Morag Walling delivered the webinar on 14th January 2016. Her experience comes with a background linking aspects of the school curriculum, working directly with students in the areas of careers, work experience and employer engagements in schools for 10 years.

She is now supporting students as part of a careers service in a university context. Morag has a strategic perspective having been a senior manager in local authorities and a unique insight into the journey young people make through education into employment.

This unique perspective as fuelled Morag's interest in the topic of "barriers" to progression both real and perceived and she has been able to publish research undertaken as part of her MA in Careers Guidance to shed new light on some of these issues which is now being taken further by others in the field.

| **Bigger picture issue** | **Perspective** | **What concerns look like and for whom** | **Underlying issue** | **Overarching suggestions to ameliorate** | **Top tips to action** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Why do a degree? | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Young Person/Parent**  Difficulty understanding what they can do with a degree longer term | Lack of understanding as to what a degree offers beyond the subject content | Links made around what degree level skills are and what that enables people to do longer term. | Can you improve teacher understanding as to what degree levels skills look like.  Create Alumni links to give case study evidence. |
|  | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Young Person/Parent**  Questioning of worth of a degree if only same entry level jobs accessible | Short term view of value of degree  Lack of understanding around links with experience | Supporting conversations around starting somewhere, might as a graduate have theoretical understanding but even internships don’t give you that practical experience in situ so first jobs about learning to be a practitioner. | Make links with Alumni in “first” jobs other than Grad schemes so that young people see what these individuals are gaining from them and where they view their next move.  Support understanding around sandwich style courses and how to make sure you are in a good position to succeed if you want to access this. |
|  | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Young Person/Parent**  Predominant Interest in local industries as see immediate job link | Where local industries limited this narrows view point | Broadening horizons. | Can you hold skype info sessions with non local employers or Alumni working out of the area? |
|  | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Young person**  If local and accessing HE in Cornwall tends to have been a deliberate choice as want to stay local or have another factor making leaving the area an issue. | Limited opportunities for those who wanting to stay in rural/coastal areas | Developing understanding of how to make the most of the skills you gain from HE in the local area. | Can you make links with local entrepreneurs or those working remotely?  Showcase local graduate employment opportunities. |
|  | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Young person/parent**  Some young people with extra factors will dismiss HE altogether rather than consider local. | Need to personalise offering to all situations. | Understand what might unlock the “barrier”. | Work with the cohort that have “extra” factors on a more personal level to support greater understanding of the issue and be in a better position to help them unlock that barrier. |
|  | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Young person**  Realistic link between values/lifestyle choices difficult to comprehend  How does a degree contribute to future life? | Difficulty for young person to see a future self | Better ways of conceptualising the future that takes into account recent developments in our understanding of teenage brain development. | Suggest depicting “career” as a tree and talk to young people about the different stages of career. This supports broadening understanding that there will be more than one job role that they could do and that their career “journey” is unlikely to be linear. |
| Choosing a degree | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Young person/parent/advisor**  Concern over reputation of institution and style of learning offered | Issues around awareness of appropriate need/suitability of individual | Increase understanding of potential for growth and support in environment offered by HE as part of FE. | Suggest supporting a better understanding by individuals of styles of institutions that will most suit them. Their learning style and need for support and other external circumstances. |
|  | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Parents/Advisor**  Personal experience of person giving opinion will have an impact on their viewpoint | Complexity of relationships involved between advise giver and receiver and unconscious bias |  | Need for young people to be taught how to weigh up decisions for themselves. Must be developed in a manner appropriate for the developmental stage we now know that they are at. |
|  | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Young People/Parents/Advisors**  Problems linked with too much information/choice and how to navigate it | Too much detail too quickly and not taught how to navigate information intelligently |  | Support good research skills and understanding. Generic overviews-what should you be looking for in a course |
|  | Social Mobility Charity | **Young Person/Parent**  Feeling that Uni Open days are a sales pitch. Can be off putting/ confusing making it difficult to make a good choice. | Complex interactions going on in terms of Institutions roles at an Open day. Attracting students/Informing for good choice. | Need to find ways of supporting parents/ young people to get beyond the sales pitch. | Make sure school visits/interactions have built in opportunity for informality.  Support student and parents to become savvy consumers. |
| Entry Routes and potential Pathways | Social Mobility Charity | **Young Person/Parent/Advisors**  Often see headline entry criteria and dismiss or can be unaware of options for alternative access routes to entry. | Lack of awareness of the possible options around alternative access options for different criteria.  Difficulty is finding this information at a level above individual institution level so detailed personal research essential. |  | Can this information be collated by schools or at a higher national level? |
|  | Social Mobility Charity | **Young Person/Advisors**  Become very focused on a narrow area such as law/medicine/veterinary. If not successful can lose direction and motivation. | Aspiration raising activities can result in narrow and fixed dreams which may not be reached however hard the young person tries or wants it to happen.  Those in advisory capacity feel uncomfortable challenging dreams so no alternative or related options are discussed. |  | Reframing of conversations around “dreams”. Personal stories can help here as no one is directly challenging the young person they are being allowed to see for themselves. Important to have access to a range of people-not just those who have “made it”! |
| Cost | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Parents**  Seem more concerned since fee increase with cost and making a degree count in terms of future work than before the fee increase. Potential for this to add pressure to end game for a degree. | Parents bring an adult sense of the worry over debt but often without full appreciation of the real impact in terms of actual repayment | Use the resources available on the CUC On website:  <http://www.cucon.co.uk/info-and-resources/funding-and-finance/student-finance-explained>  There’s many videos and links to the Student Finance website for further information | Begin the conversations a lot earlier with parents. |
|  | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Young People**  On the whole doesn’t seem to have changed behaviour as much as one might think it should as a result of increased debt when making choices. | In terms of social norms nothing much has changed.  Difficulty in processing actuality of cost implications as managing those sums of money outside their experience. | Take advantage of local university outreach and open days that offer workshops around finance and funding. These can be requested at local level and via your local network pages: <http://www.hefce.ac.uk/sas/nnco/find/> |  |
|  | Social Mobility Charity | **Young People**  Do talk about cost a lot and make general assumptions around where might be cheaper/have support. Even as generalisations these may not be useful. | Assumptions not based on realistic knowledge of options for financial support options.  No easy place to gather this information together so have to search per institution. Difficult for young person and those supporting them to guide. Often will depend on chance as to who finds out about what. | Offer myth busting sessions and games. | Can this information be collated by schools or at a higher national level? |
|  | Social Mobility Charity 2 | **Young People/Parents**  Unable to cover travel costs to internships particularly if they are outside home area  Unable to buy smart clothes for interviews | Inability to consider options that could increase costs either through travel or extra upfront expense. |  | Are there ways that this can be supported locally or are their national support avenues? |
| Preparation to succeed at HE | FE/HE institution Cornwall | **Young people/Teachers**  Levels of independent learning expected at HE institutions differ along with different pathways to support gaining entry to HE through more supported routes and build independent learning skills as you go. | Need to have greater understanding what those are and where is going to work best for individuals. |  | Opportunities to build in independent learning at 16-18 education regardless of education route would help lessen the difference experienced by individuals on entry.  Could Universities build this more into 1st year programmes? |
|  | Social Mobility Charity | **Young Person/HE institution**  Implications around dropping out at HE during first term/year.  What happens to students who do this? At the very best they incur an extra year student loan or they may not re-engage with HE. | Options and suitability of course/location of HE not fully thought through in advance |  | Perhaps this could be lessened if better initial decisions were made. Support good research skills and understanding. Generic overviews-what should you be looking for in a course |
|  | Social Mobility Charity | **Young People/Parents/Advisors**  Thinking about HE too late to explore and make informed choice. | For young people from privileged backgrounds the conversations around HE will have been going on at home since they were a lot younger. This influences thinking and decisions right the way through. For those without that can come too late. | Schools tend to give more focus around support for GCSE choices and less around post 16 choices in Yr 11. This can mean that once in the 6th form when decisions are being made about HE or not HE the direction is options can already be limited for that student. | Raise awareness in schools that staring conversations /raising awareness of HE during Yr 10 would support those where it isn’t being discussed at home and help them have it in their mind when making post 16 choices and be less likely to come round to thinking it is for them too late. |
| Confidence | Social Mobility Charity | **Young People/Advisors**  Reticence of young people around selling themselves or asking questions to find out more information. | Despite offers of follow up opportunities some young people seem to feel that they will be making a nuisance of themselves so don’t ask even when the offer is there.  Particularly prevalent outside London or major cities where students seem to have more of a sense of entitlement or an expectation that they will go on. | Students more likely to feel comfortable talking more openly with former students or people closer to their age than “adults”. | Do you have links with Alumni?  Can you make links with younger workers to help get that “relatability”? |
|  | Social Mobility Charity 2 | **Young person/Advisors** | Lacking contacts –potential to hamper career prospects.  Harder to compete later on for opportunities in prestigious firms and companies |  | Support contact banks within school. Consider making those available to alumni for the Uni holidays. |
|  | Social Mobility Charity 2 | **Young person/Parents/Advisors**  **Issues specific to 1st generation HE** | No one in the family to ask for the right support with university applications  -Lack of knowledge about Russel Group universities  -Lack of knowledge about the interview process for top universities |  | Consider appropriateness of mentors for individuals and families to help them move forward with this. |
|  | Social Mobility Charity 2 |  | No insight into university life, the university application process and university interviews |  |  |
|  | Social Mobility Charity 3  Coastal/Rural focus | **Young person/Parent/Institution**  Seasonality of activities possible in coastal or rural locations | Practicalities of all year round extension activities affected by geographical location |  | Consider links with other schools/organisations locally to promote shared access.  Share ideas with other schools/colleges in similar situations. |
|  | Social Mobility Charity 3  Coastal/rural focus | **Advisor/Institution**  Those who are already disadvantaged find it harder to access remote models | Remote models favour the advantaged and those with strongest skills in terms of hardware access and digital ability |  | Consider linking with other organisations to improve digital access and literacy as a first step. |
|  | Social Mobility Charity 3  Coastal /rural focus | **Institution/Advisor/Parent**  Not everyone who is entitled to claim for financial help does so, so difficult to use it as a measure of disadvantage | Methods of identification affected by views of “charity” |  | Schools need to have an awareness that they may not be reaching all those affected by the issues through standard identification methods. |

Contributions received from the following organisations:

Future First

 