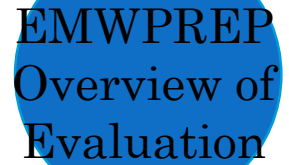# NEON 2019 Summit: Evaluation – Offering the Evidence that NCOPs Work
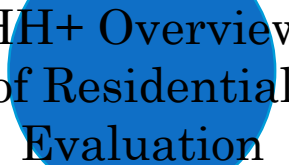
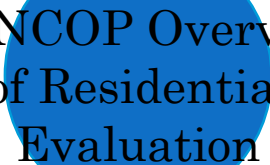**Emma Church, Hannah Merry and Vicki Spink**

EMWPREP Overview of Evaluation

HH+ Overview of Residential Evaluation

OFFERING THE EVIDENCE THAT NCOPS WORK

DANCOP Overview of Residential Evaluation

Group Discussion

MONITORING VS EVALUATION

Monitoring is…	Evaluation is…
The systematic and routine collection of information about outreach activities and their participants	The assessment of outreach activities and their effects on participants
Used as part of an ongoing process to check if activities are occurring as planned with the right schools and students	Specifically planned and designed to measure the success against the activity aims and objectives
Carried out at the time the activity occurs	Carried out at specific, often multiple, timepoints
Able to provide information in 'real time' which can be used to help alter activity plans / targeting procedures for current cohorts of learners	Used to provide recommendations for future change and improvement
Focused on input, activities and outputs	Focused on outcomes, impacts and overall goals
Predominantly evidenced using quantitative data	Tailored to meet the needs of the activity aims and objectives being tested and can, therefore, produce both qualitative and/or quantitative reports
Able to check whether the activity did what it said it would do	Able to check whether the activity delivered the intended impact
Most useful to the operations/management team (WP practitioners and leads)	Useful to all stakeholders (WP practitioners, University management, OfS etc)
Used to inform actions and decisions	Used for planning of new programs and interventions

LOGIC MODEL AND THEORY OF CHANGE

- Similar but different
  - Same general purpose – to describe how your programme / activity is expected to contribute to results in the both the short-term and longer-term; and to help you think critically about this.

- Logic Model
  - Gives a description of the programme, shows how the programme activities will lead to the immediate outputs, and how these will lead to the outcomes and goal.
  - Are linear, which means that all activities lead to outputs which lead to outcomes and the end goal – there are no cyclical processes or feedback loops.
  - Allows for risks and assumptions, although these are usually only basic.
  - Doesn't include evidence for why you think one thing will lead to another.

- Theory of Change
  - Gives the big picture, including issues related to context that you can't control.
  - Shows all the different pathways that might lead to change, even if those pathways are not related to your programme.
  - Describes *how* and *why* you think change happens.
  - Is flexible and doesn't have a particular format.
  - Describes why you think one box will lead to another box (e.g. if you think increased knowledge will lead to behaviour change, is that an assumption or do you have evidence to show it is the case?).

DATA COLLECTED

- Activity and Participant Data
  - To measure activity delivery, who takes part, engagement levels and progression outcomes.

- Baseline Surveys
  - To measure distance travelled and change over time.

- Individual Event Evaluation Forms
  - To record the success and impact of the events .

- Teacher Questionnaires
  - Provide anecdotal evidence of impact on participants.

- Interviews and Focus Groups
  - Helps provide in-depth insights into participants understanding.

- Reflective Diaries
  - Allow participants to assess their own progress during and after taking part in interventions.

- Attainment Data
  - To ascertain evidence of effect on academic ability.

NCOP EVALUATIONS

HH+ and DANCOP		
Monitoring	Activity data logged on EMWPREP	
	Participant data logged on EMWPREP	
	WP Targeting report produced	
Evaluation	Pre, immediate post and follow-up event questionnaires designed by EMWPREP	
	Reflective Log designed by HH+	
	Report based on the findings of the analysed questionnaires and reflective logs	

HIGHER HORIZONS+ UNiFY 2018 RESIDENTIALS

- 4 Y10 residentials at Keele, Staffs, Harper Adams and Chester (387 learners) and 1 Y12 residential (53 learners) at Keele

- 100% NCOP cohort, budget circa £30k per event with space for 100 learners

- Aims to give learners a taste of university life including academic (lectures, workshops, seminars) and social (stay in halls, sports, evening entertainment at the students union)

- 3 days 2 nights

- Individual sign-up for event, no teachers present.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- Learners understand the difference between how you study at school/sixth form/college and university

- Learners understand extra-curricular social opportunities available at university (it's not only about studying!)

- Learners practice communication skills, demonstrate they can work as a team, develop and improve confidence

- Learners demonstrate awareness of next steps for them

- Learners have fun!

- Learners use experience to make informed decision about higher education progression

EXAMPLE TIMETABLE

	DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
AM	ARRIVAL Accommodation check-in Ice breakers	Taster lecture Subject Workshops	Revision skills Next steps IAG
	LUNCH	LUNCH	LUNCH
PM	Team-building Interactive IAG	Campus tour Sports	DEPART
	TEA	TEA	
EVENING	Entertainment off or on campus (e.g. Exotic zoo, bowling etc.)	Entertainment at SU (e.g. party/quiz night etc.)	

LOGIC MODEL
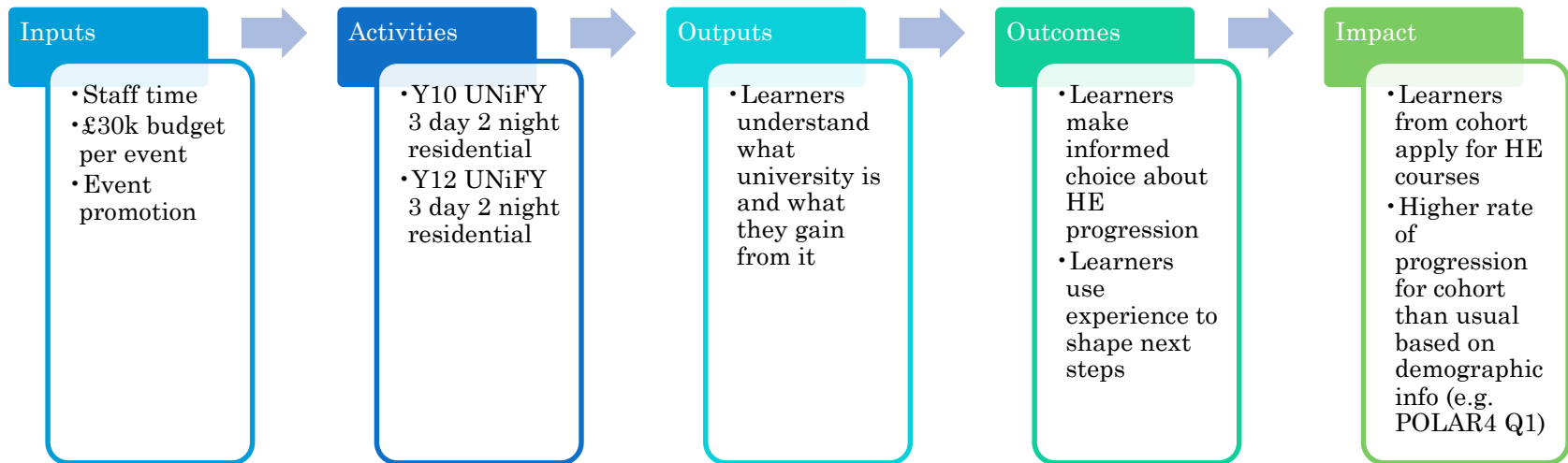
Inputs		Activities		Outputs		Outcomes		Impact
• Staff time • £30k budget per event • Event promotion	→	• Y10 UNiFY 3 day 2 night residential • Y12 UNiFY 3 day 2 night residential	→	• Learners understand what university is and what they gain from it	→	• Learners make informed choice about HE progression • Learners use experience to shape next steps	→	• Learners from cohort apply for HE courses • Higher rate of progression for cohort than usual based on demographic info (e.g. POLAR4 Q1)

Evaluation Aims

- To measure 'distance travelled' and attitudinal shifts over the course of the event

- To assess attitudes to higher education (pre and post) – has this event changed their mind?

- Capture qualitative data where possible – learner voice important for context to surveys

- Follow up with cohort later on to see if impact (if any) is sustained

- Do learners know what their next steps are?

- EMWPREP for longitudinal tracking

EVALUATION

- Pre-event baseline survey – assess attitudes to HE progression and intentions
- Reflective Log – page completed at start, at the end of each day, and end of final day
  - What do you expect to learn? / Do you have concerns about university or the event?
  - What have you learnt today? / what will you do with this learning?
  - What was the most important thing you learnt at UNiFY? / What are your next steps?
- Post-event survey – matches the baseline questions, complete before they leave
- Post-event Autumn term follow-up survey – matches the baseline questions, sent to school for completion
- Post-event focus groups in following academic year

Lessons Learnt

- No matter what you do some learners won't complete a baseline survey ahead of the event – allocate time on arrival

- Trust learners to keep Reflective Logs or collect them in and hand them back out each day?

- Qualitative data is good but how much is too much?

- If you collect a lot of handwritten data you need to input it all before analysis – and team is already busy completing summer monitoring returns

- Focus groups didn't happen – difficult to follow up when learners are dispersed at different schools

DANCOP SUMMER SCHOOL

- Year 10 students
- 42 students and 33 were DANCOP
- 7 schools engaged

- 3 days and 2 nights
- Individual sign up through school, no teacher present

OUTCOMES

- To give students an insight into university life including accommodation, course options and societies

- To raise aspirations and find out about the range of courses available along with how they are taught

- To get to know other year 10 students across the county.

SUCCESSES

- Increase knowledge of higher education

- Improve confidence and change attitudes towards higher education

- Increase the number of students likely to apply to university.

TIMETABLE OF PROJECT

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Morning	Arrival/Welcome Why go to university? Ice breakers	Academic taster sessions	Next steps IAG Inspirational speaker
	Lunch	Lunch	Lunch
Afternoon	Team building Accommodation check-in	IAG session carousel	Depart
	Dinner	Dinner	
Evening	Interactive IAG Dragon's Den project Games evening	Entertainment in the Dome	

EVALUATION AIMS

- To measure 'distance travelled' and attitudinal shifts over the course of the event

- To assess attitudes to higher education (pre and post)

- Capture qualitative data through reflective log

- Follow up with cohort 6 weeks after the event to see if impact (if any) is sustained

- EMWPREP for longitudinal tracking

Evaluation – methods used

- Pre-event baseline survey– assess knowledge and intentions around HE progression

- Reflective Log – page completed at the end of each day

- Post evaluation survey – matched the pre-event survey

- Post-post evaluation survey – matched the pre-event survey

BARRIERS TO EVALUATION

- Sent the pre-event baseline survey out with consent forms

- Post-post event survey had a low return rate

- Using paper based forms

- GDPR – this speaks for itself!

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

- Met its intended targets with students being better informed about where to gather information and their future choices

- Reflective log

- How to return surveys – send to school and/or email learners

- Focus groups

GROUP DISCUSSION

- Thinking about recent NCOP Phase 2 guidance
  - What is your assessment of the current evaluations?
    - What elements were successful?
    - What didn't work as well?
    - How would you have conducted the evaluations based on the aims and objectives?
    - How could we improve / build on the current framework?

… OUR THOUGHTS FOR NEXT STEPS

- NCOP Phase 2 Evaluation Guidance….
  - Links to A&P types of evaluation
  - Self-assessment tool
  - Evaluation plan mapped to progression framework
  - Continuation of monitoring and tracking

UNiFY EVALUATION 2019

- Shorter snappier, Reflective Log to give contextual data during the event
  - No questions for baseline – data already captured in baseline survey
  - Each day two questions: What have you learnt and how will you use it?
  - End of event: Describe your time at UNiFY in one sentence / After UNiFY what is your next step?
- Re-evaluate baseline and post-event surveys – what are key impact proxy questions?
- Focus group follow up – how do we make this work? Central location? UNiFY reunion? Bribe with pizza?
- Do key impact proxy questions demonstrate same positive attitudes in post-event and autumn term follow-up survey? If not, what do we do about it?
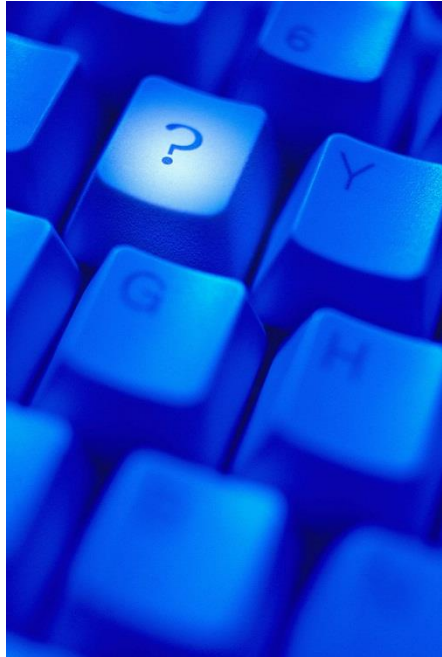
DANCOP EVALUATION 2020

- Pre-event baseline survey – to be completed in the application form

- Reflective log – used throughout the event

- Post-post survey - using alternative methods

- Post-event focus groups – potentially taking place in the following academic year

ANY QUESTIONS?

- Emma Church
  - EMWPREP Coordinator
  - E.Church@lboro.ac.uk

- Hannah Merry
  - HH+ Operations Manager
  - h.k.merry1@keele.ac.uk

- Vicki Spink
  - DANCOP Project Officer
  - V.Spink@derby.ac.uk