



Longitudinal Impact Report

Common Purpose Student Experiences

RAKESH KHURANA, Dean, Harvard College

"In our ever more complex and interconnected world which has no obvious historical parallel, Common Purpose has developed a breakthrough idea about the importance of Cultural Intelligence in order to navigate both this new world and its contradictions. It has important implications and raises questions about our current systems for those of us involved in educating and developing our future global citizens."



The next generation of leaders – many of whom are studying at university now – are preparing to live and work in a fast, fluid and disrupted world.

If they are going to thrive in their careers and stand up as leaders in society, they will need the skills and competencies to bring different people together – from across boundaries – to solve common problems.



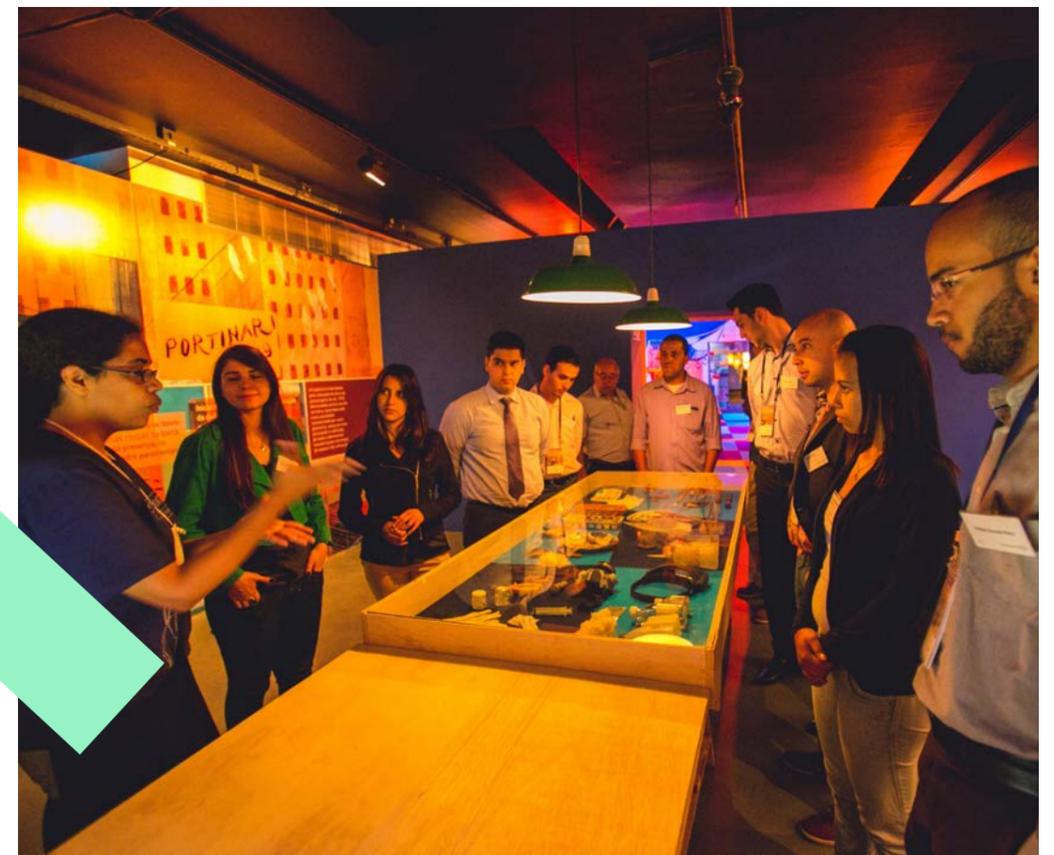
Common Purpose have been running leadership development programmes for university students for the past 16 years. Run in partnership with leading universities across the world, the programmes

aim to develop the skills and competencies students need to be inclusive leaders.

The programmes are designed to deliver against our Cross-Boundary Leadership framework which comprises the leadership skills and competencies we, and leading employers and experts, feel are needed to be successful in today's complex, fragmented and fast-paced world.

To measure the impact of these programmes students assess their learning and development against this skills and competency framework at the end of the programme and then three months later to measure application and implementation.

After delivering over 480 programmes for over 27,000 students in over 80 cities across the world, we conducted an assessment of the long-term impact our programmes have had on students over the past 16 years. We wanted to know how they've been able to use the skills and competencies they developed on their programme and how it has helped them in their roles and career progression. We wanted to find out how their programme has supported them to stand up as leaders and have an impact on the issues they are passionate about.



Our work with universities

27,000+

students have been on a
Common Purpose programme

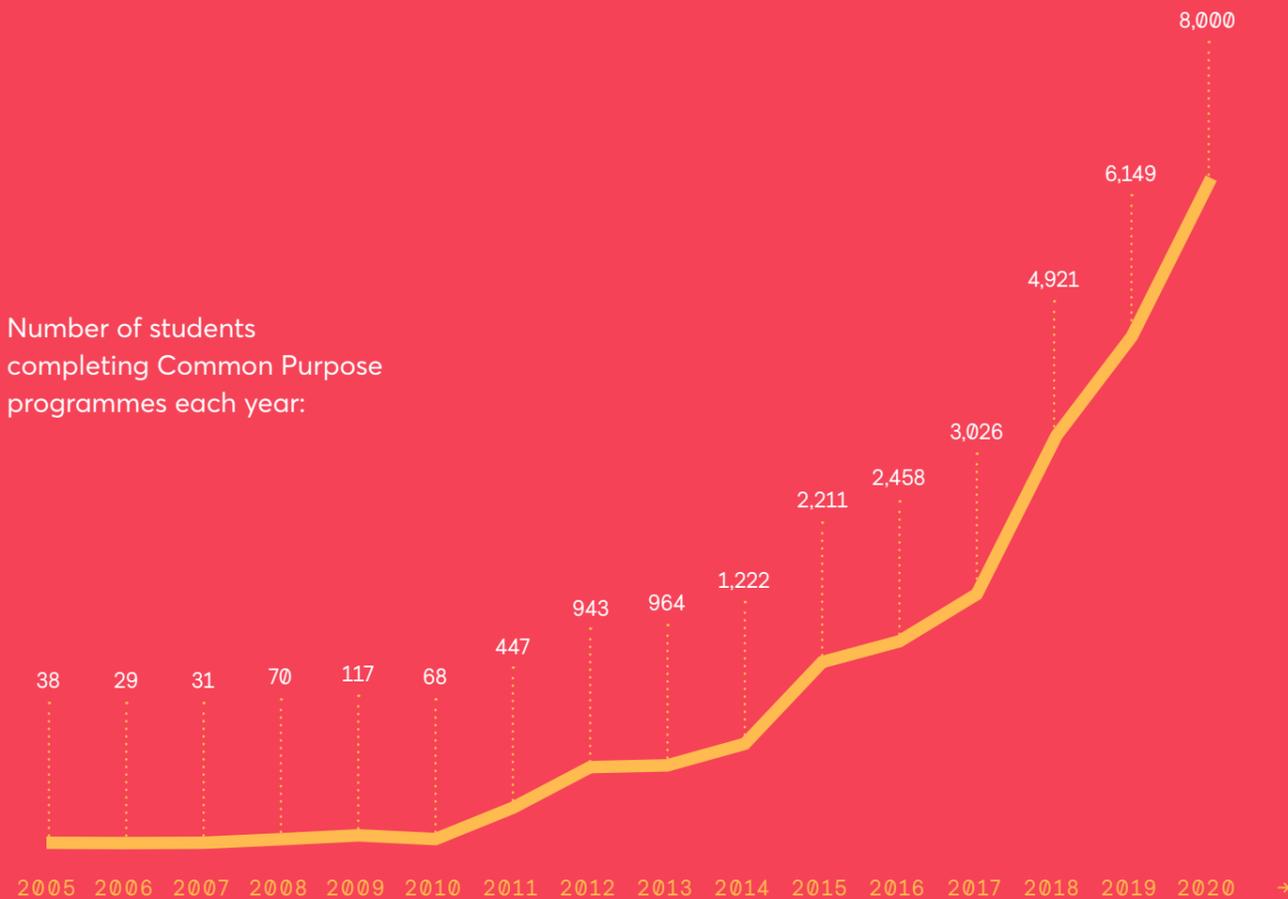
PROFESSOR IAN HOLLIDAY, Vice-President (Teaching and Learning), The University of Hong Kong

"At The University of Hong Kong, we're committed to leadership development and a global experience for both students and staff. The programmes form a core part of our commitment to all our undergraduates undertaking a Mainland China and international learning experience during their time with us. We're now excited to add a student leadership programme to our prestigious new Bachelor of Arts & Sciences degrees, embedding leadership development at the start of students' interdisciplinary learning."



16 years and counting

Number of students completing Common Purpose programmes each year:



481

programmes delivered in over 80 cities across the world

We've partnered with organizations committed to developing the next generation of leaders, such as:

AIESEC	National Youth Council of Singapore
All-China Youth Federation	Universitas 21
Fulbright	Westpac Scholars
Hong Kong Federation of Youth Groups	

150+

universities we have partnered with to develop their students

93%

of students said that the learning and development from their programme helped them progress in their careers

99%

of students rated their Common Purpose experience as valuable

91%

are more confident to have an impact in the world as a result of their Common Purpose programme experience

97%

of students would recommend their programme to another person

Some of the universities we worked with in the past 16 years:

Ateneo de Manila University	University College London
Bangkok University	University of Birmingham
BINUS University	University of Bristol
Harvard University	University of Chicago
IIM Bangalore	University of Glasgow
IIT Bombay	University of Hong Kong
King's College London	University of Leeds
National University of Singapore	University of Nottingham
Newcastle University	University of Technology, Sydney
RMIT University	University of Western Australia
State University of New York	Western Sydney University

Common Purpose programmes expose students to diverse perspectives from senior leaders in the government, business and NGO sectors. This is made possible by our vast network of alumni and supporters. Each year, we work with over 1,000 organizations including:

Accenture	Greater Sydney Commission
Adidas	Hong Kong Monetary Authority
African Development Bank	HSBC Bank
American Express Foundation	Islamic Relief
Amnesty International	NHS
Arup	Nissan Motor Manufacturing (UK) Ltd
ASEAN Foundation	Red Cross
Australian Defence College	Refugee Council
Barclays Bank PLC	Royal Academy of Arts
Barnardo's	Schneider Electric
City of Melbourne	Siemens AG
DBS Bank	The Jane Goodall Institute
Deloitte	Uber
EY	Unilever
Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO)	UN Global Compact – Cities Programme
Google	Westpac
Greater London Authority	WWF

The long-term impact of our programmes



Alumni comment from the 2019
longitudinal impact survey

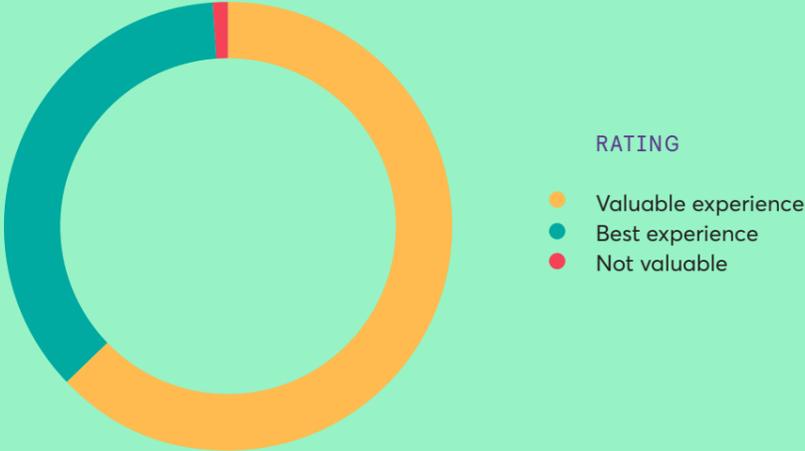
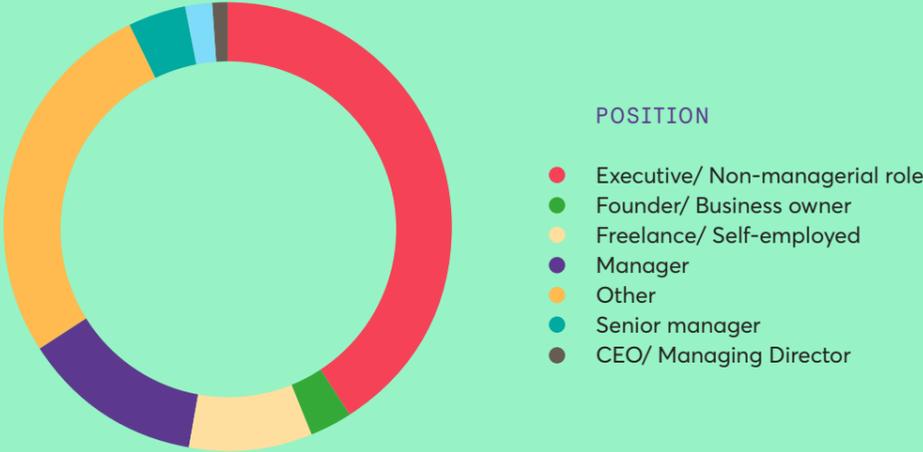
"The programme helped develop me into the leader that I am today. Through the programme, I was able to experience other people's leadership style and take little bits from others from the programme. I now manage 250 staff and lead from the front. My motto, which I took away from the programme, is to not ask someone to do something that you wouldn't do yourself."

We designed a longitudinal impact survey which addressed the three areas of impact we focus on for students – learning impact, impact on careers and impact on society.

ALUMNI RESPONDENT PROFILE:

594 respondents
 Currently based in **52** countries
94 nationalities
 They came from **152** universities

55% of respondents are currently employed. For those employed, these are the positions they hold:



Over 1/3 of this number say their Common Purpose programme was the best leadership development they had at university

Learning impact

We wanted to understand how the skills and competencies they developed from the programme have made them better able to work in diverse teams, solve complex problems and adjust their behaviour in culturally diverse situations. We wanted their assessment on how the programme ranked against other leadership development opportunities they had while at university.

- 95%** say they have been better able to work in diverse teams
- 94%** say they have been better able to adapt to changing situations
- 96%** say they have been able to adjust their behaviour in culturally diverse situations
- 87%** say they have been better able to solve complex problems

"I'm in charge of service improvement and liaise with the clinical team quite often, and we don't always agree with what's best for patients and the service. I've used the Common Purpose experience of working in diverse teams to try and understand their point of view to better improve the service."

"A week from starting this new position, I was asked to meet a Greek client and present our analytical offerings, which they've already heard about. Adjusting the material to an international audience could have been problematic but just taking the time to listen allowed me to really readjust and to present our offerings in an interesting way."

Impact on Careers

We wanted to understand how they used the programme experience to help them get a job after university through using the experience on their CVs and in interviews. We wanted to understand how their employers valued the skills and competencies they had developed on the programme and how it's helped them progress in their careers.

91%

said that the skills and competencies that are developed through Common Purpose programmes are valued by employers

93%

said that the learning and development from the programmes has helped them progress in their careers



How have they used their Common Purpose experience?

70% have included it on their CVs

39% have mentioned it during job interviews

12% have referred to it during appraisals

30% have used it in other ways: facilitating training, cover letters, social media profiles, public speaking

"My position requires me to pitch and sell educational services. We don't work only in the UK market – I have to communicate with people from other parts of the world on a daily basis. One thing that the programme has taught me is to take a slower approach where necessary – to build rapport first, learn as much as you can about the other side, and then think about how you can help and offer a solution."

"The programme I attended has inspired me to further push myself to become as successful and fulfilled as some of the speakers, therefore I decided upon completion to join a professional industry mentoring programme, an international short-term exchange in Shanghai and have completed multiple School of Business leadership roles."

"Learning and working with people from all backgrounds has improved my team building skills and open mindedness. Also, the programme idea that my group created has lingered in my head for some time and has affected the trajectory of my career aspirations."

"I started a new job where I heavily referred to my experiences on the programme in the interview. When I started working, my creative thinking skills, which were enhanced by the programme, have become particularly useful."

"When asked during past job interviews about working with people from different backgrounds, I often refer to my projects or discussions done on the Common Purpose online course. It provided me with the ability to connect with people from all over the world to provide solutions about relevant crises we face in today's society. Simply working with and connecting with people from different walks of life allowed me to greater appreciate the views of others. Especially in the workplace."

Impact on Society

We wanted to understand how the programme and what they learned has helped them to stand up as leaders in their careers or community, what societal impact they are most passionate about and whether they feel equipped to lead on that issue.



66%

say that their experience has helped them take on a leadership role in their job or community

91%

are more confident to have an impact in the world as a result of their Common Purpose programme experience

Q: What do the next generation of leaders care about?

The issues respondents were most passionate about tackling were:

1. Social justice
2. Climate change and sustainability
3. Inclusivity in work and society
4. Education and literacy
5. Women's rights
6. Food security

"As a result of the Common Purpose programme, I founded and managed my university's first Enterprise society, starting with a small team of 5, and growing it to over 20 in the first semester."

"I want to work across cultures and geographies to better enable different countries to deal with emerging challenges. As a leader, I want to enable governments and businesses to better understand these threats and how to work together to combat them."

"I met my career mentor during the Global Leadership Experience programme when she participated as a guest speaker and an advisor of the programme. I believe the relationships I was able to build through the programme are invaluable. I was also inspired by leadership lessons from self-reflection to talent management. I was motivated to not only become a great leader, but also an inspiring one."

Transformational, long-term impact



In the next few pages, we delve deeper into the data behind the long-term impact of our student programmes. In analyzing the data our key finding was that the impact of the programme is long-lasting.

Upon comparing the impact between respondents who participated in the first 10 years with those who did so in the last 5 years, it was clear that respondents were continuing to extract value from their learning and experience over time. The skills they had developed were being used throughout their careers, enabling them to deliver on key capabilities and expectations as their careers progress. This was especially highlighted through the very high number of respondents who said the learning from the programme has helped their career progress.

It's clear that the impact of the key skills and competencies developed – working in diverse teams, adapting to change, solving complex problems, adjusting behaviour in culturally different situations – remains in the long-term, with little variance between the 2005–15 cohort and the 2016 onwards cohort.

The data shows that their employers overwhelmingly valued the skills and competencies they developed on the programme. While there is a slightly lower score for the 2005–15 cohort it does suggest that these are core skills that remain relevant and of value in the workplace.

Unsurprisingly maybe, students who participated in the past 4 years have used the experience on their CV at a greater rate than those from 2005–15 given they are arguably less likely to have as much career experience to draw upon. It is well noted however that in the 2005–2015 cohort nearly half have used the experience in job interviews, more so than the most recent cohort.

As we look to impact on society too, we see that over two-thirds of respondents have been able to stand up as leaders, whether that be in their careers or in the community. In addition, the overwhelming majority are confident they can go on to have an impact on the issues they are passionate about.

Criteria	2005-15	2016 onwards
Programme learning used in CV	61%	73%
Programme learning used in job interviews	44%	38%
Programme learning used in appraisals	12%	11%
Programme learning has helped career progress (includes somewhat helpful and immensely helpful)	91%	93%
Employers value the skills and competencies gained (includes somewhat valuable and very valuable)	87%	93%
Been better able to work in diverse teams	92%	95%
Been better able to adapt to changing situations	95%	94%
Been better able to solve complex problems	87%	88%
Been able to adjust your behaviour in culturally diverse situations	92%	96%
Common Purpose experience was the best and/or most valuable experience compared to other leadership development opportunities at university (includes best experience and valuable experience)	99%	99%
Common Purpose programmes gave you more confidence to make an impact in the world	92%	91%
Common Purpose programme experience has helped you to take on a leadership role in your job/community/life	71%	66%
Stayed in contact with any of your peers from your Common Purpose programme (includes kept in touch with 4 or more and kept in touch with between 1-3)	53%	82%

"Thanks to the programme, I was confident enough to take on a role as a President of a political party during both of my degrees, at two different universities and ended up sitting on the Federal Council of Canada."

"I am already a Trustee for a local charity; however since the course I have taken a more active role and been more confident to make suggestions and drive change. Prior to this, being more junior was a (mental) barrier that often stopped me from speaking up or thinking my ideas would be taken seriously."

"The leadership experience taught me that even though I was not in a managerial position, I could still make a difference in the company. By collaborating with my boss, we implemented a clear and accessible emergency plan to help colleagues who suffered from epilepsy. As far as I am aware, this plan is still in place and used today."



Dalisu's Story

How a student leadership programme shaped the trajectory of my career

Dalisu Jwara is a graduate from the University of Cape Town in South Africa. As a student, he attended a Common Purpose student programme, Global Leader Experience, delivered in Glasgow and Edinburgh. Dalisu credits his Common Purpose programme experience with helping him develop skills which eventually led to being recruited by a top employer.

The path I laid out for myself was completely transformed.

When I graduated university, I thought that I was going to be an investment banker. I was wrong about that. A conversation with a CEO during a Common Purpose programme in 2015 changed the course of my career.

Common Purpose has changed the trajectory of my life, and it could do the same for other students.

The power of diversity

The programme brought together different students from around the world. Speakers and business leaders had the chance to see students for who they really were and in return we were able to see the people behind the brand and see them for who they were and the values they represent.

The programme laid the grounds for its participants to have meaningful and authentic interactions.

How can students stand out when they enter the workforce?

The truth is you leave university with a degree but there's little that differentiates you from other students who have done the exact same thing and learned the same ideas in the classroom.

It's experiences from programmes such as the Common Purpose student programme that give you the edge. It immerses students in a city to tackle a global challenge. As a result, this gives students the opportunity to grow their CQ, adapt and thrive in a new environment and build meaningful connections.

During the programme in Glasgow, I was fortunate enough to be in the final round of individuals who were presenting solutions to His Royal Highness The Prince of Wales. How many university students have been given the opportunity to experience that? How many can include that in their resumes or refer to that experience in an interview?

Meeting the CEO of Weir Group

I was in one of the group sessions during the programme when one man struck up a conversation with me. He asked my opinion about different topics and I answered as truthfully and candidly as I could. The gentleman I was talking to turned out to be the CEO of Weir Group. After our chat, he told me that the company would like to get to know me and chat with me more in the future.

Coming back home, I was about to join the investment banking world when I made a decision to contact Weir Group to see what opportunities there were for me. In the end, I went through three different rounds of interviews with a mix of people to get a position in the company.

The path I laid out for myself was completely transformed. On a cold morning thousands of miles from home, I started the first day of my first job in Glasgow for one of the top companies in the industry. This wouldn't have happened if I didn't join that Common Purpose programme.

At Weir, I was constantly working with people from across the globe. As a strategy and corporate development analyst, my work usually involved cross collaborations across teams and sectors. I had to quickly learn how to adjust to being in a new environment and working with a diverse group. Being able to navigate those spaces while adding value to a project and the organization required Cultural Intelligence. I needed to continue to develop my CQ in order to be able to understand the nuances that exist between each interaction.

The importance of being agile in my career

It's been over eight years since I completed my first Common Purpose programme yet the values and skills I've gained have stayed with me through the years. Agility and resilience, in particular, were crucial as I moved from one role to another.

I went through a period where I took on a role that I wasn't passionate about. Being agile meant that instead of resisting, I recognized that there was a lot that I could learn from that role. It may not be what I wanted at that time but because I chose to adapt to this new environment, I gained the skills that come from international experience and cultivated meaningful working relationships.

These days, employers from all sectors look for new graduates who are not just skilled in their jobs but who are also able to demonstrate core skills that are needed in the world today. That's what a Common Purpose student programme gives you. It immerses students in a city, connect them with senior leaders and explore relevant issues that are happening on the ground. As a result, they develop the skills required to understand and navigate complex and diverse environments.

Common Purpose, alongside remarkable mentors and individuals in my life, has made me a better person.

Balance of impact across women and men



While we see the higher proportion of women on our programmes being reflected in the respondents – 59.6% – the learning impact is broadly balanced across women and men.

Our programmes are designed to deliver the skills and competencies outcomes for all participants and so we aren't surprised to see little variance across women and men. Participants view the impact of the skills and competencies developed equally in their careers, career progression and how employers view them.

There are however three notable variations to this. Women respondents responded higher on:

- using the programme experience in interviews – 41% vs 34%
- enabling them to take on a leadership role in their career or community – 70% vs 61%
- staying in contact with their peers – 80% vs 71%

It is interesting to note here that the programme experience specifically supports their transition from university into employment, their perception of their ability to stand up as leaders and provides a network of peers they continue to connect with and value.

Of those that are women:

70% said that the programme helped them take on a leadership role
41% said they used the learning in job interviews
94% said the programme has helped their career progress

Criteria	Women	Men
Programme learning used in CV	71%	69%
Programme learning used in job interviews	41%	34%
Programme learning used in appraisals	9%	16%
Programme learning has helped career progress (includes somewhat helpful and immensely helpful)	94%	90%
Employers value the skills and competencies gained (includes somewhat valuable and very valuable)	94%	88%
Been better able to work in diverse teams	95%	93%
Been better able to adapt to changing situations	95%	93%
Been better able to solve complex problems	87%	87%
Been able to adjust your behaviour in culturally diverse situations	96%	95%
Common Purpose experience was the best and/or most valuable experience compared to other leadership development opportunities at university (includes best experience and valuable experience)	99%	98%
Common Purpose programmes gave you more confidence to make an impact in the world	91%	91%
Common Purpose programme experience has helped you to take on a leadership role in your job/community/life	70%	61%
Stayed in contact with any of your peers from your Common Purpose programme (includes kept in touch with 4 or more and kept in touch with between 1-3)	80%	71%

Survey comments from women:

"I started a leadership programme in my university and now work to deliver programmes for universities around the world."

"I am a director of an NGO and I recently became a member of an environmental group. I am more confident because of Common Purpose."

"It helped me gain the courage to go full-time self-employed."

* A segment of respondents did identify as non-binary; however, this sample wasn't large enough to make statistically significant comparisons.

Building meaningful connections



Our programmes are designed to bring together students from diverse backgrounds to build connections and networks.

We see through the responses that students from multiple nationalities maintain the connections, friendships and networks they made on the programme at a higher level than those from being of one nationality – 80% vs 73%

Many of our partner universities are looking to help foster connections and drive integration between diverse student communities. Our data strongly suggests that students from diverse backgrounds benefit more from the diverse student cohorts we convene and continue to nurture and extract value from these meaningful connections long into their careers and futures.

It's also widely reported that future employability is an important driver for students who study abroad. While we can't assume all students from multiple nationalities are international students, it is notable that students with multiple nationalities used the experience in job interviews at a higher rate – 44% vs 35%.

Of those that have multiple nationalities:

91% are more confident that they can have an impact as a result of their Common Purpose experience

80% have stayed in touch with other participants from their programme

100% said that their Common Purpose programme had been a valuable leadership learning experience at university

Criteria	Multiple	Single
Programme learning used in CV	70%	70%
Programme learning used in job interviews	44%	35%
Programme learning used in appraisals	14%	10%
Programme learning has helped career progress (includes somewhat helpful and immensely helpful)	90%	94%
Employers value the skills and competencies gained (includes somewhat valuable and very valuable)	94%	90%
Been better able to work in diverse teams	96%	94%
Been better able to adapt to changing situations	96%	93%
Been better able to solve complex problems	89%	87%
Been able to adjust your behaviour in culturally diverse situations	95%	96%
Common Purpose experience was the best and/or most valuable experience compared to other leadership development opportunities at university (includes best experience and valuable experience)	100%	98%
Common Purpose programmes gave you more confidence to make an impact in the world	91%	91%
Common Purpose programme experience has helped you to take on a leadership role in your job/community/life	69%	65%
Stayed in contact with any of your peers from your Common Purpose programme (includes kept in touch with 4 or more and kept in touch with between 1-3)	80%	73%

"Since the Common Purpose event, I have been more involved in different type of groups where I have made many new friends. One such place is the Realfoods Cafe at RMIT where I volunteer. We have staff and volunteers from across the continents. It used to be difficult for me to communicate with strangers previously. But now I can communicate easily, understand them better and it has made me more social."

"The founders of organizations which I have visited have given me so much inspiration in terms of their leadership stories and life philosophies. The participants I met in the same cohort all have very unique charisma and leadership style. Some of them have become my very best friends."

Sarah's Story

Building confidence and meaningful connections that led to being hired at Morgan Stanley

Sarah Houston is an International Tax Utility Associate at Morgan Stanley working in the Withholding Tax reconciliation & controls area. She lives in Glasgow, Scotland and in her free time, she volunteers and delivers food packages for a local refugee centre.



I was hired by Morgan Stanley right after I graduated university. I wouldn't have been able to achieve that without the support of industry leaders turned mentors and being given the opportunities to gain real-world leadership insights that helped give me confidence during interviews. Through the Common Purpose students programme and through my university, I was given unique opportunities to create connections with senior leaders. More importantly, the connections turned into something more meaningful because these leaders became my mentors.

Mentorship through connections

My university had a networking and mentorship programme that I signed up for. My mentor helped me with preparations for future interviews. Her job required her to conduct interviews on a regular basis so the tips and insights she shared were invaluable. My mentor's support gave me the confidence in myself and my abilities. As a result, when I went into the interview with Morgan Stanley, I felt prepared and confident.

Around the same time I went on the leadership programme with Common Purpose where I connected with someone from Morgan Stanley.

During the course of the programme, we met various senior leaders through immersions and talks to explore leadership from different angles. One of those visits was with Morgan Stanley. After the visit, I reached out to the person who ran the immersion at Morgan Stanley. He offered to go over my CV and gave me suggestions on what to improve. Just like that, I gained another mentor from joining the programme.

Gaining confidence through real life experiences

Through different exercises and activities, Common Purpose's Future Leader Experiences programme allowed me to reflect on my personal perspectives of what makes a leader and what type of leader I want to be.

The concept of Core and Flex, in particular, had such a big impact on me. It seems a simple idea but it allowed me to see myself through new eyes – identify what my core values are and what I won't flex on. It opened my eyes to what it is that I really want to do in my career and life.

During my interview at Morgan Stanley, most of the questions asked revolved around leadership, future career plans and workplace. Because I was part of the programme, I was able to draw insights from it to answer the questions confidently and effectively. I was able to talk about cultural awareness and intelligence, different leadership styles and essential leadership skills.

These are topics that are relevant to the workplace but a student might not be aware of them if they don't take advantage of opportunities that immerse them in the real world.

Real leadership experience, real hiring possibilities

University life doesn't always prepare you for the real world. What students need are real-world connections that give them real-world values and insights. When you're in the university bubble, it's difficult for students to gain access to leaders in the industry.

The Future Leader Experiences programme allowed students, like me, to meet leaders we normally would not meet and gain insights we normally would not gain. I believe that the mentorship and connection opportunities from programmes like this are absolutely essential for students. Ultimately, the experiences and insights gained from it make them more hireable for recruiters.

Finding mentors, building connections and gaining leadership experience helped me get hired by a multinational financial services company.

Through the Common Purpose students programme and through my university, I was given unique opportunities to create connections with senior leaders. More importantly, the connections turned into something more meaningful because these leaders became my mentors.

Key findings from this survey

1.

Programme experience increased employability

The learning and development from the programmes has helped the respondents progress in their careers. It is clear that they used their programme experience to help them get a job after university through using the experience on their CVs and in interviews.

2.

Application of programme learning throughout their career

The skills the respondents had developed during the programme were being used throughout their careers, enabling them to deliver on key capabilities and expectations as their careers progress. In addition, the data shows that their employers overwhelmingly valued the skills and competencies they developed on the programme.

3.

Balance of impact across women and men

The data shows that there is little variance to the learning impact across women and men. It is apparent that the programmes are able to deliver the skills and competencies outcomes for all participants.

4.

Building meaningful connections and networks

Our data strongly suggests that respondents from diverse backgrounds benefit more from the diverse student cohorts we convene. They continue to nurture and extract value from these meaningful connections long into their careers and futures.

SANJEEV GUPTA, Executive Director – Financial Services, Africa Finance Corporation & Chair, Common Purpose Student Experiences

“We are delighted that students are able to use the learning, skills and networks from our programmes to further their employability, career progression and ability to have an impact in society. Today’s world is remarkably fluid and disrupted, the next generation of inclusive leaders we see coming through our programmes give us great belief that we can tackle the complex problems we face in our organizations and society.”

