

# Virtual Insight into University July - August 2025

## BACKGROUND

EDT's vision is a society where all young people can develop the STEM skills, knowledge and experience they need to take control of their futures and change the world around them.

EDT have run residential summer school to give students a taster of university life in STEM in locations all across the UK for the last 20 years. The Virtual programme was developed in 2020 in light of the pandemic to give students opportunities to access from home.

The aim of the programme is to introduce Year 11 and 12/S4/S5 (age 15 to 17) students to different STEM options at university, inspiring the future generation of STEM professionals to think about their next steps.

Even after the pandemic there was still an appetite for the virtual programme as it allows students from all areas to access the course, work flexibly around their other commitments and have access to a wide variety of courses and universities.

The course comprises of:

- Introductions to a variety of STEM courses
- Recorded taster lectures
- Projects set by STEM companies
- Live sessions from universities and STEM professionals
- University set projects and activities
- A graduation project for students to research and present on an area inspired by the course.

In 2024/25 we ran the course over eight weeks from 30<sup>th</sup> June 2025 - 22nd August 2025.

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## PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

212 students participated in the Virtual Insight into University course in 2025.

47% Female  
48% Male  
1% Non-Binary  
3% Prefer not to say

### Ethnicity:

48% Ethnic Minority Group  
48% White  
4% Prefer not to say

30% of students received a funded or bursary place  
25% of students would be the first in their family to attend higher education  
24% of students receive free school meals  
9% of students are a student carer  
1% of students are care experienced

24% of participants live in areas with low progression rates of 18 year olds into higher education (Polar 1 and 2)  
18% of students come from the 20% most deprived areas as measured by the Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD)

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## LIVE SESSIONS

An integral part of the Insight into University course is live sessions with educational and industry professionals, students need to attend at least five to complete the course. On this year's course we had 45 live sessions for the students choose from. All the sessions included the opportunity for young people to ask questions making it a very beneficial part of the course.

The Sessions included:

- Sample lectures from a range of universities in STEM subjects.
- Interactive workshops where students could join in with the activity such as bridge building, a live chemistry experiment and a podcast recording led by academics.
- Admissions sessions from a range of universities explaining the range of STEM subjects and the admissions process including support with UCAS applications.
- Live feedback sessions from universities giving students a chance to find out about the project they had submitted.
- Careers sessions with STEM professionals to show students where they can take their STEM career post-university as well as options for placements and degree apprenticeships.
- Q'n'A with current students to find out about university life and how it is for undergraduates.

### Student comments:

"The sessions were incredibly helpful; helping me figure out what path I would like to take for my future."

"I really enjoyed the live sessions—they were engaging, informative, and well-structured. The presenters explained the concepts clearly and created a welcoming space for questions and discussion. I came away with practical insights that I can apply immediately, and I appreciated the opportunity to connect with experts and various knowledgeable panelists who share similar interests."

"They were super interesting and a nice change from what we usually do in school. It was great to hear from actual researchers who clearly love what they do."

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## HOW WE MET OUR OBJECTIVES

We aimed to increase students' confidence in their careers choices. Percentage of students who had increased confidence in their career choices at the end of the course:



We aimed to increase students awareness in the STEM opportunities available to them at university. Percentage of students who had increased awareness in STEM opportunities at the end of the course:



We aimed to increase their skills and knowledge. Percentage of students who felt that the skills and knowledge they gained from the course would have a positive impact on their futures studies and/ or career:



We aimed to inspire them to study a STEM related subject at university. Percentage of students who are likely to study at STEM related subject at university:



We aimed to create a high value course. Percentage of students who rated the course as Good or Excellent at the end of the course:



Percentage of students who would recommend the course to a friend or family member:



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## SKILLS

98% felt they were able to try out lots of different ideas.



97% felt the course helped their written presentation skills.



97% felt the course helped them develop problem-solving skills.



97% felt the course helped them develop resilience.



95% felt the course helped them feel more confident.



94% felt the course helped their written communication skills.



90% helped me feel more connected to STEM employers.



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## STUDENT COMMENTS

"I found it very useful into getting an insight into what the role of someone in STEM might look like and gave me an opportunity to experience that."

"Overall, I found the course to be incredibly helpful and well-organised. The content was relevant and thoughtfully presented, and I appreciated how each module built on the last to deepen my understanding."

"All the questions I had were answered. Also, I loved the variety of university lectures, and they have definitely helped inform my decisions on courses at university."

"The course was both challenging and rewarding. I particularly enjoyed refining my presentation skills, learning how to communicate complex technical ideas clearly and effectively."

"I greatly enjoyed it, I appreciated the very vast array of subjects as well as the freedom we had to research and explore what we wanted, I also appreciated the amount of documents you provided us."

"The selection of subjects was vast, and I was able to explore some subject areas that I hadn't really considered before and really open my eyes to different opportunities and career paths."

"I thought the course was expertly written and set out: it fulfilled its intended purpose which was to widen the horizons of students looking at careers in STEM."

"This course was an amazing experience - I really enjoyed every aspect of it. This course was one of the best experiences I've signed up to and I would definitely recommend this!"

"I found the course extremely useful with the projects giving feedback and advice for future development. The variety of project choices were also amazing, and I loved the various use of media from zoom meetings to podcasts and projects."

"I think this EDT program has consolidated my vision of being in STEM and given me hope seeing so many people from the top universities that I too can get in and make a difference in my own field in the future. 10/10 experience"

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## THANK YOU

We would like to thank our supporters for 2024/25: Avantor, The Jon Dennison fund and GSK

We would also like to thank our contributing universities:

Abertay University, Aston University, Kingston University, Lancaster University, Northumbria University, Nottingham Trent University, Sheffield Hallam University, Solent University: Southampton, UCL, University of Birmingham, University of Cambridge, University of Edinburgh, University of Glasgow, University of Hertfordshire, University of Liverpool, University of Nottingham, University of Oxford, University of Roehampton, University of Sheffield, University of Strathclyde and University of Warwick

And our contributing companies and panelists:

AmSafe, Arup, Avantor, Cavendish Nuclear, CGI, GFG Foundation, GSK, Innovate UK, Life Scan, Midland Metro Alliance, National Gas, Mott MacDonald, Murphy Group, Rees Jeffreys Road Fund, Stantec UK Limited, Safran, Tech Skills, and Technically Speaking Podcast

**Without your support we wouldn't have been able to inspire so many young people into STEM careers and education**

## GROWTH

We have students across the UK looking for opportunities to access these programmes, as you can see from this report it has a real impact. We are always looking for new organisations to support the programme.

**Please get in touch:**

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