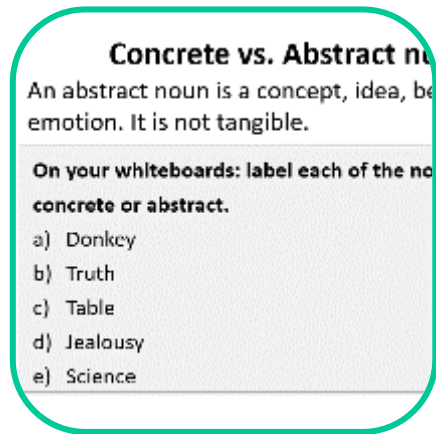# University-led tutoring
South-West Social Mobility Commission

July 2025

The Tutoring Model: Overview

- Universities are ideally placed to deliver high quality sustainable, scalable, low-cost tutoring service with schools

- Responds to widening education divide in post pandemic era, focusing on foundational skills for pupils

- Tutoring – a good education bet

- Vision: regional & national tutoring service embedded in university and school system.

University-led tutoring is ...

A fully-specified course

+

Delivered in school over 9 weeks by undergrad tutors as part of their degree programme

Summary:

University-led tutoring provides free, high quality, sustainable tutoring delivered by undergrads to pupils in schools

1. Tutoring for Year 8s with a social mobility focus

Selected by teachers, with a focus on those from under-resourced backgrounds

2. University students deliver the tutoring

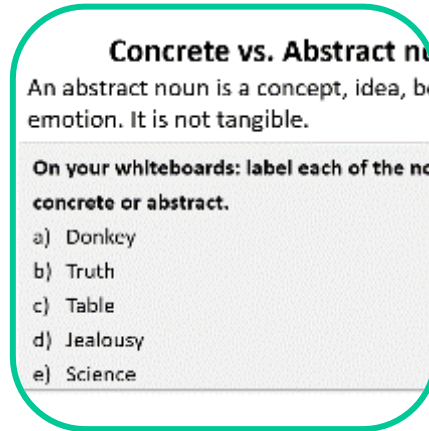Using a fully specified 9-week course and tutor training

3. Schools get the tutoring free of charge

Which takes place weekly in person in schools, with a teacher overseeing the tutoring

4. Two delivery routes: credit-bearing module placement* and paid ambassadors

*Our gold standard version ensures a sustainable, high-quality experience for students and pupils due to added enrichment hours, at low cost to unis

'Win win win' model

Concrete vs. Abstract n[...]

An abstract noun is a concept, idea, b[...] emotion. It is not tangible.

On your whiteboards: label each of the n[...] concrete or abstract.
a) Donkey
b) Truth
c) Table
d) Jealousy
e) Science

Supports disadvantaged pupils: one of the few interventions known to raise attainment

High quality: fully specified content & pedagogy reduces tutor variability

Scalable: created as a free resource for any partner interested in delivery

High quality: reduces likelihood of tutor drop-out, lateness or absence

Benefits students: student tutors gain degree credits & employability skills
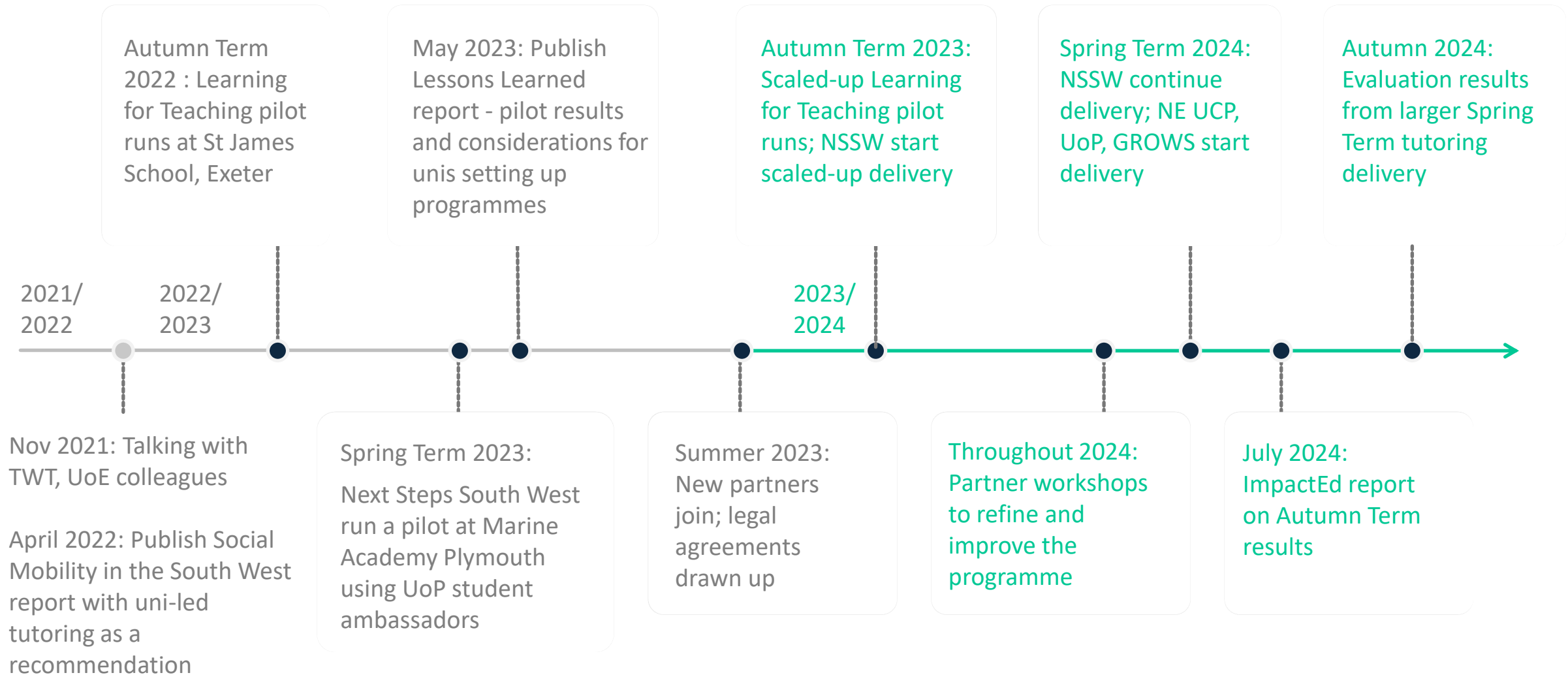
Supports teacher pipeline: boosting teacher recruitment in an area

Sustainable: provided free to pupils & schools, at relatively low cost to unis

Aids Social Mobility

- **Accessible to all students as it's delivered through the curriculum** - not limited to those who can afford unpaid extracurricular volunteering

- **Especially valuable for students with low incomes, part-time jobs, or caring responsibilities**, who may otherwise be excluded from traditional volunteering

- **Builds employability skills** (e.g. communication, teamwork, leadership) in a structured, supported environment

- Tutoring and mentoring models can also **improve educational outcomes for primary and secondary school pupils**, supporting wider social equity

Timeline: The model was developed with an Exeter head teacher who created the course and UoE SoE colleagues

Autumn Term 2022 : Learning for Teaching pilot runs at St James School, Exeter

May 2023: Publish Lessons Learned report - pilot results and considerations for unis setting up programmes

Autumn Term 2023: Scaled-up Learning for Teaching pilot runs; NSSW start scaled-up delivery

Spring Term 2024: NSSW continue delivery; NE UCP, UoP, GROWS start delivery

Autumn 2024: Evaluation results from larger Spring Term tutoring delivery

2021/ 2022

2022/ 2023

2023/ 2024

Nov 2021: Talking with TWT, UoE colleagues

April 2022: Publish Social Mobility in the South West report with uni-led tutoring as a recommendation

Spring Term 2023:

Next Steps South West run a pilot at Marine Academy Plymouth using UoP student ambassadors

Summer 2023: New partners join; legal agreements drawn up

Throughout 2024: Partner workshops to refine and improve the programme

July 2024: ImpactEd report on Autumn Term results

We have transformed the education of undergraduates and had an impact on local communities

83%

100%

Exploring a teaching career- 83.3% of tutors were motivated to see whether they would enjoy teaching, with the majority feeling this motivation was "totally fulfilled."

Were motivated to contributed to their local communities— 100% of tutors selected this motivation, with 70.6% reporting it as "totally fulfilled."

"I chose Learning for Teaching to discover more about teaching for a future career. The tutoring enhances my CV and provides me with an interesting experience to talk about passionately at interviews."

The skills most rated as being gained as a result of the programme were **interpersonal skills**, **communication skills**, and **human-only skills**. Other key areas of growth included **resilience** and **leadership**.

We have been trialling the model at the University of Exeter and with SW and NE partners

350+

Pupils reached in 2023/24 through our scale-up with Uni Connect partners in the SW & NE. Partnership continuing in 2024/25.

33%

Improvement in pupils' writing – independent evaluation by ImpactEd.
+1 impact report due in Summer 2025.

"I chose Learning for Teaching to discover more about teaching for a future career. The tutoring enhances my CV and provides me with an interesting experience to talk about passionately at interviews."

Our vision is for a national university–led tutoring service

There are two key elements to the model

1 Fully specified course and tutor training

2 Embedded in the curriculum: accredited module placement option

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The offer:

- Fully specified course & tutor training

- Toolkit for embedding the model

- Additional resources including videos for parents/carers and schools

- Larger programme and process evaluation coordinated by UoE

- Advice and support from Beth and the team

What is Service/ Community Learning?

A working definition:

A teaching and learning approach where students engage in a **meaningful service with their community** whilst **gaining credits** towards their degree.

This means that it is **mutually beneficial** for both students and the communities involved.

"Win-win-win" model

Students
Gain exposure to their community, employability skills and academic credit

Community
Benefit from the support students offer, relationships and links are forged, knowledge exchange

Universities
Fulfil civic responsibility, give equitable opportunities to students

We set up the tutoring placement and embedded it into an existing accredited module at the University

Accredited module

- Existing undergraduate option module run by School of Education
- Open to all 2nd, 3rd and 4th year undergrads studying any subject
- 30 credits

Compulsory placement

- 50 hours placement time
- Three options to choose from
- Assessed reflective log forms 10% of module grade

Tutoring placement

- 10 hours tutor training (5 hrs video content; 5 hrs practice/other training e.g. school safeguarding)
- 9 hours tutoring preparation (1 hr/wk)
- 13.5 hours classroom observation (1.5 hrs/wk)
- 9 hours tutoring (1 hr/wk)
- 9 hours reflective log (1 hr/wk)

Self-arranged school placement

2-week placement during summer holidays

Virtual placement

Online placement – COVID option

Mini-graduation event

Expansion & development

Tutoring expansion & development:

Strand 1	Strand 2	Strand 3	Strand 4	Strand 5
Curriculum-embedding at other universities	**Toolkit for curriculum-embedding**	**Primary reading strand**	**Secondary 'reading for writing' strand**	**Maths programme**
• Working with interested university partners to support them to offer a tutoring placement for students	• Providing support to embed tutoring into the curriculum at other HEIs to support wider embedding of uni-led tutoring	• Adapting the programme for KS2 for September 2025 • Reading/literacy focus, based on UoE research	• Developing and beginning to deliver a 'reading for writing' programme for KS3/4 intervention	• Possible focus on fractions/division, maths anxiety • Long term research project to improve regional and national outcomes

'Win win win' model

2023/24: full evaluation report to be published August 2025

Additional interest and onboarding:
- X2 UCPs for delivery in 2025/26
- X2 HEIs for delivery in 2026/27, with a further 2 interested

Service learning paper and recommendations:
- Based on a2i research

Programme expansion and development
- X2 new reading programmes for 2025/26 delivery (primary & secondary)
- Developing the existing programme to ensure that it is as appealing and useful as possible

University of Exeter

Thank you.