



London South Bank University

Introducing people from one of society's most marginalised groups into the City of London's corridors of power is the aim of London South Bank University's City Opportunities scheme, which hopes to transform the futures of young adults who have spent their childhood in care.

The university had designed a week-long programme to offer those leaving care the tools needed to enter higher education as well as defined pathways for the future.

Since its pilot in 2012, the scheme has flourished, backed by major City firms including Pricewaterhouse-Coopers, Lloyd's of London and UBS. Not only do these corporations lend their names to the project, they also allow participants to visit their offices, speak to staff and learn about careers.

The participants also get taster lectures and seminars at London South Bank, careers advice and sessions on managing money. The initiative equips participants with transferable skills while also changing their perceptions of their choices.

John Widdowson, principal and chief executive of New College Durham, said the judges were impressed by "clear evidence of sustained commitment and success in developing the aspirations of children who has recently left care. It was pleasing to see the strong links that have been developed with business, placing wider participation in higher education in the context of employment and career enhancement."