



Chemboost: A Widening Participation Tutoring Programme

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Abstract

ChemBoost is an online tutoring programme developed at Sheffield Hallam University. The programme has completed two successful rounds that ran from April 2024-April 2025 and September 2025 to December 2025. It has been designed to support year 12 and 13 applicants from widening participation groups in the South Yorkshire area and nationally. The aims of the programme are to support applicants with their understanding of Chemistry topics to achieve higher grades in their A-levels and encourage them to consider chemistry degree courses (Ní Chorcora et al., 2023).

The programme includes an in-person welcome day event at Sheffield Hallam University, where the applicants take part in a practical lab session and a lab olympics social activity. It is an opportunity for the applicants to experience university labs and meet the academics, undergraduate tutors and their peers on the programme. Subsequently, there were online weekly 1 hr sessions in a two-week rolling programme rotating between academic staff-led tutorials and SHU student-led mentoring sessions. The participants were given questions to complete between the weeks. Undergraduates and PhD students acted as accessible role models for A-level Chemistry and BTEC Applied Science from minoritised groups.

Our poster will discuss how we developed and implemented the ChemBoost programme and the challenges we faced. The demographics of applicants, those selected for the programme and those retained by the programme will be explored, as well as feedback of the programme. Funding for the programme (welcome event and student tutors) has been received by the Hallam Fund, Graham Royle and Tony Hill.

Keywords

Outreach, Student Recruitment, Widening Participation, Tutoring

References

Ní Chorcora, E., Bray, A., & Banks, J. (2023). A systematic review of widening participation: Exploring the effectiveness of outreach programmes for students in second-level schools. *Review of Education*, 11(2), e3406. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1002/rev3.3406>

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