Working collaboratively with the Further Education sector presents a variety of unique challenges:

- Outreach is often not a measured college priority
  Widening Participation (WP) - “It’s what we do”

- Intrinsic in the college ethos / no formal outreach structures
- Internal struggles and conflicting priorities
Challenges

Engaging FECs in WP

General misunderstanding of the WP agenda
• Distinction between marketing/recruitment and WP/outreach
• Difficult to create focussed outreach work above and beyond the general ethos of FECs

Financial constraints
• Colleges are unable to contribute as much time / resource
• Conflicting priorities that require resource

Geography
• Regional dispersion of college partners
• Colleges are often not seen as equal partners  
  • Recipient over partner

• Distribution of NNCO funding might not meet college needs  
  • Unequal funding distribution

• General misunderstanding of FECs  
  • Lack of external awareness of college structure and priorities

• Identifying relevant staff  
  • High staff turnover  
  • Appropriateness of level (strategic & operational)
Challenges for College HE
An FE college perspective

- **What is College HE?** – Lack of awareness of non-traditional routes
- **A valid alternative** – Raising the profile of Higher Level Skills
- **Restricted options** – A lack of engagement with schools and IAG teams
- **Financial restraints** – Reductions in available funding for outreach work.
Solutions
Relationships

Internal

• Heads of College HE
• Marketing/Outreach teams
• Student Services

External

• HEI partners
• School networks
• External networks (e.g. KAFEC)
• **Student-led video series** from FE Colleges (5 informative pieces and 3 case studies)

• **Creation of collaborative documents** containing information on all College HE courses regionally

• **Fact sheets** on College HE

http://kentandmedway.org/collegehe/
• **Activity Portal** on KMCNet website

• **Dedicated College HE area** on KMCNet website

• **Workshop** at regional conference on ‘What is College HE?’

• **Webinar** on ‘FE Colleges as providers of Higher Education?’ [http://kentandmedway.org/college-he-webinar/](http://kentandmedway.org/college-he-webinar/)

• Supported colleges to **develop outreach activity** and engage local schools

• **Regional Conference** for HE staff in partner colleges
The advantages of partnership working
An FE College perspective

- Collaborative networks offer access to schools, IAG teams and decision makers.
- College HE recognised, valued and promoted independently and impartially.
- Working collaboratively with other colleges.
- Outreach portals offer a SPOC that represents colleges as equal partners.
- Access to national resources and networks.