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|--------------------------------------|---|
| <b>Activity Name</b>                 | Articulacy – Y12 Workshop ‘Articulate your way to HE’                                       |
| <b>Date</b>                          | 5 One-day Workshops delivered throughout June and July 2019                                 |
| <b>Location</b>                      | 5 target schools and colleges across Cornwall and Devon (see schools involved)              |
| <b>Total number of students</b>      | 44 Students   |
| <b>Number of target students</b>     | 31 Target Students  |
| <b>Schools involved in the event</b> | Bodmin College, Coombe Dean School, Exeter College, South Devon College, The Spires College |

## **Introduction**

In the Summer Term of Tranche 3 (June-July 2019), Articulacy worked in collaboration with Next Steps South West (NSSW) to deliver a new one-day workshop to target and non-target students in Year 12 in 5 schools and colleges in Cornwall and Devon.

‘Articulate Your Way to HE’ is an intensive one-day activity offered to Year 12 students to help them reflect on how they present themselves as they move beyond school and college into the world of higher education (HE) and careers. Through a mix of interactive games and discussions, students develop their understanding how to present themselves in a way that will encourage future success. The sessions discuss a toolkit of tips and ideas for helping students with their preparation for HE and careers, including:

- Making a first good impression
- Using positive body language
- Speaking confidently and positively about yourself and your abilities
- Telephone skills
- Interview skills
- Linking school achievements to future careers

Students work with an Articulacy tutor during the day, and develop their understanding of HE through discussions with Student Ambassadors (SAs), who support delivery of the workshop.

Delivery of the one-day workshop was piloted in Tranche 3, building on the success of the Year 9 ‘Articulate’ programme delivered throughout Tranches 1, 2 and 3 of NCOP. Following positive feedback from the five pilot sessions evaluated in this report, the workshop is now available as part of the NSSW Phase 2 provision.

## **Aims**

The workshop aims to increase students’ confidence in their communication and presentation skills within the context of an interview for HE or future careers, and includes a focus on reflecting on and evidencing students’ transferable skills. The session therefore primarily addresses the barrier of Soft Skills, particularly aiming to increase students’ confidence, resilience, and self-belief as they progress through Year 12 into the final stages of their current studies. By facilitating discussions with Student Ambassadors and providing participants with relatable HE role models, the workshop also addresses the barrier of Socio-economic factors affecting HE progression, aiming to raise students’ aspirations for higher education study.

## **Impact Evaluation Design and Data Collection**

In order to evaluate the impact of the workshop on students’ perception of their Soft Skills and on Socio-economic factors affecting HE progression, and to ascertain whether the intervention had met its key aims, participants were asked to complete pre- and post-activity surveys. This



survey included an Outcome Star on which students were asked to rate their agreement from 1-10 (where 1 is low and 10 is high) against six statements:

1. I can communicate well with other people
2. I know how to present myself when meeting new people
3. I know how to use the telephone in a professional context
4. I understand my strengths and know how to talk about them
5. I feel confident attending interviews
6. I am considering HE study

Comparison of pre- and post-intervention responses to these statements enabled evaluation of the success of the intervention. The survey also gathered data relating to students' perception of whether the workshop had helped them to develop their communication and presentation skills. Finally, the survey asked students for qualitative comments in response to two questions regarding the workshop.

Completed pre- and post-activity impact evaluation surveys were collected from 33 participants, and these responses have been analysed in the following section of this report.

### **Impact Evaluation Data Analysis**

The following analysis interrogates the pre- and post-activity surveys, exploring trends in the data and highlighting any potential conclusions that can be drawn in relation to the workshop and its impact on the students and their experience of the barriers to HE progression addressed by the intervention.

### **Outcome Star Ratings**

Figure 1 presents the average pre- and post-activity ratings for all six outcome star statements, and shows the increase in students' rating against each of the statements (in green).

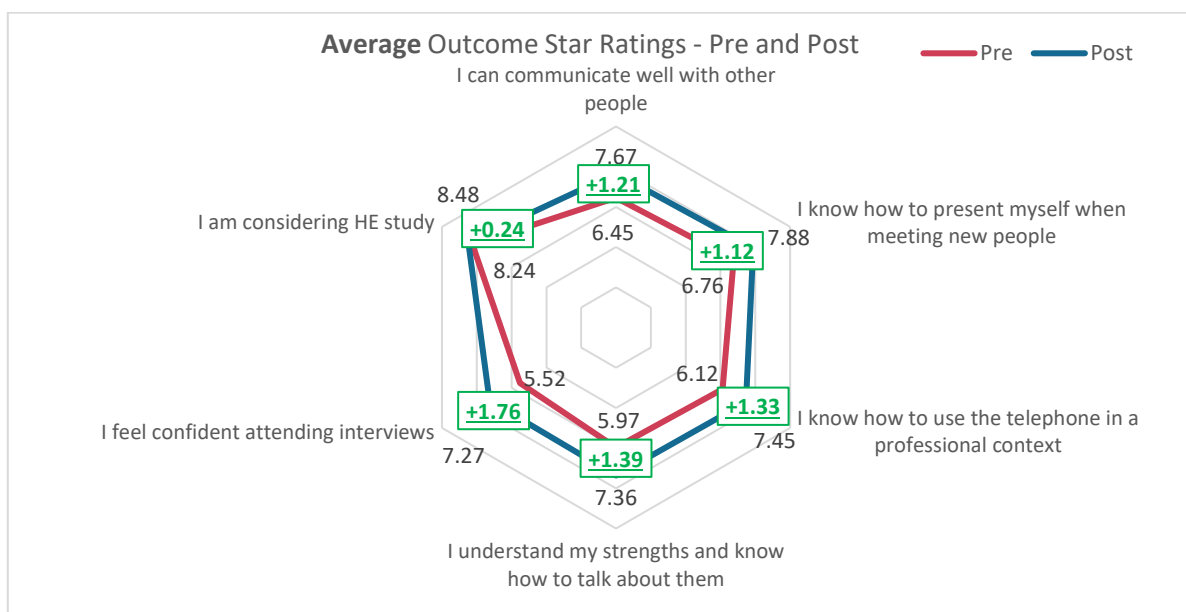


Figure 1 – Average Pre- and Post-activity Outcome Star Ratings

The average rating for five of the six statements increased by an average of at least 1.12 points between the pre- and post-activity surveys. Furthermore, although the final statement regarding students' HE intentions had an average increase of only 0.24 points, this statement had the highest average pre- and post-activity rating (average pre-activity rating of 8.24 increasing to 8.48). The average pre- and post-intervention ratings for these six statements



indicate positive impact across all areas evaluated by the outcome star, and suggest that the workshop met its aim of increasing students' confidence in their communication, presentation, and interview skills, whilst also further raising their already high aspirations for HE study.

The greatest increase is shown in students' confidence in attending interviews (average increase of 1.76 points). When combined with the increase seen in statements concerning students' understanding of how to talk about their strengths (average increase of 1.39 points) and their ability to communicate with others (average increase of 1.21 points), this data suggests that the workshop was particularly successful in supporting students with the development of their overall communication skills.

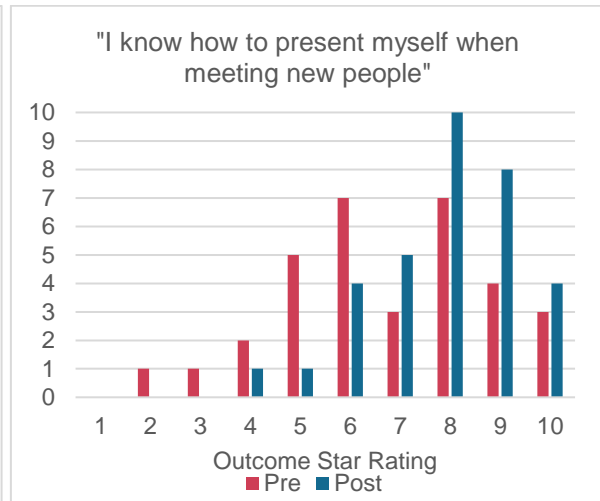
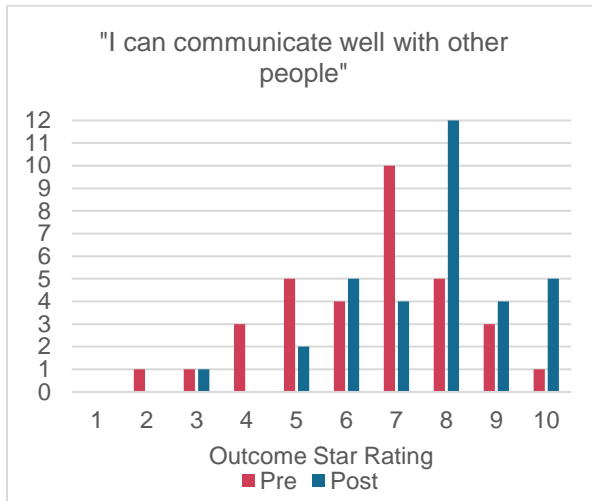
In order to have a more nuanced understanding of this quantitative data, the table below presents a comparison of the average (mean), median, and mode ratings of the pre- and post-activity outcome star statements (numbered according to the list given on the previous page).

|                      | <b>Statement 1</b> | <b>Statement 2</b> | <b>Statement 3</b> | <b>Statement 4</b> | <b>Statement 5</b> | <b>Statement 6</b> |
|----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| <b>AVERAGE Pre-</b>  | 6.45               | 6.76               | 6.12               | 5.97               | 5.52               | 8.24               |
| <b>AVERAGE Post-</b> | 7.67               | 7.88               | 7.45               | 7.36               | 7.27               | 8.48               |
| <b>MEDIAN Pre-</b>   | 7                  | 7                  | 7                  | 6                  | 6                  | 9                  |
| <b>MEDIAN Post-</b>  | 8                  | 8                  | 8                  | 7                  | 8                  | 9                  |
| <b>MODE Pre-</b>     | 7                  | 8                  | 7                  | 6                  | 4                  | 10                 |
| <b>MODE Post-</b>    | 8                  | 8                  | 8                  | 7                  | 8                  | 10                 |

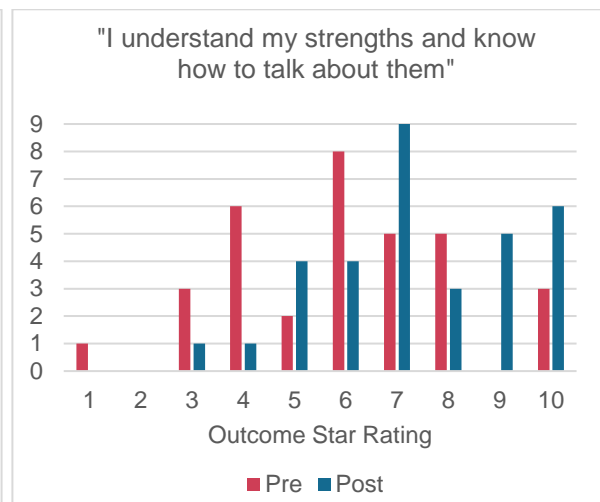
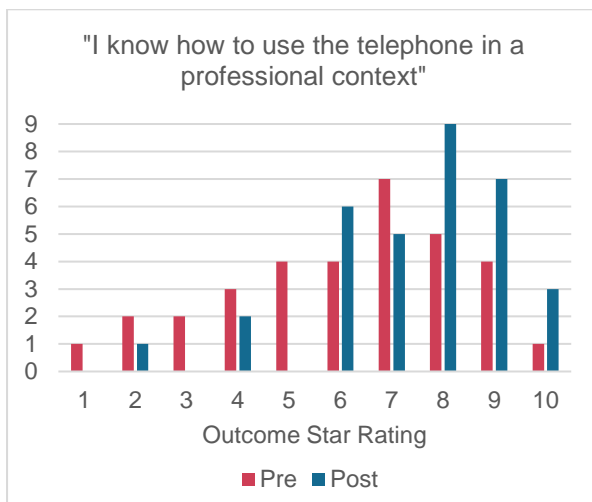
Comparison of these three measures of central tendency shows that the average, median, and mode of each statement's pre- and post- ratings are broadly similar for the first four statements, with figures rounded up or down to the nearest whole for the median and mode calculations. However, this table highlights differences between these measures for the final two statements. For statement five ('I feel confident attending interviews'), this difference is most significant for the mode (the most frequently-selected rating), which indicates an increase of 4 points between the pre- and post-activity ratings (increase of 4 to 8). This analysis suggests that the impact of the workshop on students' confidence in their interview skills was greater than indicated by the average pre- and post-activity data (Figure 1).

Furthermore, when looking at the mode for statement six ('I am considering HE study'), the small increase seen in the average pre- and post-intervention rating can be explained by the fact that the most frequent rating before the workshop was already at the top of the scale (10). Acknowledging this data, it can therefore be suggested that the increase in the average rating for this statement is to be commended, as it represented an increase on an already high figure.

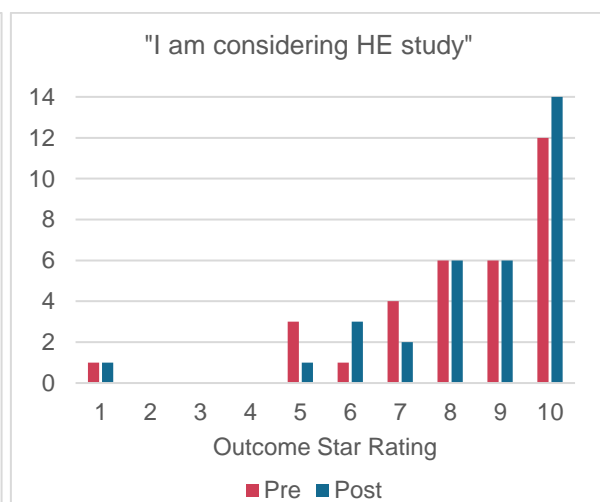
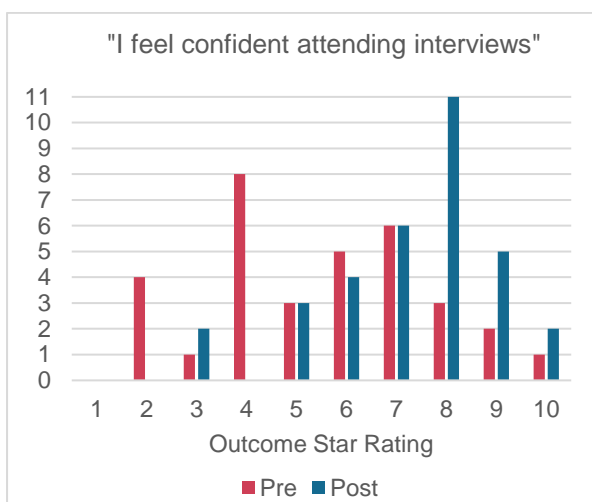
In order to better understand the data presented above, the histograms in Figures 2-7 below show the distribution of the count of pre- and post-activity ratings for each statement on the outcome star. These figures show that there was an increase in the number of students selecting higher ratings for each of the six statements, including the final statement regarding HE intentions (2 more students selected '10' in the post-activity survey than in the pre-activity survey).



Figures 2 and 3 – Count of Pre- and Post-activity Outcome Star Ratings, Statements 1 & 2



Figures 4 and 5 – Count of Pre- and Post-activity Outcome Star Ratings, Statements 3 & 4



Figures 6 and 7 – Count of Pre- and Post-activity Outcome Star Ratings, Statements 5 & 6

Overall, analysis of the pre- and post-intervention data shown in Figures 1-7 indicates impact on students' Soft Skills (increasing their confidence in specific communication and interview skills) and also suggests that the intervention has helped to address the barrier of Socio-economic factors by further increasing students' intentions to progress to HE.



Post-activity impact statements

Figure 8 presents students’ responses in the post-activity survey when asked to indicate how much they agreed with three statements relating to their perception of the workshop and its impact on them.

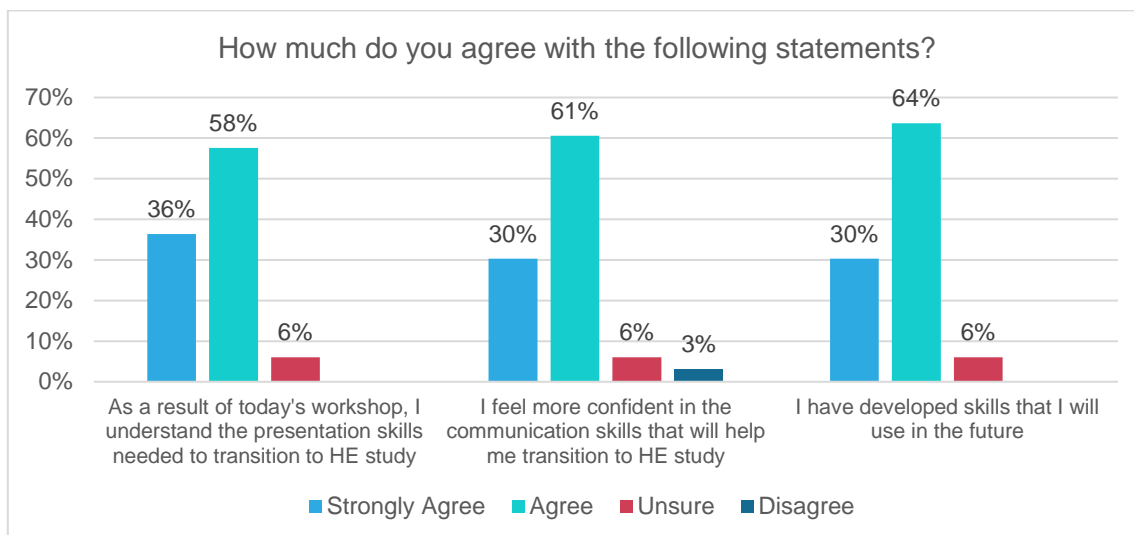


Figure 8 – Students’ perception of the workshop and its impact

Analysis of this data indicates that students were very positive about the workshop and its impact on them, with the vast majority ( $\geq 91\%$ ) agreeing or strongly agreeing with each of the three statements. Students’ responses show that they felt that the Articulatory session helped them understand the presentation skills needed to transition to HE study (36% ‘Strongly agree’, 58% ‘Agree’), and that the majority of them increased their confidence in these skills (30% ‘Strongly Agree’, 61% ‘Agree’). Furthermore, the data shows that almost all students (94%) felt that the workshop helped them develop skills that they would be able to use in the future, indicating that there was potentially a long-term transferable impact for participants on the barrier of Soft Skills, relating to both their future studies and career plans.

Qualitative Feedback

In order to gather qualitative feedback on the Articulatory workshop, students were students to provide comments in response to two questions about the sessions. The table below shows the key trends in the qualitative data, giving the number of responses for each thematic category and illustrative quotations for each one. It should be noted that not all students answered both questions.

| <b>What went well today?</b>  | <b>What would you like to see more of / would you still like to know?</b>  |
|---|--|
| <u>Specific activities</u> (5 Comments)<br><i>'The activities'</i><br><i>'The presentation'</i><br><i>'Group discussion'</i><br><i>'The wolf game'</i>                                  | <u>Specific skills activities</u> (10 comments)<br><i>'More 'techniques' that you wouldn't think of usually'</i><br><i>'The kind of things that help you stand out in interviews'</i><br><i>'Would like to see more about telephone interviews and practise them.'</i> |
| <u>Learning / developing skills</u> (7 comments)<br><i>'I learnt helpful skills in how to communication with new people'</i><br><i>'The information on body language really helped'</i> | <u>HE Application support</u> (4 comments)<br><i>'Applying help'</i><br><i>'Personal statement for uni'</i><br><i>'More HE interview time'</i>   |



|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><i>'Development of soft skills, presentations and interviews'</i><br/><i>'Learned how to communicate through the telephone in a professional manner.'</i></p>  | <p><i>'A little talk to try and decide about HE'</i></p>   |
| <p><u>Delivery / environment</u> (6 comments)<br/><i>'Good environment'</i><br/><i>'I felt at first it would've been uncomfortable with new people but it went amazing. I found it a very safe environment to communicate and be yourself.'</i><br/><i>'I enjoyed the day. Ben was a great teacher and would help and discuss parts.'</i></p> | <p><u>HE course information</u> (1 comment)<br/><i>'Other options similar to uni'</i></p>                  |
| <p><u>Increased Knowledge of HE</u> (8 comments)<br/><i>'I learnt more about uni life and how to cope'</i><br/><i>'I have a better understanding of universities and interview skills'</i><br/><i>'Asking student ambassadors about university'</i><br/><i>'The interview process and learning how to present myself better.'</i></p>         | <p><u>Finance knowledge</u> (1 comment)<br/><i>'I would like to know about managing money for uni'</i></p> |
| <p><u>Increased confidence</u> (2 comments)<br/><i>'I feel more confident with new people'</i><br/><i>'The phone activity helped me to be more confident when using the phone'</i></p>  | <p><u>Nothing / not applicable</u> (7 comments)<br/><i>'N/A'</i><br/><i>'Nothing'</i></p>                  |
| <p><u>Not applicable</u> (4 comments)<br/><i>'N/A'</i></p>  |  |

Analysis of this qualitative data correlates with the findings from quantitative data analysed in this report, and shows that students perceived impact on a range of areas as a result of the Articulatory workshop. Students acknowledged that they had learnt new skills, including communication and interview skills, providing further evidence to suggest that the workshop met its primary aims and successfully addressed the barrier of Soft Skills. Furthermore, a number of respondents cited an increase in their understanding of university, indicating impact on the barrier of Knowledge of HE. Although this barrier was not directly addressed by the workshop's primary aims, this feedback indicates another positive outcome from the session for participants.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

The analysis of data collected in the pre- and post-activity surveys for the Y12 'Articulate Your Way to HE' workshops indicates that these sessions had a positive impact on students who took part, and that the intervention supported participants in addressing the NSSW barriers of Soft Skills and Socio-economic factors. Overall, student feedback showed that participants had a positive perception of the workshop, with several noting that there was nothing they would like to see more of or know.

With regards suggested changes for Tranche 4, some students asked for specific activities or information that could be further developed into delivery of the workshop, such as the opportunity to further practise telephone interviews. Other students requested information that could be made available to students through other elements of the NSSW core offer, such as the 'Student Finance' and 'Preparing for Uni and UCAS' workshops. It is recommended that NSSW Institutional Officers arranging Y12 Articulatory workshops ensure that other NSSW core offer sessions are made available to participants, and ensure that delivery of the Articulatory workshop aligns with other interventions with which students engage in Y12 and Y13.