

Pathfinder Programme 2025 Impact Report





Introduction

We upskill the employees of partner companies to become effective mentors for young people, preparing them to deliver 1-2-1 mentoring sessions for local students, in the lead up to life-changing work experience opportunities at the partner companies themselves.

Our programme creates lasting professional networks for students who don't feel that they have the personal and family connections to gain an advantage in their career.

Programme breakdown

The programme combined mentoring and work experience to offer a rich employability experience for the students:



Mentor selection

Wiseup selected a pool of mentors to deliver the programme. Wiseup gathered key information on the mentor's experience and industry specialisms.

Mentor training

Mentors attended a training workshop on how to effectively mentor young people - including tools, tips and techniques for the sessions.



Matching

Wiseup matched each student with a suitable mentor based on their ambitions and career preferences.

Mentoring session 1 & 2

Initial introductory sessions were held to build rapport. Mentee learnt about the industry & sets personal goals for sessions.

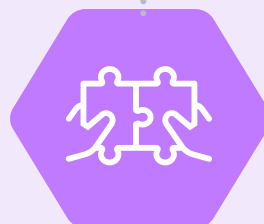


Work experience & sessions 3+4

The students visited the office on a curated work experience week - with workshops, activities and further sessions with their mentor.

Programme wrap up

Programme concludes with completion certificates. Pairs agree on any post-work experience comms, if needed.



2025 Programme Snapshot

123 students

- Year 12 students
- University students

490 hours of mentoring

- Mentors supported their mentee before and during the work experience
- Further sessions to come to review and reconnect

304 office hours

- In-office work experience delivered for each student participant
- Rich and dynamic work experience itinerary giving students access to all business departments and an array of professional contacts



Mentor training

The mentor training gives the opportunity for mentors to learn about tools, tips and techniques for delivering effective mentoring to young people.

The workshop consists of learning from a professional mentor and coach, while taking part in activities and exercises that mimicked interactions they may have with their mentee.



Pre-programme snapshot

The following were selected as the 3 most prevalent worries about the programme:

- Not feeling like I fit in
- Not knowing what to say to professionals
- Not feeling confident enough to ask questions

<23%

of student's parents/guardians
work in an office environment

We asked all students to score themselves out of 10 on how they felt in a number of areas:

1

Understanding what it's like to work in an office or professional job

Average score = 4.9

2

Confidence talking to professionals

Average score = 5.0

3

Understanding of workplace etiquette

Average score = 6.1

4

Awareness of different job roles

Average score = 5.0

5

Feeling comfortable asking a professional for help

Average score = 5.8

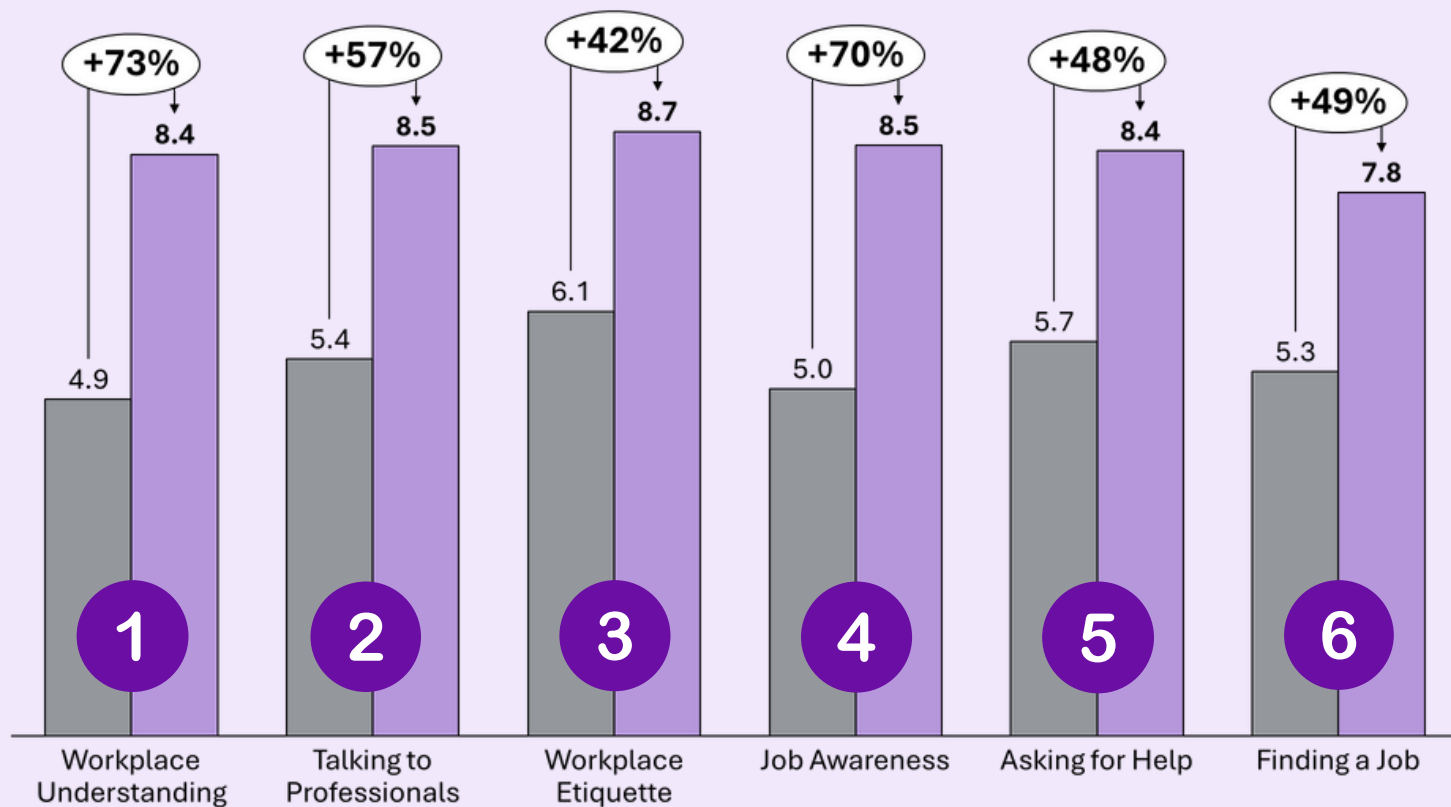
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Feeling confident in ability to find a job in London

Average score = 5.0

Programme Impact

Students rated themselves again in the same six key areas after the programme, with the following improvements:



We saw an average improvement of 57% across all of the key areas



The highest improvement was in student's understanding what it's like to work in an office



There was a significant improvement to student's awareness of different job roles



Students scored an average of 5.4 across the six key areas before the programme, rising to 8.4 after completion



All students reported key skills improvements

Every student on one of our 2025 programmes reported improvements in the following skills:



Communication



Presenting



Networking



Decision making



Setting goals



Personal brand

Mentor impact

Here are a selection of responses from mentees, when asked how their mentor helped them:



“ —

My mentor helped massively. Jason is very intelligent and has taught me not only advice on digital marketing but overall general life skills.

Ciaran, Add People Mentee



“ —

I absolutely loved all the days I spent on work experience. It was interesting learning how everything works. It was an unforgettable experience and I am very grateful for this opportunity.

Medina, Kantar Mentee



“ —

I've been given great relevant advice from my mentor. He has made sure that what I wanted to get out of the work experience I got - for example learning about HR. On the first day I felt less nervous as I knew I had someone there I knew.

Oscar, NES Fircroft Mentee



“ —

My mentor had helped me navigate different career paths which I didn't initially know about. The mentoring helped me a lot and it was very helpful to have someone from the company to confide in about worries and questions without being judged. When I was feeling nervous and anxious during my presentation my mentor helped me to stay calm and gave me tips which eventually helped me finish my presentation. I am incredibly thankful for her and i think it's very important to have a mentor in a work experience programme like I had at with intelligence.

Najma - With Intelligence Mentee



“ —

I learnt that when meeting new people, I shouldn't "wait" till I am comfortable before I talk to them or interact with them, but I should make the most of the time I have with them as I don't know what connections I may create.

Shameemah - Hays Mentee



“ —

He emphasised the importance of education, sacrifice and working hard towards achieving my goals. Our talks helped my motivation to develop my organisation & focus on earning the best qualifications whilst in education.

Nadia - LondonEnergy Mentee

Education Partner Feedback

“

Having participated in the programme since its inception, we have seen firsthand the phenomenal impact that it has had on our students. As a school with significantly higher levels of socioeconomic deprivation than the national average, our students typically don't have access to corporate work experience through personal connections, so the programme has been invaluable.

Before taking part, many students' concerns revolved around not having the 'know-how' to navigate an office job; from signing in at reception, to booking meeting rooms, preparing for business pitches, etc.

In addition, the 1:1 mentoring has significantly increased students' confidence, through being able to ask questions, and seek feedback, as well as to continue that professional mentoring relationship after the programme has finished. Students leave the experience able to network with a range of professionals, knowing how to market themselves as brilliant future employees, and understanding that jobs at these companies are for them.

Previous participants have gone on to successfully obtain prestigious degree apprenticeships at top companies such as Accenture and Sir Robert McAlpine. Where experiences like this had previously been reserved for those with personal connections, the gap is now rightfully closing thanks to these initiatives.

Sophie Cunningham
Careers Lead



“

As a teacher working in a school in London that has a mission to help push some of the brightest disadvantaged students in London into top professional and academic institutions, I have found the mentoring programmes are invaluable and our goals match up.

Work experience placements allow students to develop the skills and perspective they need to get into an interview, but without mentoring young people struggle to have the confidence required to explain why they are right for a position. By helping students build a professional relationship with a mentor, I have found that they have become more effective communicators of their own merits and skills by having multiple low stakes interactions with a professional role model. Degree Level Apprenticeships are particularly appealing to young people at the moment, and since working with Wiseup, there has been a direct correlation with mentored students applying for and then being offered places on these highly competitive courses.

James O'Riodan
Careers Lead



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