

Project Next Generation and how it informs events

Aimee Okafor- Head of Events



What is Project Next Generation?

Understanding **what** students aged 13-17 are planning for their future and **how** they choose subjects of interest and career pathways

Explore values, marketing landscape and drivers post-pandemic

Quantitative study

- Online survey with 1000 young people from across the UK

Qualitative study

- Online forum with 25 young people and their parents

May – July 2023

6 key themes were identified

- 1 Inspiration/Discovery
- 2 Feelings/Happiness
- 3 Experience
- 4 Confidence
- 5 Independence/Empowerment
- 6 Control

Inspiration / Discovery

Defined as 'discovering options for their future and the need to be inspired'.

Don't leave aspiration up to the imagination

Inspiration/Discovery is at the forefront of their decision-making.



Many feel they know little about what options are available post-18

%	...continuing your studies	...getting an apprenticeship	...different jobs/ careers
A lot	12%	12%	12%
A reasonable amount	30%	26%	29%
A little bit	32%	33%	36%
Very little	18%	21%	17%
Nothing at all	6%	8%	5%
Prefer not to say	2%	1%	1%

We haven't been offered much support/advice, but we were given a booklet which contained some useful advice about post-career options by our head of year. We were also given a few PowerPoints (also from our head of year) but it contained limited information. In addition, our school offered a careers meeting with a careers advisor, but spaces were limited so not everyone could receive this information

Young people need inspiration
and encouragement to
discover available options, and
to help them have more
certainty about the future



Feelings / Happiness

Defined as 'current enjoyment and future happiness'.

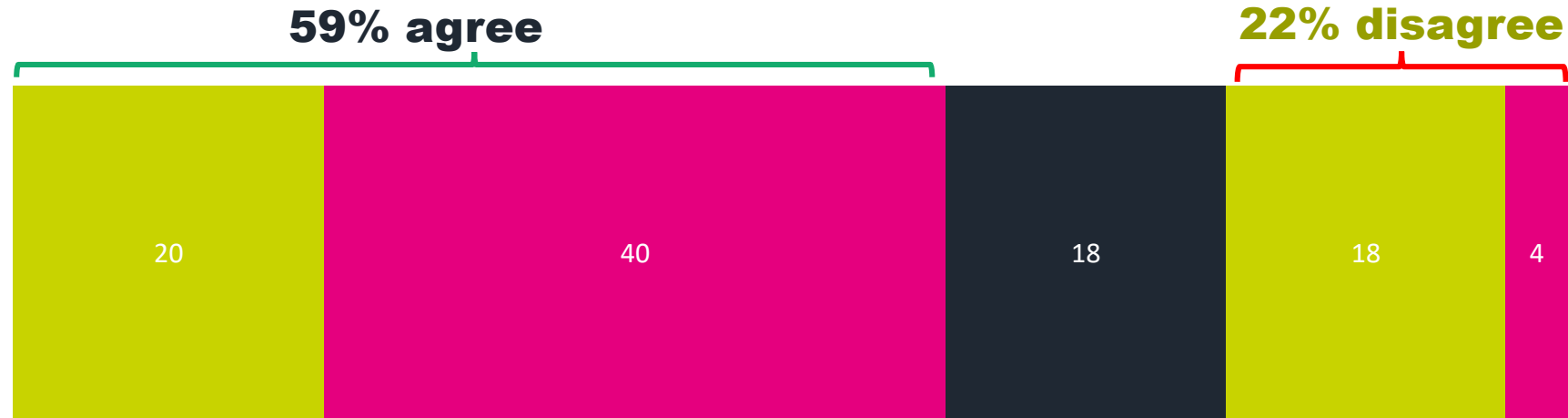
Living in the moment and planning for the future

What happiness looks like and how universities can demonstrate how their courses can help them achieve this.



A key strategy is focussing on what they enjoy and t that good things will follow

I'M NOT TRYING TO
MAP OUT MY
FUTURE – I'M
STICKING TO WHAT
I ENJOY / WHAT I
AM GOOD AT AND
THE REST WILL
TAKE CARE OF
ITSELF



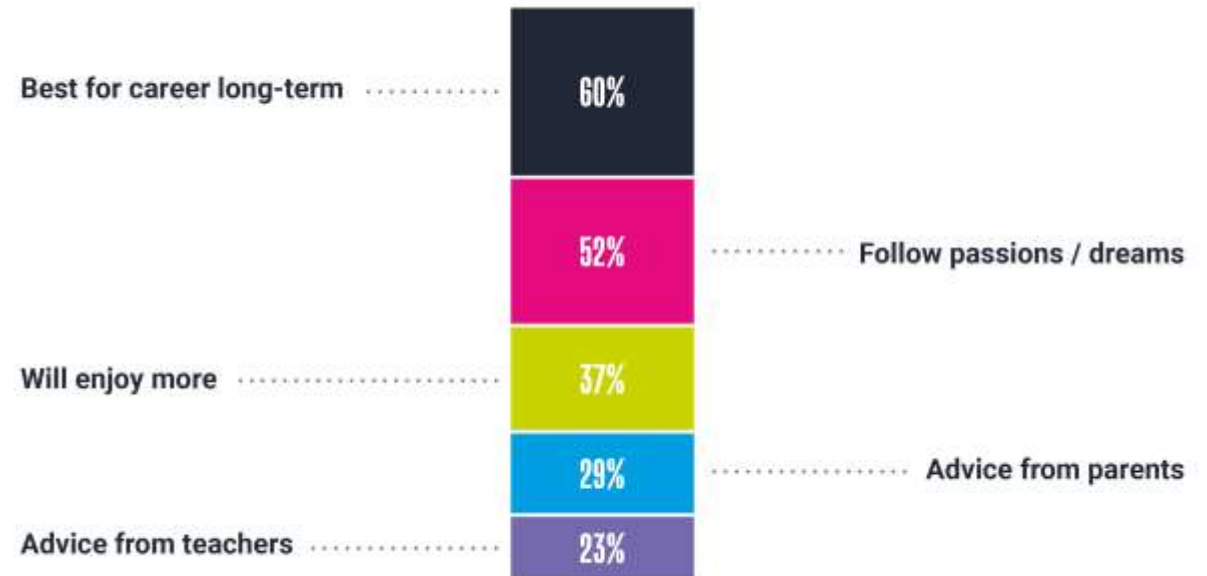
Enjoyment and happiness are key drivers of choice



The starting point is finding a career they will be happy in, and they need inspiration to find this

47% chose 'Enjoying my job' as the number one factor when thinking about the job they want in the future

Main reasons for being most likely to apply to university:



Young people think about what will fulfill current enjoyment, but also future happiness



CURRENT ENJOYMENT

Passions & interests

Subject/course/career enjoyment

It is very important for me to enjoy the subjects I study because then I am more motivated to revise, and I am more interested. If I didn't enjoy a subject then it would put me off further study of that particular



FUTURE HAPPINESS

Stable career & financial situation

Career progression

Opportunities to explore/travel/independence

I want to have a job that I can really enjoy and earn good money from, so I can have fun and be happy at work – 15

Experience

Defined as direct, indirect, and past experiences.

Using experience to empower choices

How experiences shape their thinking, and how they are important to help with their future and choices.



Experience in the decision-making process can be defined in three ways



Direct experience

Work experience, placement years etc.

Hands on, practical & employability skills development



Indirect experience

Engagement with mentors, employers, or people who have taken a particular pathway

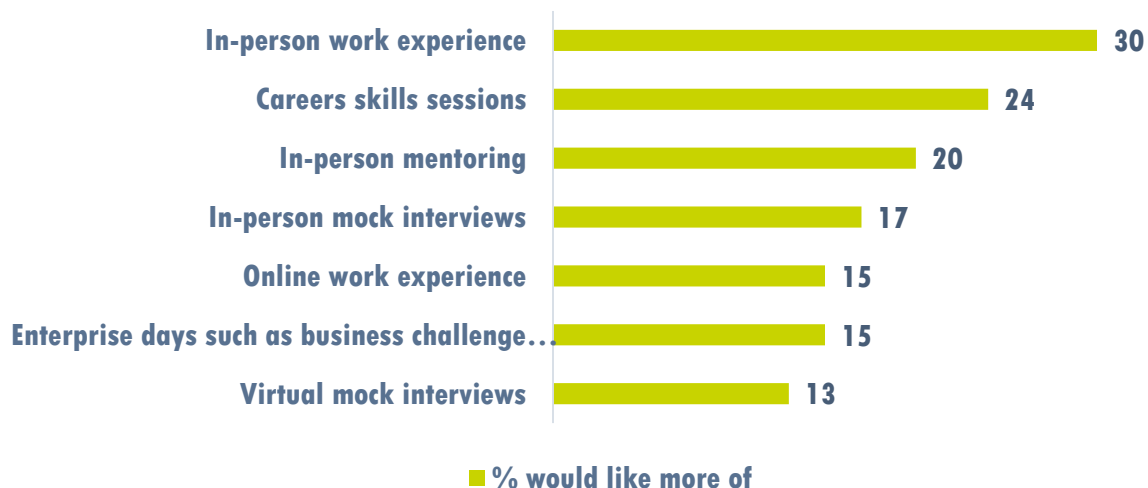


Drawing on past experiences

Experiences of parents/family friends that have influenced their thoughts/exposure & experience of particular careers or pathways

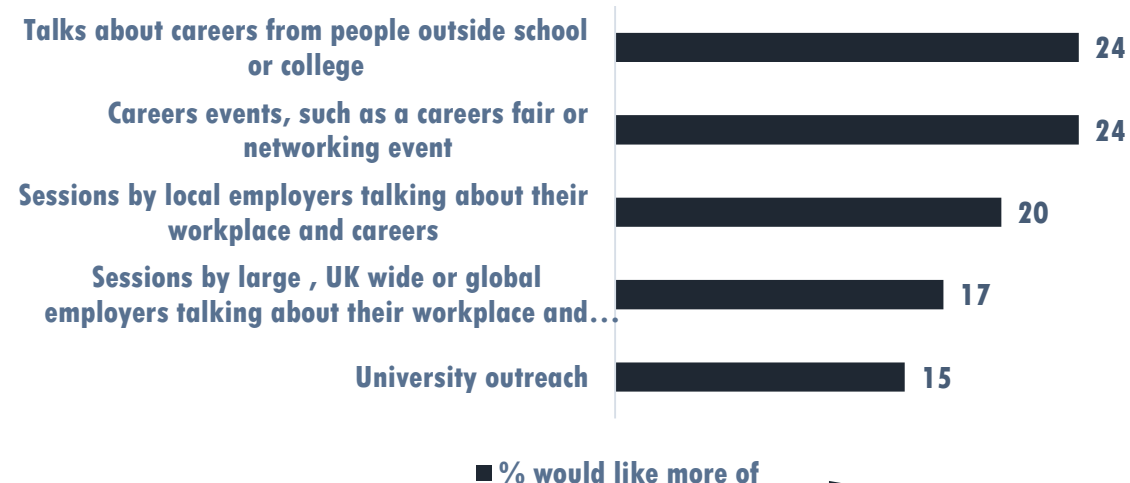
There is a need for more experience, whether direct or indirect

Direct experience



There are lots of people out there and not many good jobs about, it's harder to find one. Most companies are looking for people with experience or certain qualifications. - 16

Indirect experience



Teacher's advice has been not so helpful, it doesn't always answer the questions I have. The advice is basic, and I feel as if when I reach out to the teacher, I receive a standard response. - 15

Support and reassurance can empower young people to be independent in their decision-making



Knowledge & reassurance/support can empower YP to take control of their future.

- This is even more important Y11 onwards, as they need confirmation they are making right choice but also knowledge that there are other options if things don't go to plan

From teachers, careers advisers, parents

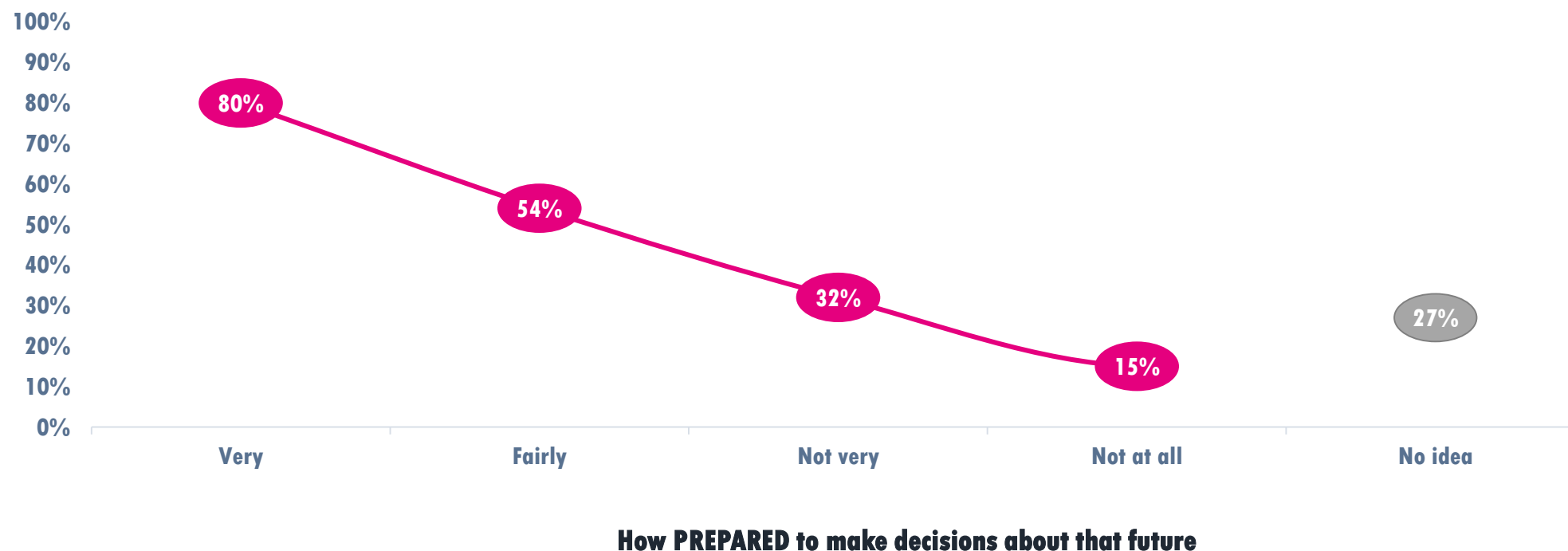


Empowerment from being able to engage with and hear real life examples.

Peer mentors, those who have done this path AND from people in a position they want to be in who took an alternative route to get there – especially important

Control in terms of preparedness is key for feeling optimistic about the future

% Extremely/very positive about the future

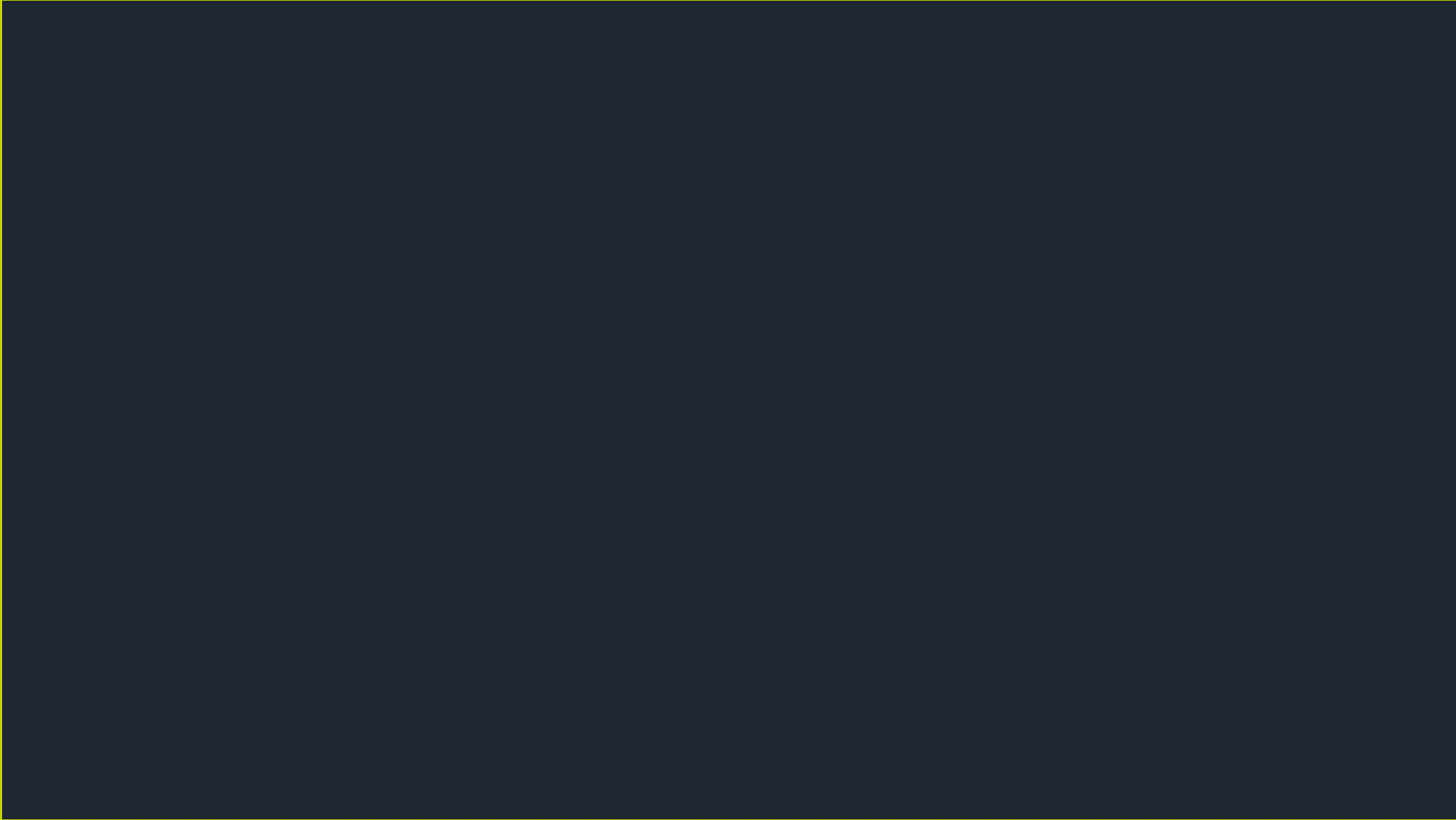


6 key themes when producing st for post-18 decisions



How do these translate at an event?





Inspiration & Discovery

Inspiration/Discovery is at the forefront of their decision-making.

1. Give young people real sources of inspiration and discovery. They're bombarded with plenty of information, and spend a lot of time being talked at – they need the chance to talk with someone, to ask questions, discover what they love, and what it'll actually be like.
2. Show them the ins and outs of day-to-day life studying a subject, applying for a place, or working in a profession. Offer visits to universities and employers, demonstrative workshops, or real life stories in video format via social.
3. Address questions around the different options available, how to achieve their goals, earning and progression potential, financial management and concerns, nerves and uncertainty (relating to confidence and preparedness), and finding the path that best suits their skills and personality.

1

New adviser pre-event journey

2

New pre-event student tools

3

UCAS in event support to focus on supporting Discovery journey

4

Discovery touchpoints around the event floor

Feelings & Happiness

Enjoyment and happiness are key drivers of choice

1. Highlight opportunities to travel and the potential for career independence (e.g. entrepreneurship or business ownership) in your resources.
2. Give them access to real people who have followed different paths – determined planning/carefree enjoyment – so they can interpret which is best for them

1

Question based tools and support

2

Clearly signposted UCAS in event support

3

Student / Apprentice ambassadors

Experience

Offer resources to develop soft skills (e.g. via life coaching and mentoring videos about confidence).

1. Balance in-person (for confirmation and confidence) with digital opportunities (for inspiration and discovery).
2. For direct experience, offer work experience and placement years, as well as hands-on employability skills development. For indirect experience, offer engagement with mentors, employers, and current students

1

Subject / careers in-event experiences to bring to life subjects or careers and give young people hands on experiences and content to watch.

How we can work together to overcome barriers to asking questions



What I thing would
you change to
improve the
student experience
at a UCAS event?

