

SUN FUNDING GUIDANCE

ACADEMIC YEAR 2020-21

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out guidance for the use of funding provided to schools within Dorset, Hampshire and the Isle of Wight by the Southern Universities Network as part of the Uni Connect programme (previously the National Collaborative Outreach Programme), funded by the Office for Students. To find out more, click [here](#).

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FURTHER INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE

Each school is assigned a SUN Project Leader who will support both the school and Single Point of Contact (SPoC). The SUN Project Leader will meet with the school SPoC regularly throughout the year to provide advice and guidance about the use of SUN funding and the reporting requirements. If you're unsure of who your SUN contact is, or how to get in touch, please email sun@soton.ac.uk.

ABOUT THE SUN AND THE UNI CONNECT PROGRAMME

The [Southern Universities Network](#) (SUN) has been established to support the Government's ambitions to make faster progress nationally to widen access to Higher Education through the [Uni Connect Programme](#) (formerly the National Collaborative Outreach Programme - NCOP).



The SUN partnership comprises Higher Education Institutions, Further Education Colleges, Schools and Local Authorities within Hampshire, Dorset and the Isle of Wight.

Uni Connect is currently focused on providing targeted higher education outreach to young people in years 9 to 14 living in particular geographic areas where higher education participation is lower than might be expected given the GCSE results of the young people who live there. These students are referred to as 'Uni Connect students' (formerly NCOP students).

Uni Connect aims to:

- reduce the gap in higher education participation between the most and least represented groups
- support young people to make well-informed decisions about their future education
- support effective and impactful local collaboration by higher education providers working together with schools, colleges, employers and other partners
- contribute to a stronger evidence base around 'what works' in higher education outreach and strengthen evaluation practice in the sector.

The SUN provides funding to schools and colleges to meet the aims and objectives of Uni Connect. Funding allocations are based on the number of 'Uni Connect students' at your school.

Uni Connect students – Primary target for SUN funded activity

A 'Uni Connect student' is a term used to refer to a young person in year 9 – 14 of their education, domiciled in target wards defined by OfS; previously known as an 'NCOP student'. Your school will receive funding on a per 'Uni Connect student' basis from SUN in 2020-21. Schools can identify their Uni Connect cohort using the 'Postcode Profiling' tool provided by SUN.

FUNDING ALLOCATION FOR YOUR SCHOOL



In the academic year 2020-21 all identified schools, and a select number of colleges, will receive SUN funding on the following basis:

- £30 per Uni Connect student in Y 9 – 11
- £20 per Uni Connect student in Y 12 – 14 with the ability to reach a Level 4 qualification by the age of 19
- £20 per Uni Connect student studying a Level 2 or Level 3 qualification with the ability to reach a Level 4 qualification by the age of 19

PLEASE NOTE

- There is a **MINIMUM** of £1,500 and a **MAXIMUM** of £20,000 SUN funding per school per academic year.
- The exact funding allocation for each school will be confirmed in autumn term 2020 once SUN has received the postcode data for all students at the school.

SPOC ROLE INFORMATION



SPoC Funding for SPoC Role

To enable young people in schools to engage with the Southern Universities Network (SUN) during the Uni Connect programme, schools may allocate a proportion of the SUN funding to nominate a member of staff to act as the SUN 'Single Point of Contact (SPoC)'.

The SUN funding may be used to release staff from their regular duties to act as their institution's SPoC. The SPoC requirements are provided below. The SUN suggest an allowance of six full days to complete the tasks below, this may vary dependent on the number of Uni Connect students within an institution. Your school's SUN Project Leader will offer more advice if required. Additionally, SPoC funding can be used to release other staff who may provide additional support to the SPoC.



Point of Contact

- To act as the Single Point of Contact for all SUN activity for Uni Connect students and their parent(s)/carer(s); school staff; Careers Advisers; and SUN staff.
- To meet with a designated member of the SUN team at least twice per academic year and maintain regular contact.
- Attend relevant SPoC networking events, meetings and the SPoC Conference as invited by the SUN.
- To ensure that invoices are raised in a timely manner as directed by SUN.



Data, Tracking, Evaluation & Reporting

- To provide postcode data for all students in Y7 – Y14 (where applicable) using the 'Postcode Profiling' tool provided by the SUN.
- To undertake monitoring and tracking of all Y9 – Y14 students in accordance with requirements set out by the Office for Students.
- To complete and submit accurate **SPoC Finance** and **SPoC Activity Reports** as per the deadlines below.

School Reporting Requirements

- **Soft Reporting Deadlines:** Schools should update their **SPoC Finance Report 2020-21** and **SPoC Activity Report 2020-21** on a half-termly basis via Glasscubes. All relevant reports will be on Glasscubes and templates will be provided by the SUN.
- **Hard Reporting Deadlines:** Schools should ensure all reports are ready to be sent to OfS for data collection on the following dates: **Monday 8 February 2021, 5pm** and **Monday 12 July 2021, 5pm**.

If schools fail to complete reports, SUN reserve the right to 'claw back' funding.

SPOC ROLE INFORMATION



Facilitate Activity

- To promote relevant SUN outreach activities to Uni Connect students.
- To promote relevant SUN outreach activities to the parent(s)/carer(s) of eligible students.
- To promote Teacher CPD to staff in schools and make recommendations to the SUN about additional CPD opportunities.
- To facilitate and organise activities/interventions which meet the overall aims and objectives of Uni Connect for Uni Connect students, their key influencers, and/or school staff (see [‘How can schools spend SUN funding’](#) below for further guidance).
- To ensure the SUN funding allocated to the institution is spent in accordance with the Collaboration Agreement and the guidance provided in this document. This includes the production of the ‘Action Plan’ within the SPoC Finance Report at the start of the academic year to demonstrate how the institution plans to utilise the SUN funding, as well as an update of confirmed expenditure at required intervals in line with SPoC reporting deadlines. Your SUN Project Leader will support you with this.
- To ensure accurate records and evidence of expenditure for auditing purposes.
- To proactively seek advice or support from the designated SUN Project Leader regarding questions or concerns over how to spend the allocated funds.

HOW TO TARGET ACTIVITY

Uni Connect students

Uni Connect students are your primary target for SUN funded activity. A 'Uni Connect student' is a term used to refer to a young person in year 9 – 14 of their education, domiciled in target wards defined by OfS; previously known as an 'NCOP student'.

The guidelines below should be followed:

1. Any activity or intervention needs to be targeted at a minimum of 80% of the available Uni Connect student population for that cohort (e.g. if within a class of 30 students, 10 are 'Uni Connect students', at least 8 Uni Connect students must take part).
2. If it is less than 80% of the Uni Connect student population for that cohort, then funding can be spent proportionally.
3. High intensity / high cost interventions (such as mentoring) should be solely targeted at Uni Connect students.
4. All activity should be linked to the [SUN Progression Framework](#).
5. High cost/high intensity activity should be evaluated using the SUN Evaluation Framework. The SUN will provide advice and support to schools to ensure evaluation is conducted as per the guidance offered by the Office for Students. Please speak to your SUN Project Leader if you plan to deliver high cost / high intensity activity.

Outreach Hub students

An 'Outreach Hub student' is a term used to refer to a young person who forms part of the expanded remit of the Uni Connect programme **but is not eligible for funding**. Although Outreach Hub students may not attract funding, SUN is aware that these students may still benefit from SUN funded activity. If an 'Outreach Hub student' does engage in SUN funded activity, the school will have the opportunity to demonstrate this via the SPoC Activity Report. This information will be used to inform the potential future of the programme.

HOW CAN SCHOOLS SPEND SUN FUNDING?



SPoC Role

A proportion of the SUN funding may be used to facilitate the SUN 'Single Point of Contact (SPoC)' role at your schools, as per the guidance on pages 4-5.



Activities & Interventions

The SUN funding should be used to organise or facilitate activities and interventions that meet the overall aims and objectives of the Uni Connect Programme (examples provided on p 7 – 8) for eligible students, their key influencers, and/or school staff.

HOW CAN SCHOOLS SPEND SUN FUNDING?

- **Additional CEIAG Interventions** – Schools may wish to utilise SUN funding to provide additional CEIAG interventions for Uni Connect students. These interventions must be in addition to an institution's current offer.
- **Inspirational or Motivational Speakers / Alumni or Employer visits** – A number of schools have used SUN funding to purchase inspirational or motivational talks from professional speakers. Schools may use SPoC funding to arrange visits from alumni, local employers, or training/apprenticeship providers. Funds may be used for school staff time to coordinate visits and any expenses incurred by alumni or employer.
- **Student Resilience & Wellbeing** – Schools may use SPoC funding to engage students in activity or projects that seek to support student resilience and wellbeing.
- **Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Opportunities** – Schools may fund CPD and training opportunities for staff. Funding can be used to purchase places on training courses, or a facilitator to deliver in-house training. Additionally, SPoC funding can be used to cover associated costs, such as travel and cover expenses. SUN encourages schools to collaborate where possible. Institutions should be able to demonstrate how the CPD and training opportunities funded by SUN are directly linked to the overall aims of Uni Connect and support progression to HE for disadvantaged young people, and/or underrepresented groups. Please speak to your SUN Project Leader if you plan to host CPD opportunities.
- **Travel to events** – SUN funding can be used to fund the transport costs associated to attendance at progression-related events or activities such as Regional Careers or Subject Specific fairs and/or activities.
- **Staff Cover** – SUN funding can be used to fund staff cover for off-site SUN-related activity. Schools must be able to provide evidence and or a receipt that an additional member of staff was required to support the activity.
- **Revision resources and subscriptions** - Resources and service subscriptions may only be purchased after consultation with a member of the SUN team.
- **Mentoring Projects** – Schools may use funding to develop mentoring projects in-house or access mentoring projects delivered by third parties.
- **Workshops & Activities (delivered by school staff)** – Schools may use funding for staff time to develop and deliver aspiration realising workshops and activities that provide information and advice about educational progression to target students, parents/ carers, and school staff.

HOW CAN SCHOOLS SPEND SUN FUNDING?



- **Workshops & Activities (delivered by third parties)** - In previous years', schools and colleges have used SPoC funding to purchase workshops and activities from the following providers:



Click on any of the providers above to be directed to their website



FUNDING RESTRICTIONS

- The SUN Funding cannot be used to cover the cost of a school's statutory requirements.
- Institutions may only use the SUN funding to cover the cost of subscriptions or resources with prior agreement from SUN.
- Institutions may only use the SUN funding to cover the cost of equipment or hardware with prior agreement from the SUN.
- The SUN Funding cannot be used to cover the costs of activity for solely non-Uni Connect students.
- The SUN funding cannot be used to cover the costs of activity where funding is obtained by a third party (duplicate funding).