

**HELOA North West & Northern Ireland, September 2025**

Session Notes – Thursday 11th September 2025



**Institutions in attendance**

Bangor University (1)

Edge Hill University (4)

Future U (1)

Lancaster University (2)

Liverpool Hope University (6)

Manchester Metropolitan University (8)

University of Lancashire (5)

University of Chester (1)

University of Cumbria (8)

University of Greater Manchester (2)

University of Liverpool (2)

University of Manchester (1)

University of Salford (2)

Other ()

\*Delete institutions if no one from there attended

**Total attendees: 43**

The session notes below were written and compiled by a variety of reporters, therefore some formatting differences may be present.

1. **Roadmap to Learning and Engagement,** *Andrew Foulds, Future U*
2. **Understanding the 2026 Cohort So Far** *Ashley Walshe, UniFrog*

# Roadmap to Learning and Engagement

*Andrew Foulds, FutureU*

*Reporter: Amy Robinson*

Session Description

How do we support children and young people to foster a love of learning and develop skills for learning within the limitations of outreach?

This session discusses how a year 7 programme at Future U uses the Feynman Technique to establish key learning principles and anchor a whole school vision for outreach and engagement.

**Delivered by Andrew Foulds, Outreach Officer, Future U**

**Future U Website:** [**https://lancashirefutureu.org.uk/about-us/**](https://lancashirefutureu.org.uk/about-us/)

Introduction

**What is Future U?**

Uni connect programme focussing on widening participation in Lancashire.

Power Up Programme

Power Up programme was the first time Future U worked with year 7 & 8 pupils. Approach included no longer viewing year by year progression, but as a whole High School approach. Core aim: to support pupils in developing a love of learning and the skills needed to become resilient learners.

Programme Outline:

Power Up basically a miniature mentor programme. Included 6 sessions progressing each time. Did not teach them about HE but wanted to empower them to learn, test learning skills, and meta-cognition, feel a sense of belonging. Wanted to learn with them, and not be afraid to make mistakes in front of pupils as learn from mistakes to develop the programme but also show pupils even the people in front of them can make mistakes and that’s OK. Help develop resilient learners.

The Feynman Technique:

Programme utilises the Feynman technique and allies to metacognitive learning: The process involves selecting a topic, explaining it simply, identifying and filling knowledge gaps by returning to the source material, and finally simplifying the explanation further to ensure a clear and comprehensive grasp of the subject.

Strategies for audience engagement

Roundtable Discussion 1: What makes a great storyteller?

* Emotive speaker – establishing an emotional connection to the story, and to the audience.
* Personality - Humour, showing personality and sharing snippets of their personal life and making themselves relatable and authentic. Be careful to play to your own strengths.
* Expressive speaker – hand gestures and movement. Barriers to this includes relying too heavily on aids, or notes, or being physically removed from your audience.
* Rhythm - making use of pauses, not speaking too fast/slow
* Be kind to yourself – continue to work on your storytelling skills and recognise that you

Roundtable Discussion 2: Where is your challenge? What little things do you do to improve engagements?

* Self-reflective – recognising if you need to change your delivery method, and/or adapt to your surroundings i.e. online vs large lecture theatre
* No time to discuss any further feedback.

# Understanding the 2026 Cohort so Far…

*Ashley Walshe, UniFrog*

*Reporter: Emily Richards*

- Thinking about brand new incoming year 13’s

- Some feedback given around new year 13’s being pleased with the changes being made the personal statements

- Some feedback around students mainly talking about apprenticeships/degree apprenticeships and how many misconceptions there are around them

- Unifrog has 2.2 million active users online

- Student survey for 2026 entry, 7,400+ students completed it (18% of 40,000+ overall students completed)

- ‘How likely am I to get in’ as the most important factor to 2026 leavers, with ‘Graduate employment rate’ as a close second. ‘Closeness to home’ as the least important factor

- Opportunity searching tools is the topmost important factor when students are using research resources

- Where do these students go to for advice? Parents/caregivers on top with teachers/school staff as a close second. Social media influencers are the bottom of the list

- Parents/carers are an extremely important factor of students making their decisions and this hasn’t changed. As a result, we should be thinking about how much we work with them.

- Comparison tools are extremely useful, with 90% of students voting on this

- The data reports that 40% of Northern Irish students are looking in the NW&amp;NI region, 30.7% of North West students looking in our region

- There has also been an increase in Yorkshire and the Humber students being interested in our region, whereas London student interest is going down

- The interest to stay in the North West region has gone up by 2%

- Social sciences most popular in NW & NI, business and management second

- Interest in computing is going down and growing instead is AI

- 1 in 4 students everywhere have shortlisted either social sciences or law

- Tailoring personal statement workshops to also be subject specific is extremely useful to students

**END.**