

This Summer I participated in a Q-Step internship as a Data analyst for my host organisation, The Northern Powerhouse Partnership. NPP is a business-led think tank representing the voices of business and civic leaders across the north of England.



The photo above is of NPP's Net Zero Report launch as forgemasters in Sheffield. It was an great opportunity to meet political leaders such as Oliver Coppard (Mayor of South Yorkshire) and Anne Handley. The Net Zero report was written prior to my internship, but I was able to help work the event.

NPP collaborates with the public and private sectors to advocate for increased investment and broader devolution throughout the north.

Although originally set out as an economic project, NPP's ambition of transforming the northern economy is shared by companies, mayors, local politicians, and universities rather than being a central government economic policy. During my 8 weeks at NPP, I worked on a research project centred around

further education. Although we did not have a clear vision of what we were looking to discover, this project was primarily data-driven, in which we allowed the data to guide us. This included searching data playgrounds, The OECD data sets, and most frequently the government website. The Data Set I looked into most was the enrollment rates across regions for further education. This included specifics like whether students were going into apprenticeships, vocational courses, or A-Levels and B-TECs. Other Variables included whether these students were of disadvantaged/ NON-disadvantaged status, Sex, ethnicity, etc.

Number of pupils completing GCSEs for 16-18 local authority level destinations for 16-18 Disadvantaged, Disadvantaged, Number of pupils and State funded mainstream schools

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
North East	11,020	10,700	10,500	10,300	10,100	9,900	9,700
North West	13,000	12,800	12,600	12,400	12,200	12,000	11,800
Yorkshire and the Humber	15,000	14,800	14,600	14,400	14,200	14,000	13,800
East Midlands	12,000	11,800	11,600	11,400	11,200	11,000	10,800
East of England	10,000	9,800	9,600	9,400	9,200	9,000	8,800
London	18,000	17,800	17,600	17,400	17,200	17,000	16,800
South East	14,000	13,800	13,600	13,400	13,200	13,000	12,800
South West	12,000	11,800	11,600	11,400	11,200	11,000	10,800
Total	86,000	85,000	84,000	83,000	82,000	81,000	80,000

Number of pupils completing GCSEs for 16-18 local authority level destinations for 16-18 Disadvantaged, Not disadvantaged, Number of pupils and State funded mainstream schools

Year	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
North East	10,000	9,800	9,600	9,400	9,200	9,000	8,800
North West	12,000	11,800	11,600	11,400	11,200	11,000	10,800
Yorkshire and the Humber	14,000	13,800	13,600	13,400	13,200	13,000	12,800
East Midlands	11,000	10,800	10,600	10,400	10,200	10,000	9,800
East of England	9,000	8,800	8,600	8,400	8,200	8,000	7,800
London	16,000	15,800	15,600	15,400	15,200	15,000	14,800
South East	13,000	12,800	12,600	12,400	12,200	12,000	11,800
South West	11,000	10,800	10,600	10,400	10,200	10,000	9,800
Total	82,000	81,000	80,000	79,000	78,000	77,000	76,000



As NPP operates across the north, they have a primarily work-from-home structure, with monthly in-office meetings in any of NPP's offices. So although many of my days working looked like the image to the left, in which I would take my laptop and work from my local park, some of them also included visiting office buildings like Arcadis in Manchester and Addleshaw Goddard in Leeds.

Adapting from university to 9-5 life was tricky but I found the structure helped



me manage my mental health in a positive way. As a history and politics student, raised in Bradford, this work is not only intellectually motivating but also personal.

Through my Q-Step experience, I've learned that although data research probably isn't the career for me, I've found a plethora of careers during my internship. After questioning my colleagues, I think I would thrive in a communications role, such as public affairs/ public relations in the political sphere. Overall, I had a lovely summer working on such a worthy cause and I feel very grateful to have worked with NPP on their further education report.

