

# HEON EVALUATION REPORT

**Activity:** Royal Holloway Spring Residential

**Date:** 9 – 11 April 2025

**Progression Framework:** Develop & Decide

**Planned outcomes:**

**KO1:** Increased knowledge of range of options available in Higher Education

**KO5:** Increased subject knowledge

**KO7:** Increased knowledge of benefits of HE

**KO8:** Increased understanding of what it is like to study in HE

**AO1:** Increased confidence that HE/Apprenticeship is achievable option

**A02:** Increased confidence in ability to make informed decisions

**A03:** Increased commitment to learning

**A04:** Increased confidence in ability to undertake the transition into HE

**A06:** Increased sense of self-belief and awareness

**AR2:** Improved cognitive strategies



## Spring Residential

Royal Holloway University and HEON ran a joint three-day residential programme for Year 10 and 11 students. The programme covered a wide range of activities aiming to help students better understand their future options and what University would be like, as well as raising attainment and increasing self-confidence.

This evaluation is based on the results of a pre and post-event survey completed by students, as well as insights taken from their reflective journals and emails.

## Attendance

51 students were selected to attend based on pre-defined widening participation criteria. 73% of students were, or had been in receipt of free school meals; 55% were from areas where few people go to university; 39% had a disability 16% were young carers where few people go onto Higher Education; 10% were in care and 6% were service children. Students were from the following schools.

**Table 1: Participants' Schools**

The Quest Academy	9	Thomas Knyvett College	2
Alderwood School	7	Ark Putney Academy	1
The Magna Carta School	5	Broadwater School	1
Reading Girls' School	4	Featherstone High School	1
Space Studio West London	4	Hammersmith Academy	1
Thamesmead School	3	Harris Science Academy East London	1
Bohunt Farnborough	2	King's Academy Prospect	1
Kings International College	2	Seven Kings School	1
The Ellen Wilkinson School for Girls	2	The Bishop Wand School	1
The Wavell School	2	The Saint John Henry Newman School	1
			51
		HEON Priority School	

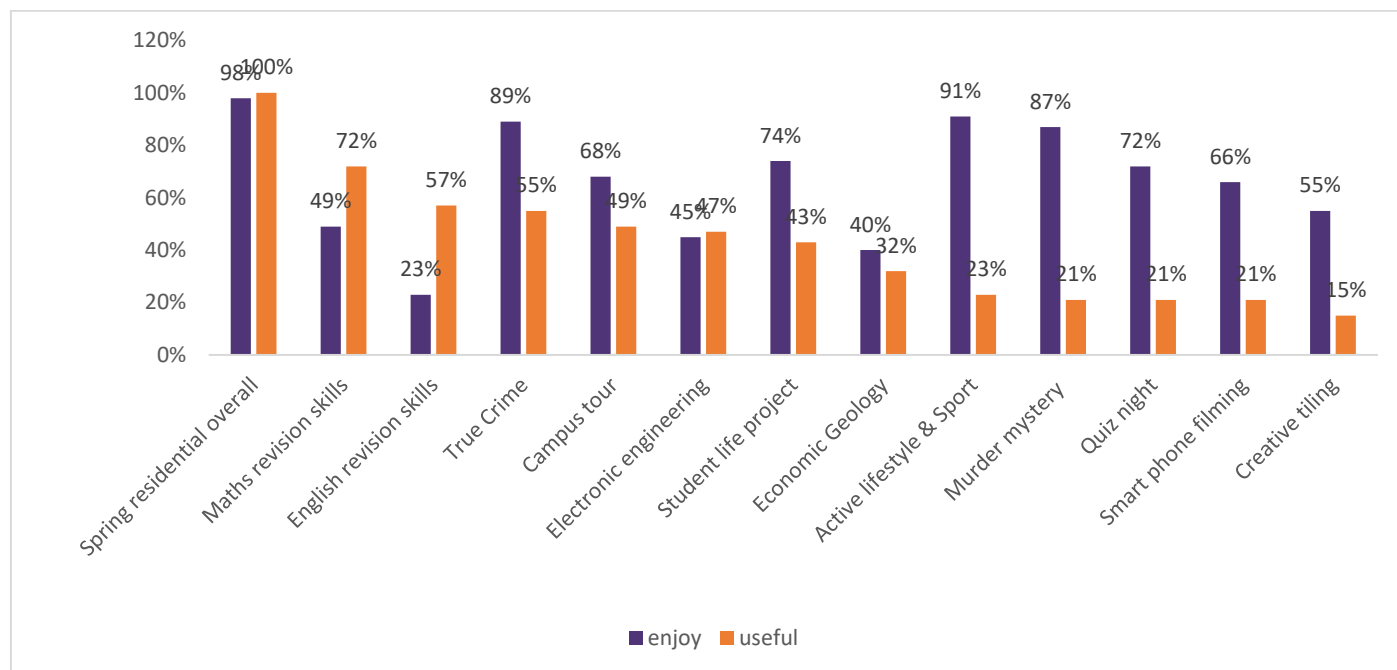
## Delivery

Almost all students (98%) said that they found the Spring residential useful and everyone (100%) agreed that it was fun. The majority of students **enjoyed** most of the activities, particularly active lifestyle and sport (91%) the murder mystery (89%), the student life project (74%) and quiz night (72%). Also half to two-thirds of students enjoyed the smart phone filming, and creative tiling. Activities that fewer than half of all students enjoyed were maths revision skills (49%), electronic engineering (45%), economic geology (40%) and english revision skills (23%).

Activities that the majority of students found **useful** were maths revision skills (72%), English revision skills (57%) and true crime (55%) . Fewer than half of students felt that the rest of the activities were useful.

Overall, the Spring Residential has delivered a programme where most activities were found either enjoyable or useful and some both. There were two activities this year that the majority did not find either enjoyable or useful (electronic engineering and economic geology).

**Figure 1: Which of these sessions did you find useful/enjoy?**



Campus Tour – many students appreciated the attractiveness of the Royal Holloway campus

*“I loved it especially the Founders building outside and the chapel was so beautiful”*

Quiz – although the majority of students enjoyed the quiz, many said that it was too long and/or too difficult for their age group.

*“The evening quiz was good but it was a bit long and so some of us got tired towards the end , especially as it had been such a busy day , I enjoyed [it] though!”*

Maths Revision Many students commented positively on the Maths revision session:

*“I think the best session of the day was the maths revision session as it gave us a lot of helpful tips for GCSE revision and the professor was really kind and supportive even though he challenged our skills. He gave me confidence to keep trying and working on my maths skills.”*

True Crime Many students said that they liked the true crime session. It was described as “intriguing,” “amazing” and “it grew my interest in law.”

## Outcomes

**Table 2 : Outcomes 2025**

	Pre % agree	Post % agree	% change
I have a good understanding of the options available to me after I leave school (KO1)	64%	87%	23%
I understand what it would be like to study at University (KO5)	20%	89%	69%
I understand the benefits of Higher Education (KO7)	85%	94%	9%
I know what student life would be like (KO8)	26%	87%	61%
I feel confident that I could progress to Higher Education in the future (AO1)	59%	89%	30%
I feel confident in taking decisions about my future study or career path (AO2)	47%	82%	36%
I feel motivated to work hard at school/college (AO3)	70%	80%	10%
I feel confident that I can make the change from school or college to HE in the future (AO4)	48%	78%	30%
I feel sure of myself and what I might achieve in the future (AO6)	50%	80%	30%
I can tell how reliable information is when I read something (AR2)	50%	78%	28%
I have a good understanding of different revision techniques (AR2)	38%	72%	34%

*N=47 (students who completed both pre and post evaluation form)*

*T = >0.05 for all outcomes indicating significant change*

**KO1** - just under two-thirds of students felt that they had a good understanding of the options available to them before they attended the Spring Residential. This increased significantly to 87% afterwards, an increase of 23%.

*“Now I know more about further education and what paths I want to take”*

**KO5** – only one in five students agreed that they had an understanding of what it would be like to study at university before attending the Spring Residential. After attending this increased significantly to 89%, a difference of 69% It is clear that there has been a real impact on students’ understanding of university study.

**KO7** –Most students (85%) already felt that they knew the benefits of HE in advance of attending the Spring residential. However, this still increased significantly to 94% by the end.

*“It helped me understand more about the importance of higher education, the opportunities it would give me in life”*

**KO8** – only just over a quarter of students felt that they knew what student life would be like before attending the residential. This increased by 61% to 87% afterwards. There has been a notable impact on students’ understanding of student life.

**AO1** –59% of students agreed they felt confident that they could progress to higher education in the future before attending the residential. This increased significantly to 89% afterwards, an increase of 30%. This indicates that there has been a really notable impact on students' self-efficacy.

*"Thanks to this residential I have had the confidence to apply for summer school at the royal veterinary college of London which is a huge step for me"*

**AO2** – Just under half of students said they felt confident in taking decisions about their future study or career path before the Spring Residential. This increased significantly to 82% after attending.

**AO3** – There has been a 10% increase in students agreeing they felt motivated to work hard at school, from 70 to 80%. Again, this is a significant increase.

*"It has really opened my mind about so many things and has made me feel more positive about my studies."*

**AO4** –Before attending the residential just under half of all students said they felt confident in making the change from school to HE in the future. This increased by 30% to 78% after the event.

**AO6** – 50% of students agreed that they felt sure of themselves and what they might achieve in the future before they attended the Spring Residential. This increased to 80% after attending. It is clear that there has been a significant impact on students confidence and self-belief.

*"I now have a visual idea of how university could potentially work out and how easy it can be to make new friends and socialise."*

*"At first I felt really nervous and a little isolated as I was the only person here from my school, sort of just keeping to myself, but as I started talking to people everyone was really nice and I got on well with them"*

*"I'm so delighted that you have given me (and others my age) this chance to bond over common struggles such as being from an immigrant or low-income family"*

**AR2** – 50% of students said they can tell how reliable information is when they read something and 38% agreed they had a good understanding of different revision techniques. These increased significantly to 78% and 72% respectively after attending suggesting that the event had an impact on students' cognitive strategies.

The impact on outcomes can be compared with 2023 (this is not possible for 2024 as the pre-survey was not completed in that year). This shows that for some outcomes the impacts in 2025 were greater, particularly where students started from a lower base:

- In 2025 there was a 65% increase in students understanding of what it would be like to study at university, from a starting point of only 20%. This compares to a 37% increase in 2023 from a much higher starting point of 54%.
- In 2025 there was a 30% increase in students confidence to progress to higher education, from a starting point of 59%. This compares to a 9% increase in 2023 from a much higher starting point of 82%.

Students this year appear to have started with less of an understanding of university or self-efficacy and, as a result the programme has been able to achieve greater impact.