Advancing Access Annual Report 2025-2026

September 2026

All data correct as of August 2026

Our reach since 2016

Engagement is defined as either creating an account on our website or attending an event.

11.4k

total users have engaged with Advancing Access, since the project began in 2016.

This is a

9%

increase from 10,447 last year.

Since 2016, **66%** of mainstream state schools with sixth forms and FE colleges in England have engaged with our programme.

79% of schools and colleges in England on our priority list* have engaged with Advancing Access since it began.

*Our priority schools are mainstream state schools and colleges with higher levels of disadvantage and lower rates of progression to Higher Education than expected based on prior attainment.

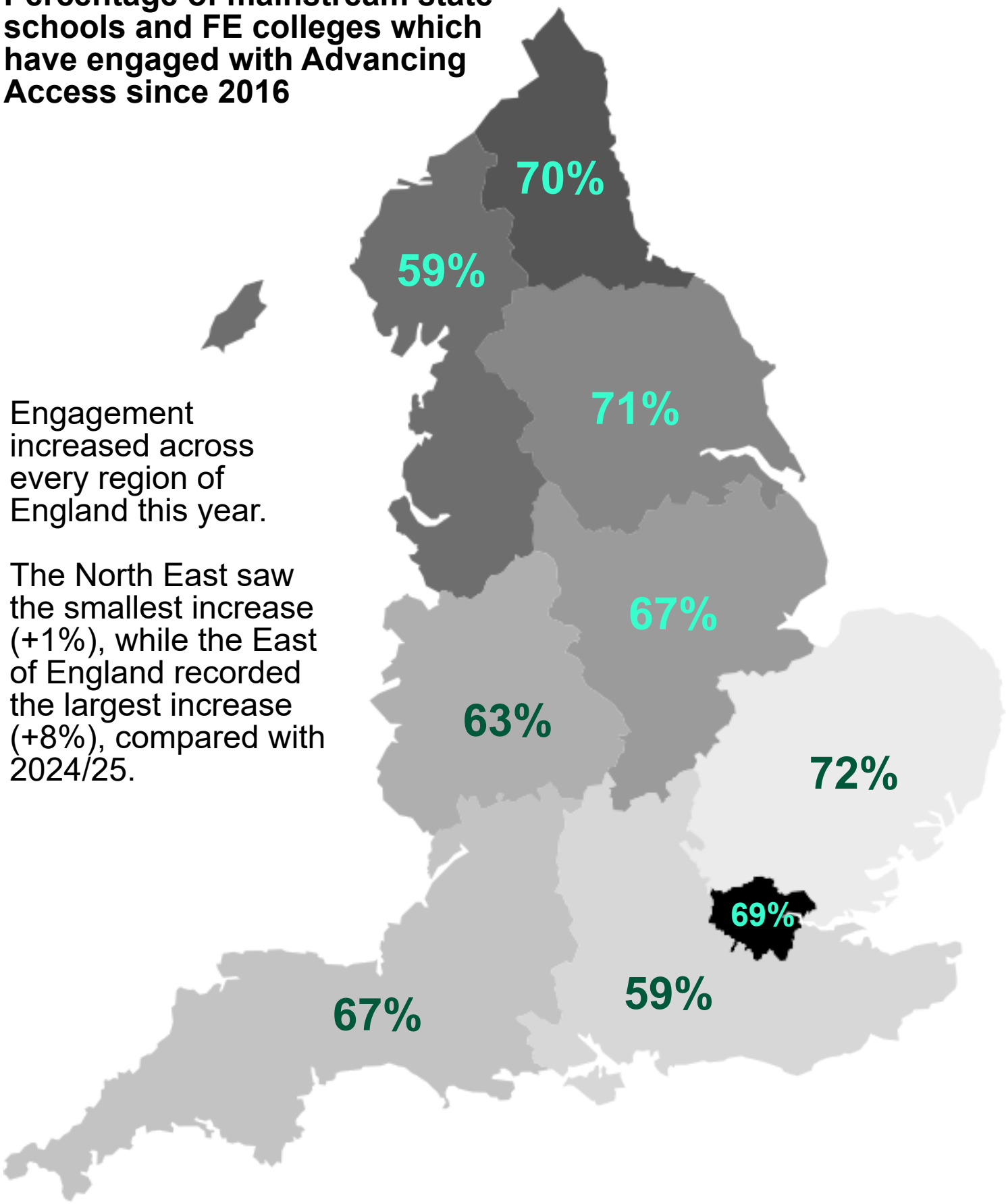
Percentage breakdown of engaged users by location

The chart below shows where our engaged users are based, illustrating the geographic reach of our work across the UK and beyond.

- England 88%
- Scotland 2%
- Wales 4%
- Northern Ireland 1%
- International/Offshore 4%
- Unknown/Other 1%

Organisation engagement by region since 2016

Percentage of mainstream state schools and FE colleges which have engaged with Advancing Access since 2016



Engagement increased across every region of England this year.

The North East saw the smallest increase (+1%), while the East of England recorded the largest increase (+8%), compared with 2024/25.

Reaching more educators

We offer free CPD sessions to schools and colleges which has seen growth in demand, reflecting its ongoing relevance and value

9.5k+*
teachers and advisers reached since 2019 through
576
in-school sessions

"Clear and answered questions before asked"

"Delivery was excellent, able to ask questions personalised to our setting. Resources relevant and made us think about things from the Higher Education point of view."

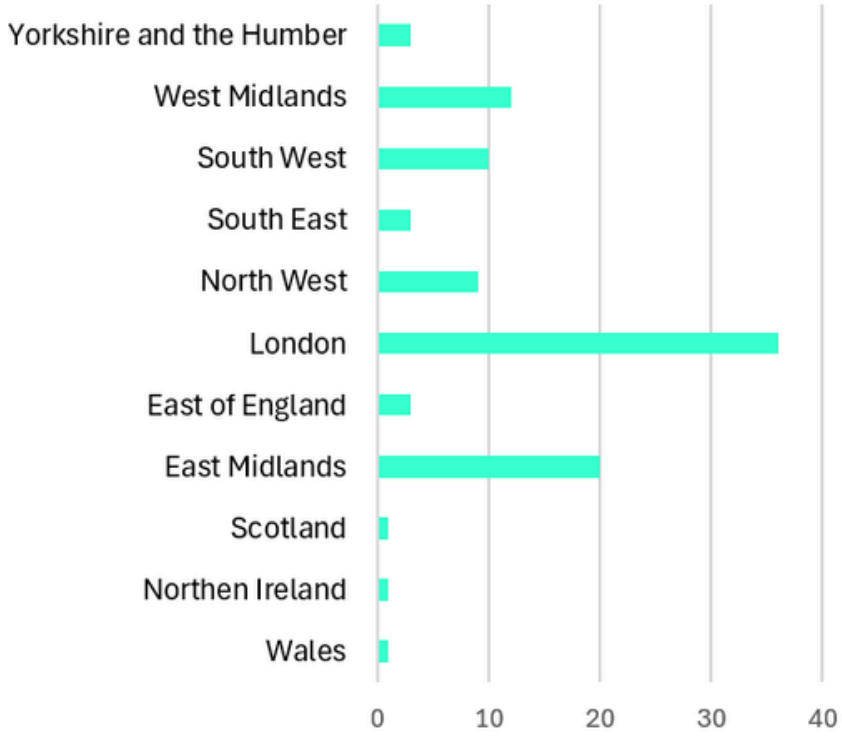
"Feel more empowered to engage in conversations to help students"

During 2025/26...

78	98*	1.2k*	36k*
sessions delivered	schools and colleges engaged	teachers and advisers participated	students potentially reached through participating educators

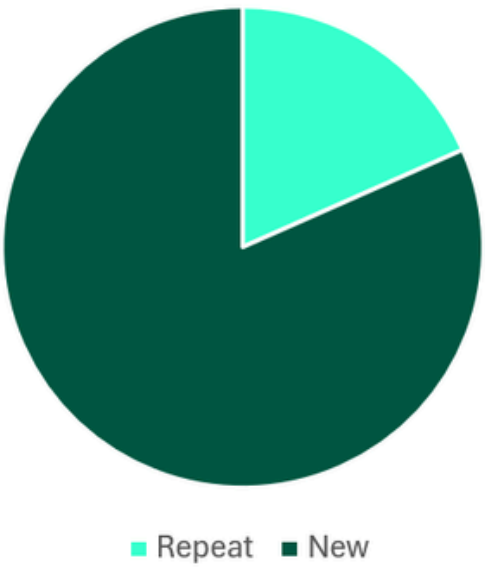
Growing our reach across the UK

Organisations from all four UK nations engaged with our CPD offer



New organisations engaged

Four in five participating organisations engaged for the first time



*estimated figures

Expanding access through a new partnership

In 2025/26, we partnered with The Sutton Trust and Causeway Education to deliver a new programme of online professional learning, supporting educators with practical guidance on applications, progression and pathways to higher education.

16
webinars delivered

1.1k
unique individuals registered

503
unique individuals attended

Two time slots helped make the programme accessible around busy school and college schedules, with sessions offered at 4pm and 6pm.

Reaching educators at scale

746
unique organisations registered

381
unique organisations attended

"Easy and practical advice that I can easily apply in my school. made me also realise potential barriers some of my students may face."

Area-based interventions

Our CPD days are hosted in priority areas by schools and colleges

We take professional learning directly to schools and colleges in cold-spot areas and communities experiencing higher levels of disadvantage. By working locally, we reduce barriers to participation, strengthen networks and extend our reach where support can have the greatest impact.

Across both events, we reached:

- **76** educators
- **22** schools and colleges
- **10** local authorities

Hosted by Holly Lodge High School

36 educators joined the event, representing **12** schools and colleges across **7** local authorities, demonstrating our reach across the wider region and strong engagement with our target institutions.

10 of **12**

attending organisations were priority institutions

"Very knowledgeable staff and lots of information and chances to discuss with peers."

Hosted by Milton Keynes College

40 educators joined the event, representing **10** schools and colleges.

8 of the **16**

state-funded 16+ institutions in Milton Keynes attended the event, reaching 50% of the eligible institutions in the local authority.

Participants reported increased knowledge across all sessions, with average self-assessment scores rising by at least one point after each session.

"Extremely informative and left me with no questions."

Russell Group Conferences

Hosted by University of Sheffield and Queen Mary University of London

354 Total registered

230 Total attended

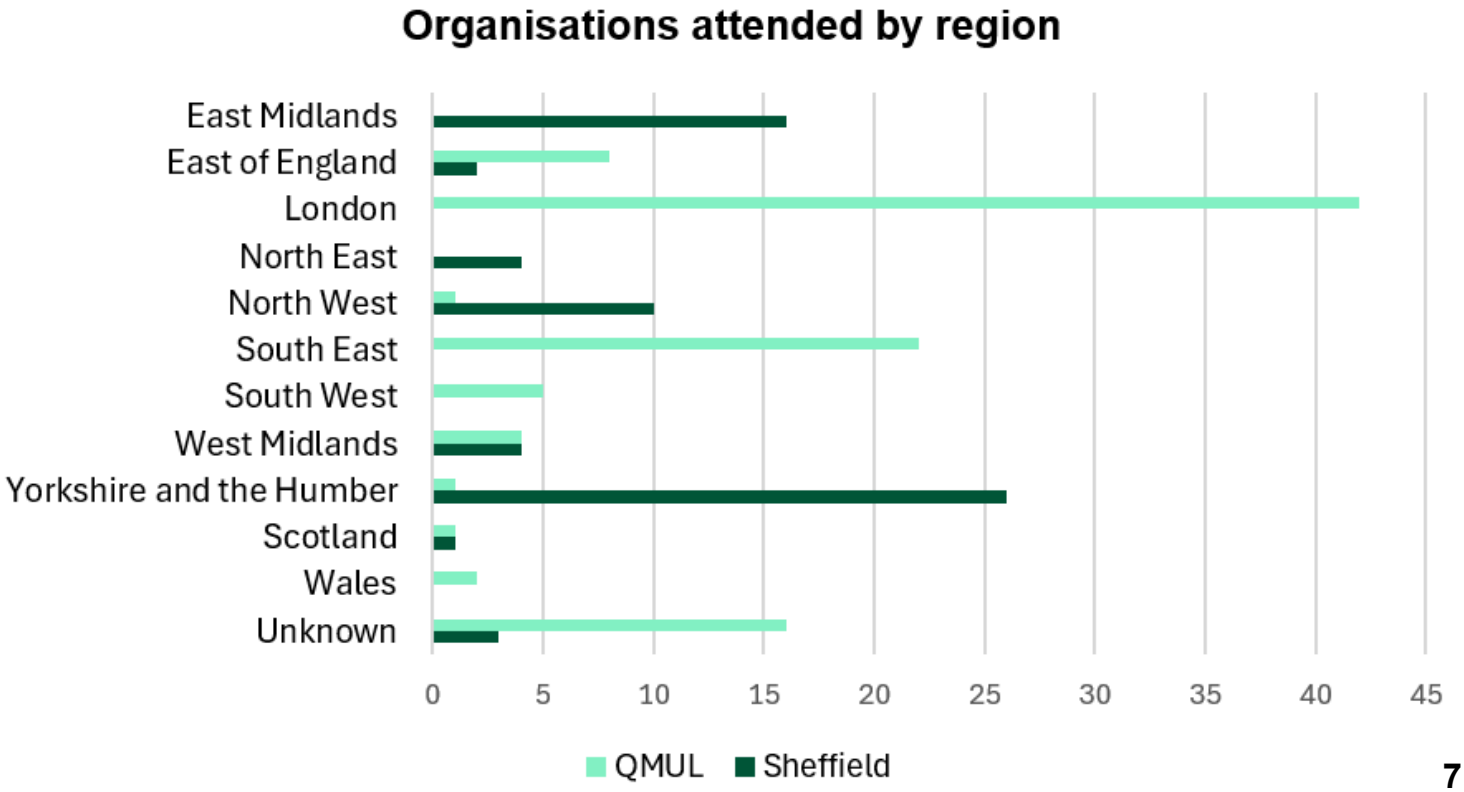
170 unique organisations

65% attendance rate

Together, the Sheffield and QMUL conferences engaged 170 organisations, including 124 UK state schools and colleges.

Organisation type	Overall	Sheffield	QMUL
UK state schools and colleges	124	**47**	**77**
Independent schools	**23**	**14**	**9**
Other organisations (Careers Advisor services)	**23**	**7**	**16**

Sheffield and QMUL attracted complementary regional audiences, extending engagement with schools, colleges and careers professionals across the UK.



Online engagement

Our online platform provides a variety of resources, making high-quality guidance, delivered by the Russell Group, accessible.

Over 660k
all time website visits since the site launched in 2017

Over 126k
all time unique visitors since the site launched in 2017

5.24
average visits per user, reflecting consistent engagement since 2017

During 2025/26...

41.8k total website visits

1. Super-Curricular guide
2. Blog article: University admissions tests
3. Blog article: Writing effective references

1.7k total downloads

1. Personal Statement Marking Checklist
2. Degree Apprenticeship vs University
3. Past event resources

Over 5.9k
blog views, an increase of
54%
from 2024/25

Personal Statement module
Launched in April 2025

58 Total certificates issued
26 Organisations certified

Most re-visited resources

1. Degree Apprenticeship vs University
2. Super-Curricular guide
3. Preparing for your Personal Statement

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www.advancingaccess.ac.uk

enquiries@advancingaccess.ac.uk

@advancingaccess