



# Greater Manchester Higher: A Case Study

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# Introduction

- Potential Barriers
- Greater Manchester Higher Collaborative Outreach Network
- Who we've worked with and how
- Challenges we've faced
- Evaluation and further resources

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# Recognising the barriers

- Students with known disability up 42% since 2010-11.
- Students reporting mental health conditions up 160% since 2010-11.
- Retention rates up, but not as much as for other students- Gap in retention has widened.
- HEFCE identified issues in 2015 research
  - Transition issues
  - Late disclosure as barrier to effective support
  - Students with mental health problems least likely to feel their needs are met
  - Pressure on resources
  - Changes to funding

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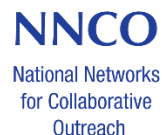
# Our partners



Teaching Intensive, Research Informed



The University of Manchester



University of  
**Salford**  
MANCHESTER



# Who we support

- Learners with disabilities:
  - Learning difficulties
  - Long-term health conditions
  - Mental health conditions
  - Physical disabilities
- Parents and Carers
- Teachers and Advisors

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# Discussion point:

What issues could you anticipate arising when planning events for learners with disabilities and/or their supporters?



# Our events

Event	Attendees
Pre-16 SpLD visit: At Manchester Metropolitan University in April 2016	91 SpLD learners 30 Teaching Staff 13 Local Schools
Pre-16 ASD visit: At Manchester Metropolitan University in April 2016	106 ASD learners 30 Teaching Staff 17 Local Schools
Post-16 ASD visit: At the University of Salford in June 2016	22 Disabled Learners 5 Schools/Colleges and individuals 8 Parents/Carers 10 Teachers
Post-16 prospective learner and parent/carer event: Held at the University of Manchester in February 2016	34 disabled learners 13 Parents
Breaking Barriers CPD: Held at the University of Bolton in June 2016	48 Teaching/Support staff 18 Schools and Colleges
In-school support presentation	Held at St John Rigby Sixth Form College in May 2016, 25 disabled learners attended 2 parents/carers 3 staff
Brightside Mentoring; delivered online	27 pre-16 pupils with ASD and 2 post-16 pupils with disabilities
ASD Summer School; hosted at MMU	18 learners attended summer school and 10 attended information evening 19 Parents/Carers engaged
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>335 Learners</b>

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# Promotion and communication

- In addition to promoting events to existing schools and colleges:
  - Important to identify SENCOs, SEND and LLD leads within schools and colleges
  - School ring-around
  - Specialist schools
  - University contacts



# Training

- Compulsory training for student ambassadors
- Training usually scheduled at least a week before the event
- Input from colleagues who work directly with learners
- Disabled student role models – no obligation to disclose
- Appropriate terminology

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**“You are so  
brave”**

**#EndTheAwkward**



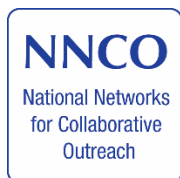
# Adjustments and additional needs

- Documents in braille
- Specific coloured handouts/powerpoints
- Interpreters and note-takers
- A spare room available if students require 'time out'
- Pre-event information pack
- Awareness of triggers
- Lunch room
- Adapted accommodation

# Who we've worked with

## Internal

- University disability support services
- University counselling services
- Student Unions
- Accommodation office
- Money advice service
- Careers Service
- Multi-faith chaplaincies



## Externally

- Other Higher Education Institutions
- Student Finance England
- Access Summit
- Local and National Charities
- Support Agencies



# Discussion point:

What issues could you anticipate arising when collaborating with different partners?

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# Working with external and internal partners

## Internal

- Availability of disability support service colleagues
- Academics
- Well-being rooms
- Awareness of welcome week and SU facilities and support

## External

- Local charities and youth branches of charities
- Assistive software/technology companies – check with disability support service
- Student ambassadors from a broad range of HEIs

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# Evaluation

- During pre and post 16 visits including the parent/carer event, the same evaluation forms are used with core GMH questions
- HEAT
- A further selection of 'event-specific' questions were asked to inform future events
- Of the 253 disabled learners who attended these events, 164 completed evaluation forms were received



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# Evaluation

Question		Pre 16 ASD	Pre 16 SpLD	Post 16 ASD	Post 16 parent / carer	Average
Before the event pupils had already thought about going to university	Strongly agree/ agree	55%	60%	89%	94%	74.5%
	Undecided	33%	28%	11%	6%	19.5%



# Evaluation

Question	Pre 16 SpLD	Pre 16 ASD	Post 16 parent/ carer	Post 16 ASD	Average
I am now more likely to consider going to university	81%	85%	89%	83%	85%
I now know more about the benefits of university	90%	88%	100%	72%	88%
I now have an understanding of how university is different from school	95%	93%	94%	78%	90%
I now have a better idea of what students need to do if they want to study at university	88%	75%	89%	61%	78%
I enjoyed the visit	90%	90%	100%	94%	94%
I am now more aware of the facilities that can be found on a university campus	77%	73%	n/a	83%	78%
I am now more aware of the different types of courses you can study at university	81%	75%	n/a	n/a	78%
I am now more aware of what student life is like at university	78%	78%	n/a	78%	78%



# Raz Riaz

**Student Ambassador**

**President-elect Bolton Students' Union**

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# Challenged life

- Born in Pakistan
- Moved to UK in 2006 with NO confidence, NO understanding of English language and culture
- My education in UK started from High School
- Student with different abilities
- Dyslexic
- Advice and Guidance
- Events

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# Resources and further info

- [HEFCE Autism video resources](#)
- [Supporting students with Autism](#)
- [Student Loans Company](#) – practitioner resources
- [Disabled Students' Allowances overview](#)
- [Into Higher Education 2017](#)
- [HEFCE Mental Health Research \(2015\)](#)
- [HEFCE Specific Learning Difficulties Research \(2015\)](#)

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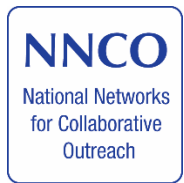
# Upcoming events

- University of Manchester Blind Ambition event:  
Wednesday 5th July  
Contact: Katie Barnes:  
[katie.barnes-2@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:katie.barnes-2@manchester.ac.uk)
- Greater Manchester Higher Breaking barriers Teacher  
CPD: Wednesday 28th June 2017  
Contact: [gmhigher@mmu.ac.uk](mailto:gmhigher@mmu.ac.uk). Hosted at  
The University of Bolton
- University of Manchester Transition Summer School  
for learners with Autism: Wednesday 6th-Thursdays  
7th August 2017: Laura Cragg:  
[dass@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:dass@manchester.ac.uk)

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# Questions?