



## PREPARING FOR A CAREERS FAIR

Student Name

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Tutor Group

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# Welcome to Opportunity Thurrock

Opportunity Thurrock is the biggest careers fair in the area, attracting over 2,500 students from 12 schools and colleges every year.

You'll have the chance to chat to universities, colleges and sixth forms about their requirements and more importantly what they can offer you. Local employers will also be there to inspire you about different industry sectors and the career paths they can provide.

This guide is designed to help you make the most of this fantastic opportunity. It will help you to think about what you should be focusing on before, during and after the event.

## Opportunity Thurrock will help you to...

- **Explore** a range of possible careers
- **Find out** your next steps at college, sixth form or with an apprenticeship
- **Discover** possible Higher Education routes



## BEFORE...

Now is the time for you to be thinking about any ambitions that you have and what steps you might be taking to achieve your dreams. It is important to have some ideas, even if they are not fully formed so that you can consider the questions you want to ask and who you want to talk to.

- *Think about your ambitions and plans*
- *Work out your strategy for the day*
- *Decide on your key questions*

## ON THE DAY...

There will be a lot of students at the fair, so don't waste time; you'll need to follow your plan to make the most of the chances you'll have.

- *Get answers to your questions*
- *Note down what you've learnt*
- *Record what you're going to research later*

## AFTER...

Hopefully the event will kick start or recharge your thinking about the future. Don't waste the opportunities you created for yourself.

- *Think about the people you met*
- *Find out where to get more info*
- *Start your plan for the future*




# How to get the most out of Opportunity Thurrock

Everyone is at a different stage in planning for their future, and you can't expect a visit to Opportunity Thurrock to completely plan out your future. Be smart, and arrive knowing what you're looking to find out by using this guide.

## TOP TIPS

- *Use your time wisely, you don't have long so plan ahead and know which stands to target*
- *Try to find out what the entry requirements are for jobs and courses*
- *Be brave! Your future will be different to your friends, so go to the places you are genuinely interested in*
- *Keep an open mind – you might not find the exact career you're interested in at the careers fair, but look at college, sixth form and training options*



*"I found the event really helpful, especially talking to the employers. I found out about careers that I didn't know existed!"*

*Student, Opportunity Thurrock 2018*

You'll have the opportunity to meet and talk to professionals in all these areas. Remember; they are at the event because they are interested in meeting and helping you!

## EMPLOYERS

Future job opportunities for after you have left education.

Talk to the employers about pathways into a career with them, what they look for in applicants.

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## COLLEGES

A Levels, BTECs, and Apprenticeships after leaving school.

Look at all the courses that are on offer, ask questions about entry requirements and the way that the courses are taught.

## SIXTH FORMS

A Levels, International Baccalaureate and BTECs after GCSE's - a wide range of courses to prepare you for higher education and beyond.

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## UNIVERSITIES

Degree courses after leaving sixth form or college.

Talk to the universities attending to find out about what is available locally and ask questions about studying for different types of over 50,000 degree subjects throughout the UK.

## TRAINING PROVIDERS

Apprenticeships and hands-on training after school or sixth form/college.

Ask about all the different pathways available to you.

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## CAREERS SUPPORT

Information and advice on your education and career options.

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## CHARITIES

Support for young people on a range of issues.

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## LOCAL AUTHORITIES

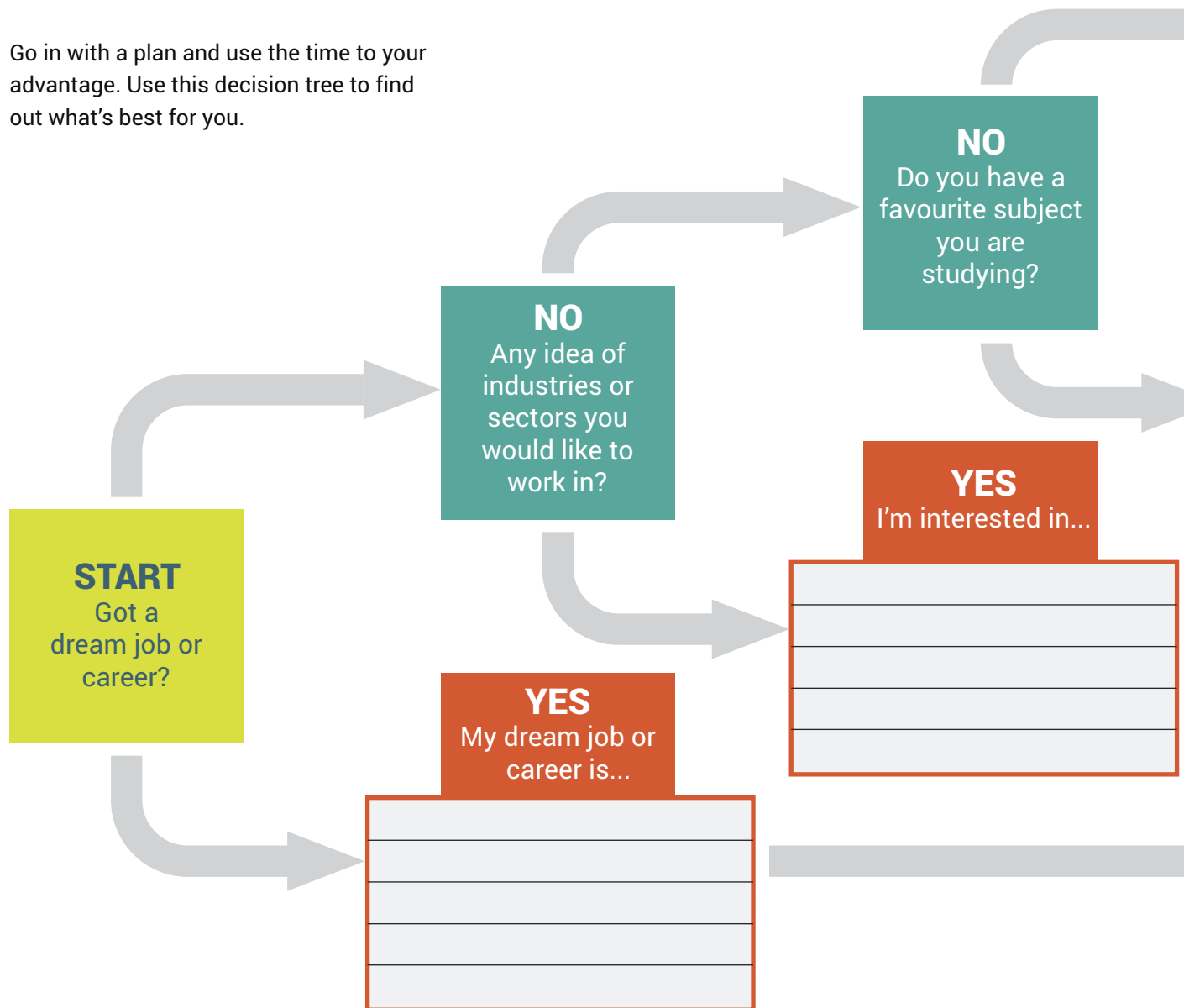
Showcasing careers and developments in your local area.

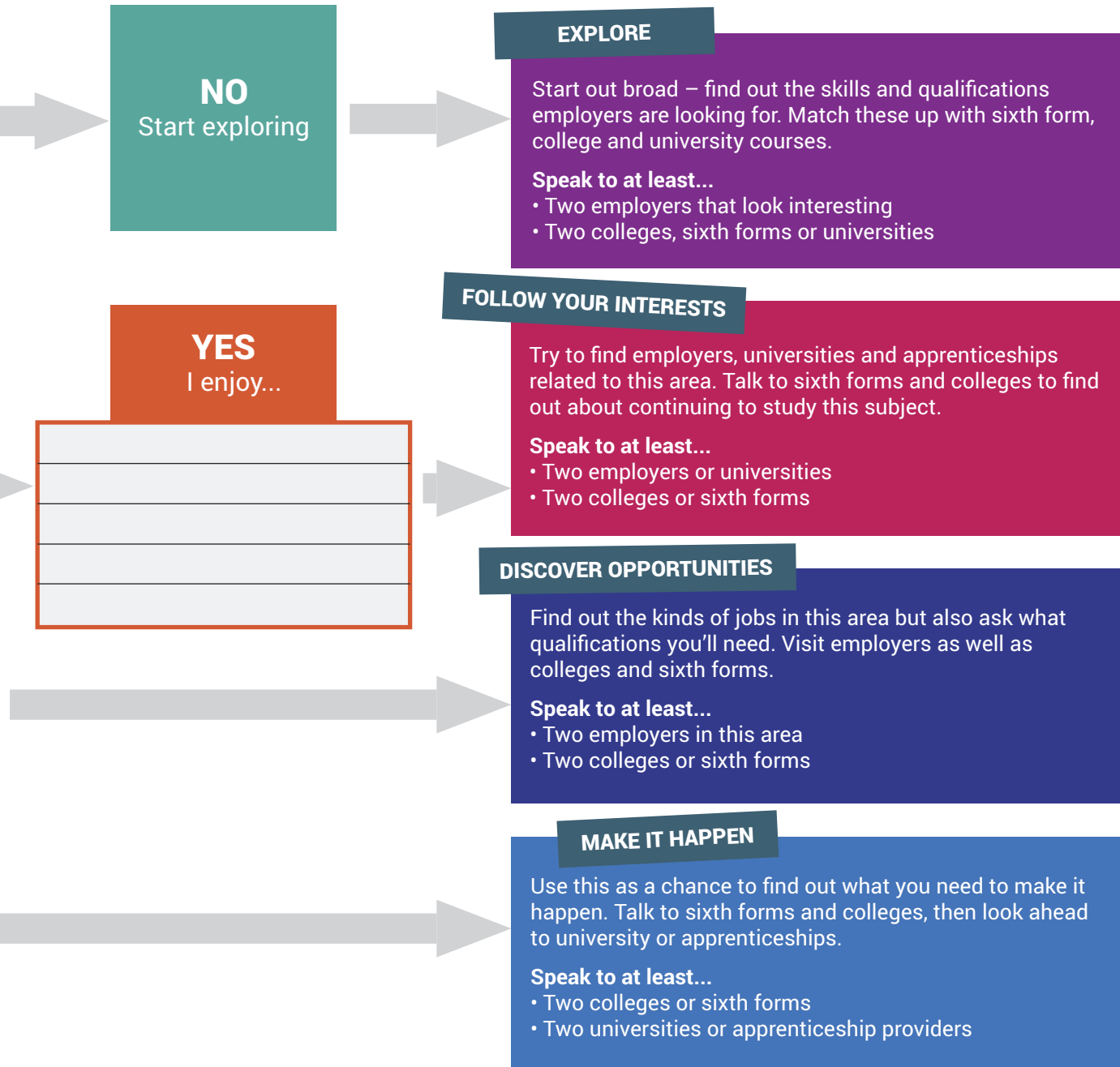
### TOP TIPS

- *Smile! Everyone is eager to meet you.*
- *Make eye contact, introduce yourself and shake hands*
- *Don't be afraid to ask questions. If in doubt refer to the list you prepared earlier.*

# Your strategy

Go in with a plan and use the time to your advantage. Use this decision tree to find out what's best for you.







# Things to find out

Having a few questions prepared will help you to start conversations and use your time wisely.

**Question 1** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type of exhibitor to ask \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 2** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type of exhibitor to ask: \_\_\_\_\_

**Question 3** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Type of exhibitor to ask: \_\_\_\_\_

## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS

Use these examples to come up with your own questions.

### To employers and training providers

- What are the skills your employees need?
- Describe a typical day in your life?
- What qualifications do I need?
- Do you have apprenticeships?
- What is the average salary?
- What work experience would help my application?

### To colleges, sixth forms and universities

- What subjects do you offer?
- What qualifications would I get?
- What grades do I need at GCSEs?
- What are your entry grades?
- Can I get careers support?



Note things you found out or want to research further, contacts, new careers or courses you discovered.

**!**

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## Next steps

Take a look back at the decision map on pages 5 and 6. Have any of your answers changed? Choose your group below and see our suggested next steps.

### EXPLORE

Got a general idea of the qualifications and skills employers need? Start looking at college and sixth form options that would give you these, but still keep your options open if you change your mind in the future.

### DISCOVER OPPORTUNITIES

Found a few jobs in the industry or sector you like? Start investigating the qualifications you need for them; college, sixth form, university and apprenticeships. You could also investigate work experience opportunities.

### FOLLOW YOUR INTERESTS

If you've found some college or sixth form options to continue with your favourite subjects, look ahead to where they could lead on to. Think about university, apprenticeships and careers.

### MAKE IT HAPPEN

You will now know more about the education, skills and experience you need for your chosen career. Contact employers for industry guidance or even work experience. Start looking at colleges and sixth forms that could help you get the qualifications you need.

# Three things I'm going to do...

Putting together an action plan to continue exploring your options will help you on your path to success. To get you started, we suggest you think of one aim for each stage: college or sixth form, university or apprenticeship, and career options.

1

*To consider my college or sixth form options I'm going to...*

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2

*To think about my university, apprenticeship or training options I'm going to...*

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3

*To investigate my career options I'm going to...*

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## Your skills and experience

You may not realise it but you already have valuable skills and experience and you can build on these over the next few years to develop a well-rounded CV.



Think about these areas and you will see that you are already doing some things and could start others that educators and employers will be interested in hearing about.

Whether you are applying for an apprenticeship, thinking about university or looking at a future career, you will need to demonstrate that you have more than exam results.

Remember that whatever you say about yourself, you will need to be able to prove it, so start collecting evidence as soon as you can. You can easily build up a portfolio to support your CV which could include information, photos and references from employers or other contacts.



### **SCHOOL OR COLLEGE**

Evidence from essays and coursework, presentations, organisation of revision and meeting deadlines, use of ICT, good attendance and punctuality and good communication with others.

### **HOBBIES**

These show that you are active outside of school or college and that you have lots of interests. Sports, acting, dancing and singing, programming, model making, drawing, photography, reading, films, travelling and cooking are examples.

## **SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

These may not be fun but they do demonstrate that you are mature and trustworthy – you may be caring for your siblings or another family member, you may babysit or do household tasks or you could have been involved in a team or group project.

### **WORK EXPERIENCE**

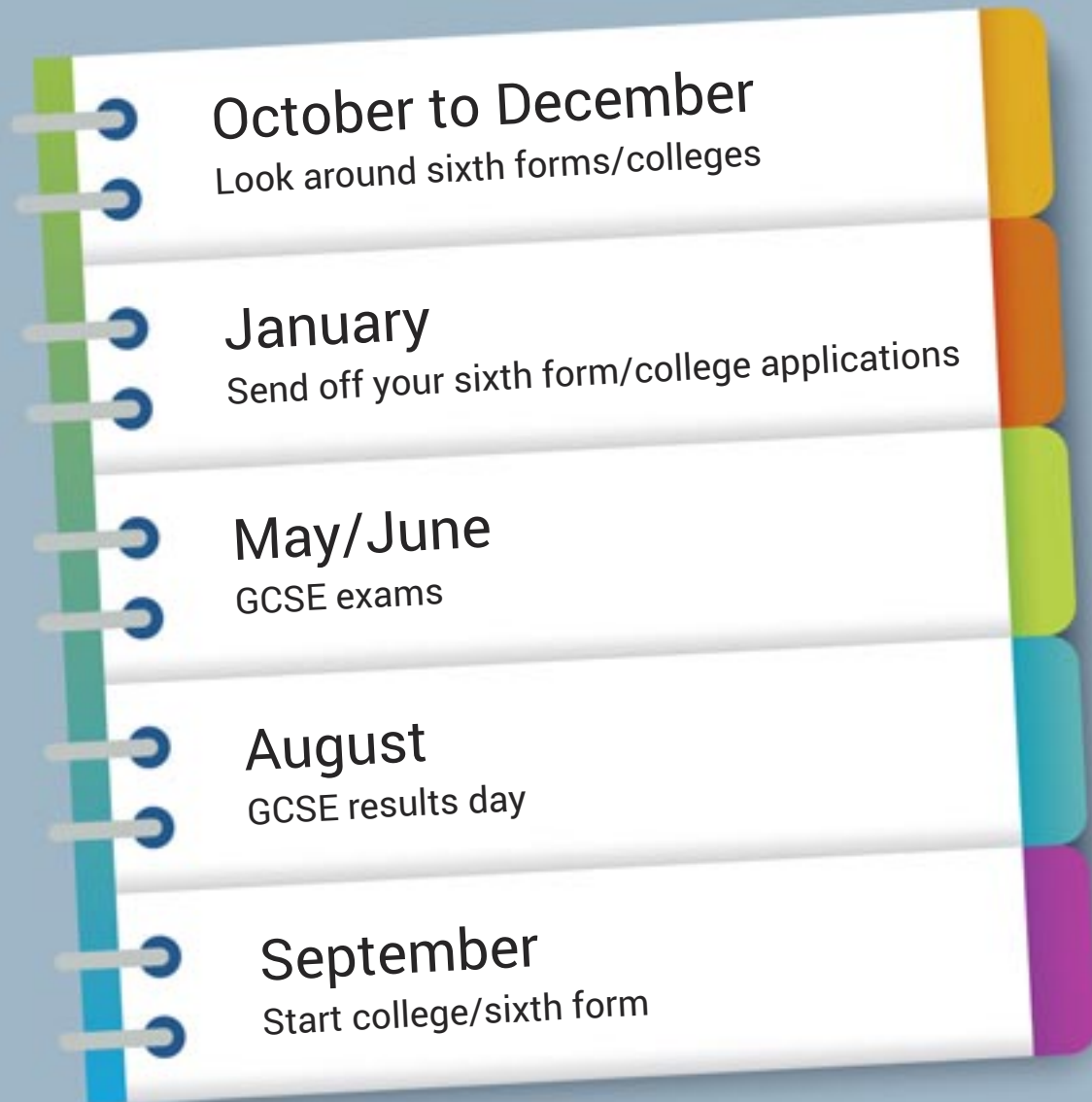
Get ahead of the game and boost your skills and experience by volunteering at a local company or charity and arranging work experience in your holidays.

### **OTHER SCHOOL OR COLLEGE ACHIEVEMENTS**

You might have been involved in other activities and achievements at school and these are valuable. For example, high attendance records, head student, prefect or school council member, sports or activities club member.



# Timeline



# Explore...

Visiting Opportunity Thurrock is a great start. Now further explore your options locally and see what is available for higher education across the country. Visit websites and see what's on offer...

## LOCAL UNIVERSITIES

- University of Essex
- University of East London
- Anglia Ruskin University

## APPRENTICESHIPS

Find vacancies at  
[www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship](http://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship)

## LOCAL COLLEGES

- USP College
- South Essex College
- Havering College
- Barking & Dagenham College

## LOCAL SIXTH FORMS

- Harris Academy Ockendon
- Ortu Sixth Form Centre –  
Stanford & Corringham
- Harris Academy Chafford Hundred
- Harris Academy Riverside

# Support...

There is plenty of support available to help you plan a successful future. Don't forget your teachers and career advisors in school; they will be keen to help.

## MAKE HAPPEN

Online and phone support.

Access resources or chat to a team member for more information.

Visit our website at [makehappen.org](http://makehappen.org)

## THURROCK CAREERS

Personalised careers information, advice and guidance support for young people:

Drop-in support at the Inspire Youth Hub in Grays and in-school Inspire Carers Advisors.

Call **0133375 413735** or visit [www.thurrock.gov.uk/career-support-for-young-people/thurrock-careers](http://www.thurrock.gov.uk/career-support-for-young-people/thurrock-careers)

# MAKE — HAPPEN

Make Happen aims to inspire young people, raise ambitions and promote interest in Higher Education as a route to achieving their ambitions.

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[www.makehappen.org](http://www.makehappen.org)



MakeHappenEssex

