

SUN Young Champions

Technical Qualifications

October 2020 - April 2021, 31 young people, aged 12 - 19, were trained and supported to be Southern Universities Network Young Champions. So far, they have volunteered 504 hours to benefit their local communities!

Young Champions were challenged to explore what young people knew about Technical Qualifications and T-Levels and what schools and education providers were doing to promote them.

Who, what, when and how?



Number of trained Young Champions: 31



Location: Virtual, through Zoom.us



Number of decision makers involved: 16



Date and time: Wednesdays, 5pm- 6.30pm

Topics explored



T-Levels
What and where



Barriers to access
Current and possible future limitations



Technical Qualifications
Range and availability



Knowledge of education professionals

How did it all work?

To begin with, we searched our own knowledge of technical qualifications; whether we knew what they were and whether we understood them.

We looked to find out what may prevent young people from taking T-Levels. Speaking to Young Children in Care Ambassadors gave valuable insight and we also participated in the making of a podcast with the Youth Voice Pioneers exploring the topic.

We decided to test our own perceptions, as well as the perceptions of others, and see whether our assumptions were correct. After brainstorming and clarifying what we wanted to find out, we designed two surveys aimed at young people and educational professionals.

We contacted schools and colleges to find out their awareness, perceptions and opinions of T-Levels. Our survey reached 1,070 young people aged 11-18 and 202 educational professionals!

After the survey data was cleaned we analysed the results, and compared them against our initial assumptions to pull out the significant findings. We shared our findings with SUN decision makers, who have challenged us to dig further into the data to solve two 'Big Business Challenges'.

Decision makers told us...



They were surprised that many teachers do not know what a T-Level is



They recognise the difference in levels of confidence between students and teachers



"What projects could we do in 2021 to increase awareness and uptake?"



"What more can the data tell us about young people's confidence choosing technical qualifications?"

Young Champion's #YouthVoice journey

We asked the Young Champions to self-assess their skills at the start of this project and again part way through. There will be further reflection at the end of the project.

What the Young Champions say about their achievements so far:



CONFIDENCE

"I've gained a lot of teamworking skills and confidence" Amy



COMMUNICATION SKILLS

"I have gained a lot more confidence and communication skills and apply them to my everyday life" Georgina



TEAM WORK

"I gained more knowledge in particular topics... and teamwork!" Thea



LEADERSHIP

"I've gained confidence, teamworking skills, practiced leadership and had a lot of fun!" Jeremy



PROBLEM SOLVING

"(this project) has helped me gain an idea of the struggles which need to be addressed, linked to the mental health of adolescents" Antonia



TRYING SOMETHING NEW

"I have gained a lot more awareness around different education and youth-related topics" Hamza



FACILITATION

"I've developed my communication, leadership and facilitation skills" Ash

Young Champions Calls to Action on T-Quals



TEACH THE TEACHERS ABOUT T-LEVELS

We found that teachers weren't confident explaining T-Levels to young people; 42% of teachers hadn't heard of them. Make sure teachers have access to the right training and information about T-Levels.



CLARIFY WHO T-LEVELS ARE AIMED AT

Survey results show that teachers weren't certain who T-Level are aimed at. Education is needed to ensure they're recommended to students appropriately.



YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE SEEN T-LEVELS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media works for informing young people - keep using it!



LET YOUNG PEOPLE KNOW HOW T-LEVELS COMPARE

Make sure that young people know what T-Levels are useful for and how they compare to other choices.



HELP YOUNG PEOPLE KNOW WHERE THEY CAN TAKE T-LEVELS

Not all colleges offer them. Help young people to understand where they can access T-Levels in their area.

Contact

Contact antonia@participationpeople.com ...for more information on SUN's #YouthVoice activities, campaigns, projects and events. We would LOVE to hear from you!



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