

Liverpool

Dentistry

At Liverpool we'll train you to be a working dental professional. Your learning will always benefit from being in context and applied. With 160 clinical dental chairs and a busy dental hospital on-site, we can offer you first-rate clinical training, complemented by innovative learning suites that feature interactive technology.

Download the full Dentistry brochure from www.liverpool.ac.uk/study/undergraduate/courses/publications/

Programmes at-a-glance

	UCAS code	A level	BTEC (Level 3 National Extended Diploma)
Bachelor of Dental Surgery BDS 5 years	A200	AAA	Not accepted
Dental Hygiene and Dental Therapy BSc (Hons) 3 years	B750		
Foundation to Health and Veterinary Studies (Year 0) 1 year			
- Dentistry (Year 0) OAAW			
- Dental Therapy (Year 0) BAAW			

Considerations

Why do higher tariff institutions take such an inconsistent approach to the inclusion of BTEC entry requirements?

How far are BTEC students likely to go to find out information that is not transparent and easily locatable?

Which questions should this group be asking, and to who, in order to instigate a more transparent approach to university admission processes for BTEC students?

Change is coming in vocational education (T-Levels). How do we ensure that similar mistakes aren't made?

USING THE NERUPI FRAMEWORK TO MAP ACTIVITY

Chris Bayes – Lancaster University

USING THE FRAMEWORK

Following two 'calls to action', we have received a limited number of responses regarding how institutions support BTEC students

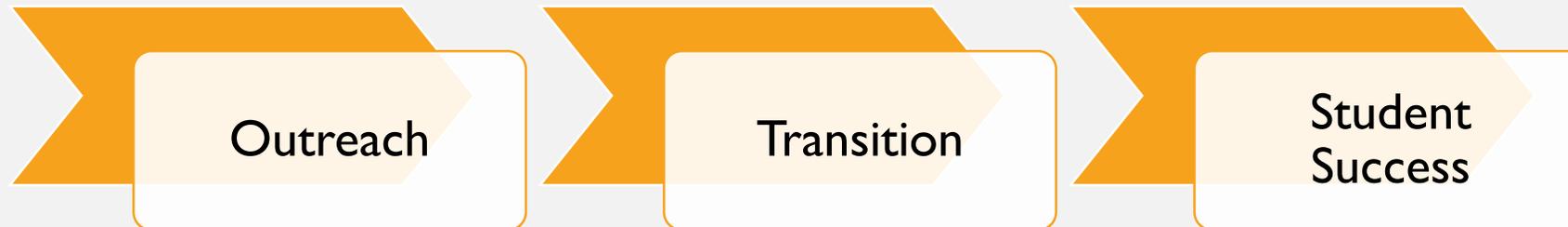
Majority of activity which we have received detail on takes place across the 'transition' and 'student success' phases of the lifecycle

Have begun to map this activity using 'Level Four' – Transition phase of the Framework using information from the following institutions:

- Exeter University
- Lancaster University
- Edge Hill University
- Swansea University
- University of East Anglia

USING THE FRAMEWORK

Ideally, would want to get to a point where we have mapped evidence of activity to support BTEC students at each point of the student lifecycle across Levels Three to Six on the NERUPI Framework



SUGGESTED APPROACH TO NEXT STEPS

- Allocate responsibility for mapping for specific level to sub-group members – Drawn across NEON & NERUPI memberships
- Have mapping of Level Four & Level Five complete for NEON Access Academy event in November & HELOA Conference in January
- Complete mapping across Levels Three to Six for session at next summer's NEON Symposium

BREAK INTO SUB GROUPS

FEEDBACK FROM SUB GROUPS

NEXT STEPS & AOB

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

NEON – Access Academy Training – 6th November, Manchester

<https://www.educationopportunities.co.uk/events/engaging-btec-students-to-succeed-in-higher-education/>

HELOA – Session on BTEC learners as part of National Conference – 15th-17th January, Stratford Upon Avon