

Information for Students and Parents

Higher education activities and the Uni Connect programme

Higher education outreach activities are aimed at showing students the higher education opportunities available at college and university, and how completing a higher education course can benefit their job prospects. The activities may also work to support student academic confidence and attainment.

The Uni Connect Programme (UCP) - formerly the National Collaborative Outreach Programme (NCOP) - aims to increase the number of students progressing to university and higher education, regardless of their background. The HeppSY team are a collection of practitioners who deliver impartial information advice and guidance related to Higher Education progression. You may have the opportunity to take part in activities such as university campus visits, summer schools, finance workshops and other higher education opportunities. HeppSY and their partners¹ are being funded by the Office for Students (OfS) to undertake such outreach activities with students at your school or college to let you know about the benefits of going into higher education. More information about HeppSY and its partners can be accessed through the links below:

HeppSY - <https://www.heppsy.org>

Higher Education Progression Partnership (HEPP) – <https://www.hepp.ac.uk/>

Sheffield Hallam University (SHU) – <https://www.shu.ac.uk/about-us/schools-and-community-outreach>

The University of Sheffield (TUoS) - <https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/schools>

Why do we need to collect data and evaluate higher education activities?

To make sure the activities we provide are useful and effective for students, we need to gather certain information which we use purely for monitoring, research and evaluation purposes. Under data protection law we are able to process this data because the activities are a task carried out in the public interest. It is also important to prove that what we do is working. We must:

1. ensure that the activities we offer are appropriate
2. identify the most effective activities and best practice
3. measure the impact of our activities

Collecting individual information

We ask HeppSY partner school/colleges to provide information about all of the students in the school/college at the start of the academic year. We collect this information to identify participants for outreach activities, monitor and evaluate our work in line with other datasets, and to enable us to track individual students over time to find out whether or not they eventually apply to any form of higher education. If students have not taken part in any activity from members of the partnership, their data will be securely deleted at the end of the next academic year. We may also ask students who have taken part in a HeppSY activity (face to face or digital) or used a HeppSY resource online to fill in a short form or register on an approved platform that allows us to monitor and evaluate what is used and by whom. The types of data we collect are outlined below:

Full Name	Ethnicity	Young Carer status	Details of activity attended/undertaken
Date of Birth	Disability	Looked after child/Care leaver status	Year Group
Postcode	Free school meals status	Estranged status (if available)	School/College attended

¹ Sheffield Hallam University (SHU), The University of Sheffield (TUoS) and the Higher Education Progression Partnership (HEPP)

Gender ²	Pupil premium	If first generation of Higher Education (if available)	Other equal opportunity monitoring information where appropriate
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HEAT

Secure storage of the student data will be done using the Higher Education Access Tracker (HEAT). The HEAT service and database is a national database which is used to record the students attending outreach activities, with the aim of following their potential progression towards higher education. The data protection and storage processes set in place by HEAT ensure that the data is stored securely and not shared without your permission. For research and evaluation purposes only, data held on HEAT may be shared with educational organisations such as government departments or contracted agencies, including: The Department for Education, UCAS, OfS, organisations contracted by the OfS to undertake the national UCP evaluation (including CFE Research and Ipsos Mori) and the Higher Education Statistics Agency.

The HEAT privacy notice can be found below:

[HEAT-Data-Protection-Policy-for-Participants.pdf](#)

Data sharing and protection

Data will be processed and shared in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR, 2018) and Data Protection Act 2018, as well as all legislation enacted in the UK in respect of the protection of personal data. As Uni Connect is a collaborative programme, the information gathered will be shared between HeppSY, Sheffield Hallam University, The University of Sheffield and the Higher Education Progression Partnership (Hepp). For specific activity we may also share data gathered with other collaborative and funding partners including South Yorkshire Futures, Local Authorities, partner schools and colleges, and the Office for Students.

The overall data controllers for the HeppSY programme are Sheffield Hallam University and The University of Sheffield, unless otherwise stated in specific agreements. The safety of students is paramount, and we rely on the safeguarding provisions of the Data Protection Act 2018 where concerns around safety and wellbeing are raised. HeppSY and its partners will **not** release individual information to anyone who is unauthorised. More details about this can be found on Sheffield Hallam University and The University of Sheffield websites:

<https://www.shu.ac.uk/outreach-data>

<https://www.sheffield.ac.uk/outreach/data>

Where we outsource work to a supplier, we check that they have adequate security, ensure appropriate contracts are in place and that they process personal data in accordance with data protection laws. Examples of suppliers include online mentoring providers, student enquiry platforms, virtual learning environments (VLE) and other approved outreach delivery organisations. If we need to transfer personal information to another organisation for processing outside the UK, we will only do so if we have appropriate safeguards (protection) in place.

All data will be stored securely, and any reporting will be done so using aggregated data, meaning that individual students will not be identifiable. The partnership does not and will not sell personal data to third party organisations.

Data retention

We will retain records securely for the durations detailed below, and will review retention periods annually in line with ICO guidance and sector best practice.

² Due to changes on the HEAT database, this information as collected by schools and colleges, and shared with the HeppSY partnership will be recorded on HEAT under the label 'Sex'.

Students engaging in outreach activity whilst under the age of 21 will have their data retained by HeppSY and the Universities on the HEAT database for 15 years after their graduation, or until they reach 30 years of age (whichever comes first). Students engaging in outreach activity whilst over the age of 21 will have their data retained by HeppSY and the Universities on the HEAT database for 15 years after their graduation, or 10 years after first intervention (whichever comes first).

After this point, data will be anonymised in bulk at the beginning of the next academic year. Details of how data is retained with regards to survey and other evaluation data collection methods are detailed in information sheets to be provided to participants at the start of the relevant evaluation/research project.

Personal data gathered through approved platforms and providers is reviewed regularly, and data deleted when no longer required for monitoring, research, and evaluation purposes.

Student data we hold internally as shared by your school or college at the start of the academic year is deleted in bulk at the beginning of the next academic year.

Questionnaires and Evaluation Data Collection

As part of the Uni Connect evaluation, we will ask a selection of students in Years 9-13 to complete a survey in the autumn term. The survey is designed to collect information about each student's knowledge and attitudes towards university/higher education. The survey runs once a year so that we can capture any changes over time. The survey is run in conjunction with CFE research, who are conducting the national evaluation on behalf of the Office for Students. Students will be given separate information before completing this survey, and your participation is entirely voluntary. Students will be asked for their opt-in consent before we collect and process this data.

As part of our ongoing research and evaluation activities, we will look to collect data from programme participants where appropriate. This may include but is not restricted to short surveys before and after taking part in HeppSY funded activity, creative tasks and follow-up interviews and focus groups. All such modes of data collection are voluntary, and students can withdraw their responses up to the point of submission. Each time a student takes part in evaluative activity, a bespoke information sheet will outline the purpose of the evaluation, and what we will do with the information collected. Once data is collected, the partnership will process the data as part of its public task.

The work undertaken is independently reviewed by the Sheffield Hallam University's Research Ethics Committee and has approved guidelines for the conduct outlined above. If you have a concern with how the research and evaluation is undertaken you can contact the Head of Research Ethics, Professor Ann Macaskill via email a.macaskill@shu.ac.uk.

Your rights

You have a number of rights under data protection law. Data protection legislation gives you the following rights:

- The right to be informed
- The right to access
- The right to rectification
- The right to erase
- The right to restrict processing
- The right to data portability
- The right to object
- The right to withdraw your consent with no given reason
- Rights in relation to automated decision making and profiling
- The right to make a complaint to the Information Commissioner

If you or your legal guardian do not want your school or college to share the information outlined above with HeppSY and its partners for the purposes stated, or be involved in HeppSY evaluation activity, please contact your school or college, or Greg Brown using the details below.

If you have a query, complaint or request about the use of your data please contact Greg Brown or the DPO for Sheffield Hallam University (details below).

You are also entitled to request copies of all the personal data that the Partnership holds about you, this is called a Subject Access Request. If you would like to make a request for any information held about you, please get in touch with the universities using the links above. If you would like to make a complaint, please contact the following;

Contact HeppSY:

Greg Brown
Evaluation and Data Manager
HeppSY
0114 225 6473
heppsydata@shu.ac.uk

Contact Sheffield Hallam University's Data Protection Officer:

Data Protection Officer
DPO@shu.ac.uk
0114 225 5555

The Information Commissioner is the regulator for information rights. The Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) has a website with information and guidance for members of the public:

<https://ico.org.uk/for-the-public/>

The Information Commissioner's Office operates a telephone helpline, live chat facility and email enquiry service. You can also report concerns online. For more information please see the Contact Us page of their website:

<https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/>