



**HEON**  
HIGHER EDUCATION  
OUTREACH NETWORK

# 2022 HEON Student Survey

*Final Report*

*September 2022*

## Summary

### *2022 Student Survey*

The 2022 survey of students who have engaged with HEON activities provides an understanding of students' awareness and opinion of HEON, knowledge about, and attitudes towards higher education and what their intentions are after leaving school. This was HEON's second annual survey and repeated the questions from 2021 to track any changes since last year. 1,082 students from 12 schools completed the 2022 survey of whom 101 had also completed it in 2021.

### *Awareness & Participation*

Almost half of all students in schools and year groups where we have engaged were unaware of HEON. Awareness varied markedly between different schools with high levels of awareness at Christ's College, Farnham Heath End and Collingwood. There was no difference between Uni Connect target and non-target students. It is evident that awareness of HEON was much higher among students who have multiple interventions with us indicating that a sustained programme can cut through.

**Students only know about us where we have a sustained presence**

### *Knowledge*

The majority of students knew at least 'a little' about the qualifications and grades needed for HE and how it leads to careers they might be interested in. Just over half agreed that they knew about options available and the benefits of Higher Education but only a minority felt that they had an understanding of other aspects of HE.

Encouragingly, the more activities students had participated in, the more likely they were to say that taking part had helped them better understand different aspect of higher education. This supports the idea that a sustained programme with multiple activities is of benefit to students in increasing their HE knowledge and understanding.

**The more activities students take part in the greater their HE knowledge**

In general, schools where we have had a more sustained presence, had a higher proportion saying that taking part had helped them better understand different aspects of Higher Education.

### *Confidence & Self Belief*

Students' confidence and self-belief was mixed with around half believing that higher education was for 'people like them' or that taking part in HEON activities had increased their confidence to progress.

Encouragingly, students' self-efficacy and confidence increased the more HEON activities that they had attended.

**The more activities students take part in the greater their confidence in higher education**

### *Progression to Higher Education*

Almost two-thirds of students intend to apply to higher education. Participation in HEON activities may have some impact on helping students make this decision. Those attending multiple HEON activities were more likely to intend to apply, and less likely to be undecided.

**Taking part in HEON activities may help students in their decision to progress to HE**

The main factor motivating students to want to go onto higher education was the potential to get a better paid job. While other factors may play a part, this stands out above all others as the main reason. Furthermore, many who do not intend to go onto higher education said it is because they wanted to earn money, or the cost of higher education is a concern.

**Getting a better paid job is the standout motivation for going onto HE**

Many students who said it is unlikely they will go onto higher education are in fact still undecided or lack confidence about the grades they will get. This indicates that even students with this view still have the potential to be persuaded about the benefits of higher education.

Family was the primary influence on students' decisions about their education and career pathway. This suggests that further engagement with parents and carers may be beneficial in delivering programme outcomes.

### *Comparison of 2021 and 2022*

Comparing the same students between 2021 and 2022 has shown increases in their understanding of HE and self-belief. There were, in particular, significant increases in students' understanding of qualifications needed, careers, options available, how to apply, what it would be like to study, the benefits and what student life would be like.

**Higher Education understanding and confidence has increased since 2021**

There were also significant increases in those saying that HE was '*for people like me*' and agreeing they felt more confident in themselves, indicating increased self-belief. By 2022 these students were also more likely to feel confident making decisions about their future, to apply the skills and more motivated to work hard.

### *Conclusions and Recommendations*

The student survey provides clear evidence of programme impact from

- the increased understanding and confidence associated with students who have a greater level of participation in the programme and
- the increased understanding and confidence of students in 2022 compared with the previous year.

It is recommended that we:

- Ensure that all activities are branded, including those delivered by external providers, to increase student awareness of our offer.
- Aim to increase our sustained and progressive delivery as this is associated with positive knowledge and attitude outcomes as well as planned progression to higher education.
- Continue to deliver a programme with careers and finance content that recognises students' primary motivation for going onto HE is for a better paid job, and that many are concerned about the cost.

# 1. The Survey

HEON completed a survey with a sample of students in the Summer Term of 2022. The survey aimed to provide a snapshot of students' awareness and opinion of HEON, knowledge about, and attitudes towards higher education and what their intentions are after leaving school. This is the second time we have carried out the survey and it is consistent with the one undertaken in 2021 so we can compare the results with last year.

The survey was undertaken on-line with students at 12 key schools/year groups where activities have been carried out. It was made accessible on mobile, tablet and computer and QR codes were also provided. Schools were asked to distribute the survey link to students and facilitate survey completion. It was administered in two phases with Years 11 and 12 completing it in early May prior to GCSEs and Years 9 and 10 in July at the end of term.

1082 students completed the survey from the following schools. The highest proportion of responses were from Cove, Wavell and Christ's College.

School	N	%
Cove	289	27
Wavell	195	18
Christ's	179	17
Alderwood	132	12
Thomas Knyvett	82	7
Chertsey High	61	6
Salesian	61	6
Farnham Heath End	30	3
Fernhill	28	3
Collingwood	11	1
FCOT	10	1
Hoe Valley	4	-
Total	1082	100

The survey included representation from all year groups with almost two-thirds from Years 9 and 10.

Year Group	N	%
Years 9 and 10	709	65
Year 11	358	33
Year 12/FE	14	2
Total	1081	100

25% of the sample were Uni Connect students from HEON target wards.

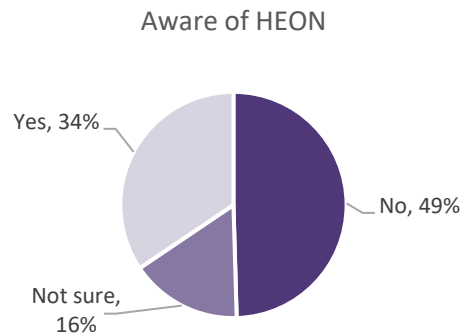
HEON Target	N	%
Uni Connect	250	25
Not Uni Connect	742	75
Total	816	100

110 students did not provide postcode

## 2. Awareness & Participation

Students were asked if they were aware of HEON prior to taking part in the survey? Overall, just a third of students were aware of HEON and almost half were not.

Awareness of HEON was marginally higher amongst Uni Connect target students compared with non-target students (40% v 33%).

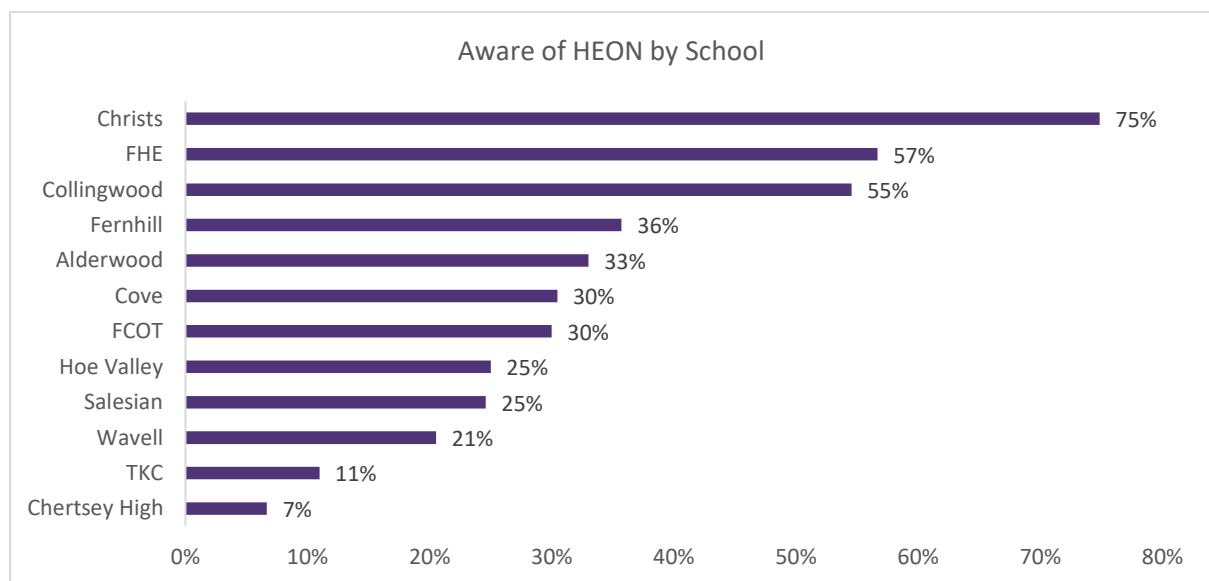


Unsurprisingly, awareness increased with engagement. 70% of those who have taken part in four or more activities were aware of HEON compared with only 17% of those who did not recall any activities. This suggests that we can achieve cut through where we have a sustained presence.

Aware of HEON by number of activities				
	Recall participating in 0 activities %	Recall participating in 1-3 activities %	Recall participating in 4+ activities %	All %
Yes	17	39	70	34
Not sure	15	18	13	16
No	68	43	16	49
Total	100	100	100	100

N=1080

Awareness also varied considerably by school. Most students at Christ's College were aware of HEON (75%) and the majority were aware at Collingwood, Farnham Heath End and Cove. However, recall at all other schools was lower (less than 50%). It is apparent that students' awareness of HEON is greater at schools where there has been a greater level of sustained activity, in particular Christ's College.



Students were shown a list of activities that had been delivered at their school for their year group and asked how many they remember taking part in? All students taking part in the survey were in a year group and school where at least one activity had been delivered to them. However, more than a third (34%) do not recall taking part in any activities. Just over half (51%) recall taking part in 1 to 2 activities. 16% remembered participating in 3 or more activities.

How many activities do you remember taking part in?	
	%
None	34
1	33
2	18
3	7
4	3
5	3
6	1
7	1
8 or more	1

Unsurprisingly, students were more likely to recall higher impact activities:

*Some [activities] I vaguely remember but others like the heon summer school I took part in, and the university visits were really fun"*  
 Y11 Student, Christ's College

It should be noted that students recall of their participation is not wholly reliable. A sample of students, where the number of activities they have completed is known, has been compared with what they self-reported. This showed that 19% of students accurately reported their participation. Just over half underestimated and, on average, they underestimated activities done by one.

Students were asked what they thought of the activities they had done. Just over half (56%) of all students made positive comments, considerably more than last year's survey, saying they were helpful, useful, offered good advice and helped with their decision making.

*"It is very interesting. This is because we get to attend real university lectures on different subjects, and we can have a sense of how it feels like to be a uni student"* Y10 student, Salesian

*"I enjoyed the activity based on T-Levels as it filled in any knowledge that I previously did not have, and made my decision in choosing my college courses a lot more confident"* Y11 student, Alderwood

*"I think it really helped because we got to get lots of help with our future and ideas on what is coming ahead"* Y10 student, Cove

Just 3% of all students made negative comments about the activities they had done. They found them "boring" or a "waste of time."

### 3. Knowledge of Higher Education

Students were asked how much they knew about different aspects of higher education. These relate to the knowledge outcomes that the HEON programme aims to deliver.

The majority of students knew at least ‘a little’ about the qualifications and grades needed to get into HE and how it leads to careers they may be interested in.

Knowledge of higher education (1)				
<i>How much do you know about ...?</i>	A lot %	A little %	Nothing %	%
Qualifications & grades needed to get into HE	32	59	9	100
How leads to careers may be interested in	36	55	9	100

Students were also asked whether taking part in HEON activities had helped with their understanding of different aspect of HE. Just over half of all students (57%) felt that taking part in had helped them better understand options and the benefits of HE. For all other aspects only a minority felt that they had a better understanding. For finance, in particular, only 28% agreed that they had a better understanding.

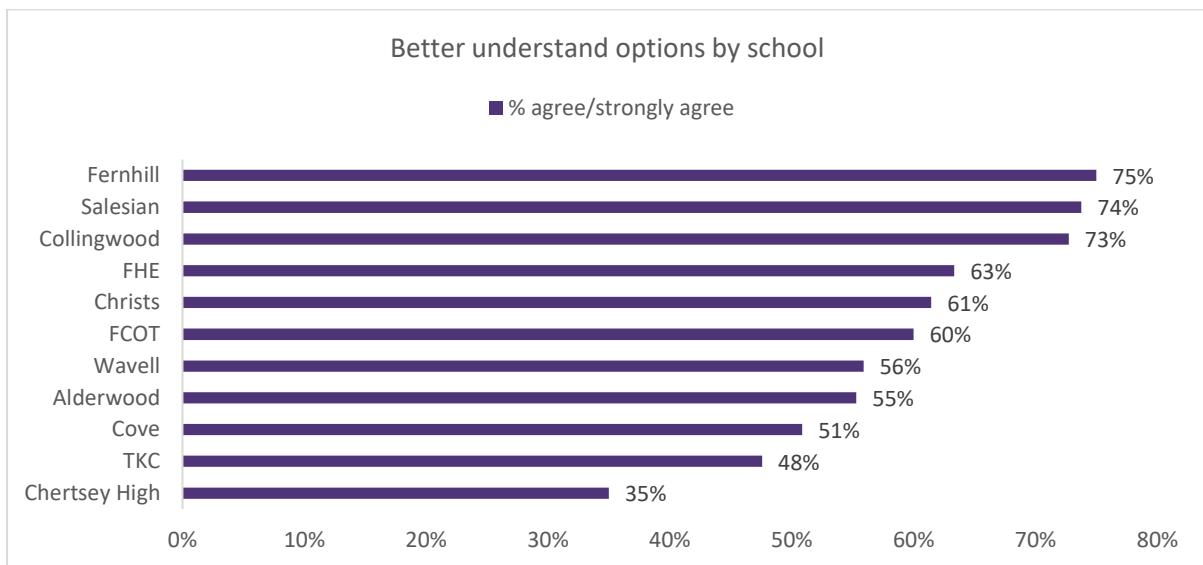
Knowledge of higher education (2)				
<i>Taking part in HEON activities has helped me better understand...</i>	Number of activities recalled			All Agree/ Strongly agree %
	0 Agree/ Strongly agree %	1-3 Agree/ Strongly agree %	4+ Agree/ Strongly agree %	
The options available to me in the future	30	66	80	57
How to apply for Higher Education	25	45	59	41
How student finance works & support that might be available	20	29	46	28
The support available for students in HE	25	40	57	37
What it would be like to study at University	27	49	64	44
The skills required for studying at University	25	48	63	43
The benefits of HE	34	48	82	57
What student life would be like	29	51	75	47
<i>N=</i>	<i>294</i>	<i>618</i>	<i>98</i>	<i>1010</i>

Knowledge of aspects of higher education increased with the number of activities that students had participated in. 96% of those who recalled taking part in four or more activities said they knew ‘a lot’ or ‘a little’ about qualifications compared to 75% who did not recall any activities. Similarly, 95% of those attending 4+ activities said they knew about careers compared to 85% who had not attended activities.

Similarly, students thinking they had a better understanding of aspects of HE increased with the number of activities attended. Students who had attended four or more activities were two to three times more likely to agree that they better understand different aspects of higher education compared to those who did not recall attending.

This supports the idea that a sustained programme with multiple activities is of benefit to students in increasing their HE knowledge and understanding.

There are notable differences between schools in their knowledge. Around three-quarters of students at Fernhill, Salesian and Collingwood, for example, agreed that taking part in HEON activities had given them a better understanding of the options after they leave school. This was much lower at Chertsey High where only just over one third of students agreed. This is partly due to lower participation as three-quarters at Chertsey High did not recall taking part in any activities. When looking at just those who had participated, their understanding increased to 90%.



*NB Hoe Valley excluded due to small sample size*

There is a similar difference between schools when looking at other knowledge outcomes. In general schools where students have participated in more HEON activities, have a higher proportion saying they understand different aspects of Higher Education.

The activities that students take part in have different outcomes associated with them, and some outcomes occur more frequently than others in the HEON programme. Many fewer students have taken part in activities concerned with applying to HE and finance so there is less likelihood for these outcomes to be impacted.



## 4. Confidence and Self-belief

Students were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with statements designed to measure their self-efficacy. Only 47% of students agreed that ‘it is for people like me’ but 72% of students agreed that HE would enable them to get a better paid job.

Self-efficacy				
	Number of activities recalled			All Agree/Strongly agree %
	0 Agree/Strongly agree %	1-3 Agree/Strongly agree %	4+ Agree/Strongly agree %	
It is for people like me	36	52	54	47
It will enable me to get a better paid job	61	76	75	72
N=	294	618	98	1010

With the exception of making informed decisions about their future, fewer than half of all students agreed that taking part in HEON activities had made them feel more confident about different aspects of higher education. In particular, only 39% said that participation had made them feel more confident in themselves.

Confidence and Motivation				
	Number of activities recalled			All Agree/Strongly agree %
	0 Agree/Strongly agree %	1-3 Agree/Strongly agree %	4+ Agree/Strongly agree %	
<i>Taking part in HEON activities has made me feel...</i>				
More confident that I could progress to HE in the future	30	53	64	46
More confident to make informed decisions about my future	31	59	75	51
I'm more motivated to work hard at school/college	28	54	63	45
More confident that I can make the change from school to HE	30	51	61	45
More confident could apply skills required for HE	27	48	63	42
More confident in myself	28	44	47	39

N=1071

Students' self-efficacy and confidence increased the more HEON activities that they had attended. Students who had attended multiple activities were more likely to agree that university is for ‘people like me’ suggesting that sustained participation may enhance students' self-belief.

Those who thought that higher education would enable them to get a better paid job was significantly lower for those who had not attended any HEON activities (61%). This indicates that attending HEON activities may have an impact on students' understanding and confidence that they can achieve better paid employment.

46% of students said taking part in HEON activities had made them feel more confident that they could progress to higher education. This increased with the number of activities with more than twice as many of those who recalled taking part in four or more activities saying they felt confident to progress, compared with those who recalled none (64% v 30%).

Just over half of all students said they felt more confident to make decisions about their future. This also increased depending on the number of activities students recalled participating in. Three-quarters of those who recalled participating in 4 or more activities said they felt confident about this, whereas only 31% of those who recalled no activities said this.

Students participating in more activities were more likely to agree they were motivated to work hard (63% 4+ activities v 28% none).

Similarly, those who recalled 4+ activities were twice as likely to say they were confident in making the transition from school compared to those who did not remember any activities (61% v 30%).

Students participating in more activities were also more likely to agree they were confident they could apply the skills required for HE (63% 4+ activities v 27% none).

Finally, participation in activities is associated with feeling confident generally. Students who had taken part in four or more activities were almost twice as likely to agree that they felt confident in themselves when compared with non-participants (47% v 28%). Again, this suggests that a sustained programme has an impact.

As with knowledge outcomes, some confidence and self-belief outcomes occur more frequently than others in the HEON programme. Many fewer students have taken part in activities concerned with making the changes from school to HE, having confidence in oneself and being motivated to work hard at school. As such, there is less likelihood for these outcomes to be impacted.

## 5. Progression to Higher Education

The survey also explored students' intentions after leaving school and why, or why not, they want to go onto higher education. The majority of students wanted to go onto further education when they leave school, either at school/6<sup>th</sup> form (49%) or an FE college (24%). One in ten wanted to begin an apprenticeship and 4% intended to start employment. One in ten students did not know what they want to do after completing their current studies.

When you finish your current studies what would you most like to do next?	
	%
Study at school or 6th form college	49
Study at a further education college	24
Begin an apprenticeship	10
Don't know	10
Get a full-time job	4
Other	4
	100

N=1077

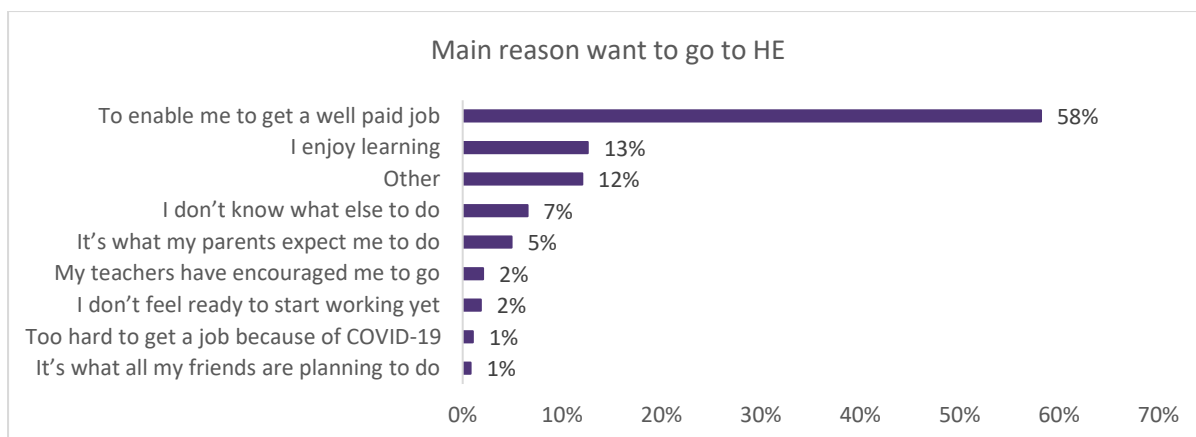
Students were asked how likely they were to apply to higher education aged 18 or 19. Almost two thirds (64%) of all students intend to apply for higher education; just under one in five did not (18%) and the same proportion (18%) were unsure.

Participation in HEON activities may have some impact on helping students make this decision. A higher proportion of those attending one to three activities said they intended to apply (67%), and fewer were undecided, compared with those who do not remember attending any activities (61%).

	How likely to apply to higher education?			
	Number of activities recalled			
	0	1-3	4+	All
	%	%	%	%
Already have, definitely will, very, fairly likely	61	67	64	64
Definitely won't, very, fairly unlikely	21	16	22	18
Don't know	18	17	14	18
Total	100	100	100	100

N=1080

The main reason why students want to apply to higher education is to enable them to get a well-paid job (58%) and this was far in excess of any other reason. This is broadly similar to 2021. Potentially higher earnings appears to be the key motivation for wanting to go on to higher education. Also, 13% said it was because they enjoy learning. Many of those who gave 'other' reasons said they wanted to apply to HE to enable them to pursue their preferred career.



N=873 students who intend to apply to University

Among students who have decided they won't apply to HE at age 18 or 19, or think it unlikely, the main reason for not doing so is that they had already decided on their career, and it doesn't require further study (22%). This continues to be the main reason for not going onto HE but has gone down by 5% compared with 2021.

A further 18% said that it simply did not appeal to them. This reason has increased by 4% when compared to 2021. 15% of students who won't or are unlikely to apply said they wanted to start work and earn money.

Almost one in five were still undecided, or said it depends on the grades they get (19% together) indicating that some of those who thought it unlikely they would apply, may still do so.

6% of students who don't plan to go onto higher education said it was because the cost is too much. This, combined with those saying they want to earn money, indicates that more than one in five may have money concerns.

Main reason might not go onto higher education		
	2021	2022
	%	%
I have decided on a specific career (that does not require further study)	27	22
It does not appeal to me	14	18
I want to work and earn money	15	15
It depends on the grades I get	11	13
I am still undecided	11	6
The cost is too much	4	6
My current qualifications are enough	4	6
I want to travel	7	4
I do not have the necessary study skills	2	4
Other	3	4
COVID-19 has put me off going to higher education	2	2
	100	100
<i>N (Students unlikely/won't apply to HE)</i>	168	198

The survey also investigated who influences students' pathway decisions. Family was the greatest influence on students with almost half (49%) ranking this as the top influence. All other influences were broadly similar with 9 to 11% ranking each first.

Greatest influence on what you will do when you leave school/college	
	% ranked 1st
Family	49
Friends	10
HEON	10
Teachers	10
Careers Advisers	11
Other	9

The impact of Covid-19 was also investigated. Half of all students did **not** think Covid-19 has had any effect on their decision about what to do next. However, 24% felt it had had some impact and 6% had been affected a great deal. Just over one in five students were not sure suggesting that, for some, they were uncertain about the longer-term implications of Covid. This has remained broadly the same as 2021, suggesting that Covid continues to have an impact for some.

Has Covid influenced your decision about what to do next?	
	%
I'm not sure	21
No, not at all	50
Yes, a great deal	6
Yes, to some extent	24
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

*N=1045*

## 6. 2021-2022 Comparison

A small sample of 144 students completed both the 2021 and 2022 surveys and their responses provide an indication of impact.

There have been some notable increases in understanding and confidence between the two survey waves some of which are statistically significant. These may be associated with attending HEON activities but there are likely to also be other influences as students get older.

Understanding and confidence will also be influenced by the activities they have attended. 70% of this sub-group were from Cove School and almost all were in Year 11. The activities that they would have attended were:- STEAMFest, Cove Drop Down day and Surrey Careers Fair, when in Year 10, and Introduction to HE in Year 11. These activities are most likely to influence understanding of options, careers and pathways and what university is like. They are not specifically concerned with finance or applications, for example.

In 2021,44% did not recall taking part in any activities and in 2022 this was much lower at 24%.

There has been a significant increase in students saying they know a lot or a little about the qualifications need for HE and how it leads to careers.

### 2021-2022 Comparison (1)

	2021	2022	t
<i>Knowledge</i>	% a lot/a little	% a lot/a little	
The qualifications & grades needed to get into HE	76	92	>0.0005
How it leads to careers you may be interested in	81	94	0.0006

N=135 students completing wave 1 & 2. T<0.05 - statistically significant

In 2022 students were significantly more likely to agree that taking part in HEON activities has made them better understand the options available, how to apply, what it would be like to study at University, the benefits and what student life would be like, compared with 2021.

By 2022 they were also significantly more likely to feel that HEON activities had helped them feel confident that it is for people like themselves, to make decisions, to apply the skills, more confident in themselves and more motivated to work hard.

### 2021-2022 Comparison (2)

	2021	2022	t
<i>Knowledge</i>	% agree/ strongly agree	% agree/ strongly agree	
The options available to me in the future	40	64	0.002
How to apply for Higher Education	22	47	>0.005
How student finance works and the support that might be available	19	27	0.83
The support available for students in Higher Education	27	36	0.08
What it would be like to study at University	33	42	0.05
The skills required for studying at University	29	44	0.20
The benefits of Higher Education	41	64	>0.005
What student life would be like	26	51	>0.005

## 2021-2022 Comparison (2)

### Confidence

It is for people like me	29	53	0.005
It will enable me to get a better job	67	71	0.40
More confident that I could progress to Higher Education in the future if I want to	37	53	0.09
More confident that I can make informed decisions about my future study or career path	33	56	>0.005
More motivated to work hard at school/college	39	50	>0.005
More confident that I can make the change from school or college to Higher Education in the future	31	45	0.20
More confident that I would be able to apply the skills required for studying at Higher Education level	27	47	0.018
More confident in myself	24	35	0.04

There was a small increase between 2021 and 2022 in students saying they were likely to apply to Higher Education, or definitely would, from 61% to 63%.