



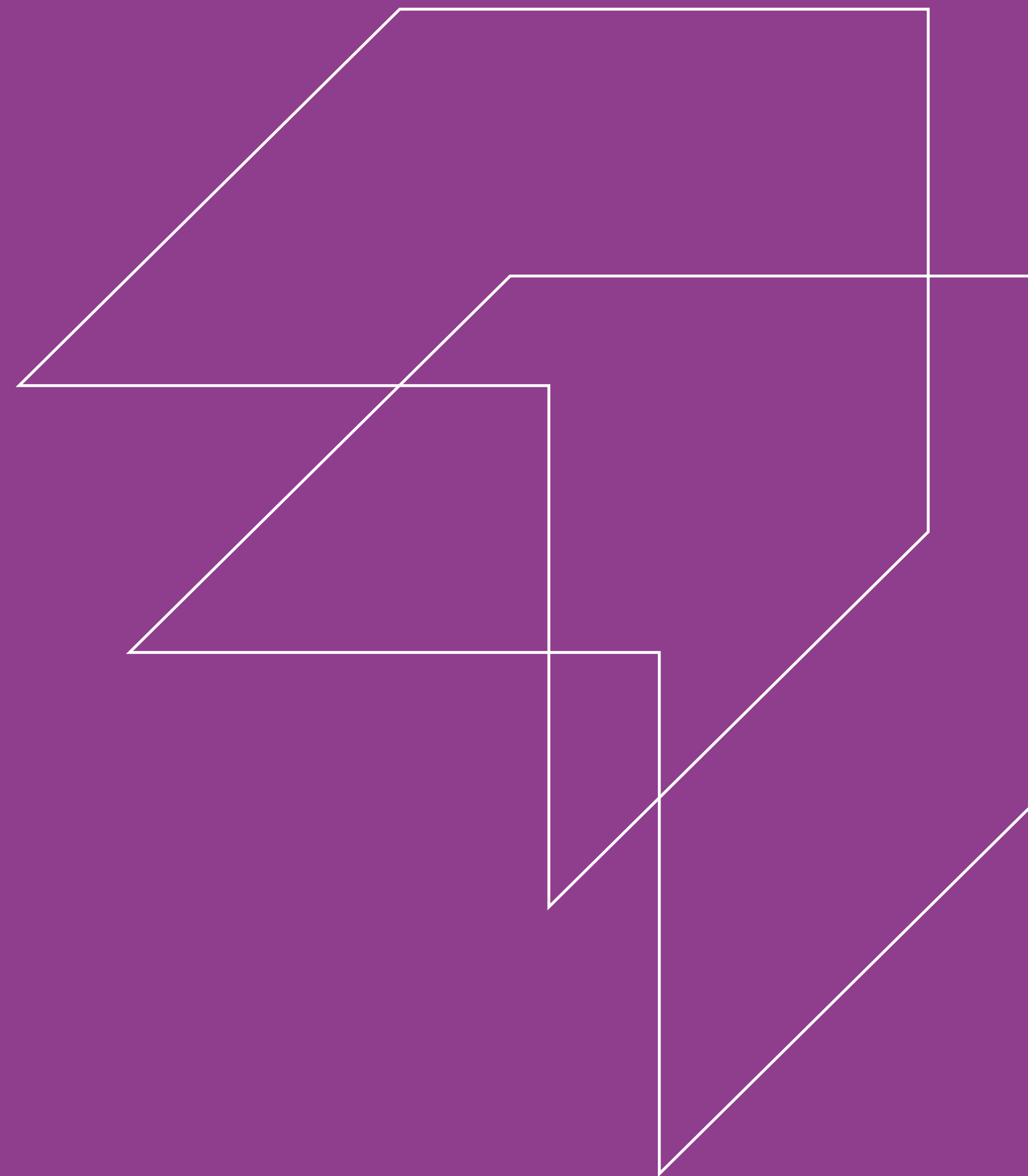
Early Connect: North East Next steps for schools and colleges

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Early Connect: North East

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1. Welcome and introduction

Mark Fox, North East CA

Part 2: What is Early Connect?

A pilot being delivered in partnership between the Department for Education (DfE) and UCAS.

Their aim is to support more young people onto apprenticeships and make it easier for employers to find apprentices.

To date a variety of employers have pledged over **5,000 apprenticeship vacancies** in the three regions.

Delivered in partnership between



Department
for Education

UCAS

Early Connect: CPD

Module 1: Apprenticeship basics

Join this workshop to learn the essentials of apprenticeships. From the different levels and entry requirements, to salary expectations and bursaries, this workshop will provide delegates with a succinct overview of everything you need to know to get started.

Option 1: Thursday 18 January, 12:00 -13:00

Option 2: Tuesday 23 January, 15:30 -16:30

Option 3: Wednesday 31 January, 12:00 - 13:00

Module 2: Understanding career pathways

Apprenticeships are increasing in popularity, with many young people seeking opportunities to start their careers through an in-work route. This workshop will explore the different levels of apprenticeships and example career paths for different roles.

Option 1: Wednesday 14 February, 12:30 -13:30

Option 2: Monday 19 February, 15:30 -16:30

Module 4: Work based competence

How do we help our students to prepare for the expectations of the workplace? In this workshop we will consider how we can help young people to prepare for the transition from school to workplace, what to expect and how to ask for help.

Option 1: Tuesday 12 March, 12:30 -13:30

Option 2: Tuesday 19 March, 15:30 -16:30

Module 3: Search, apply and succeed

Join this workshop for a practical demonstration in how to search and apply for apprenticeships. We will look at typical apprenticeship application processes and how students and their families can be supported to prepare for these opportunities.

Option 1: Wednesday 28 February, 12:30 -13:30

Option 2: Monday 4 March, 15:30 -16:30

Sign-ups to date

LA	Northumberland	North Tyneside	Newcastle	Gateshead	Sunderland	South Tyneside	County Durham
School/College	19	11	17	10	8	4	17
SUs	14 (74%)	8 (73%)	10 (59%)	7 (70%)	4 (50%)	4 (100%)	15 (88%)

2. The strategic importance of Early Connect

Eve Oakley (DfE)

Strategic Importance of Early Connect

- It is a government priority to ensure more young people (aged 16-24) access good quality training with opportunities for progression. The Apprenticeships Programme has an ambition to increase starts to pre-pandemic levels (2018/19), with a focus on SMEs and young people.
- Early Connect is a key part of the Apprenticeships Young People Strategy, approved by ministers, to increase the number of starts by young people and their % of overall starts by:
 - Supporting more young people to successfully apply for apprenticeships.
 - Ensuring employers are positive about recruiting young apprentices and see the benefits.
 - Helping providers and employers to advertise quality apprenticeships vacancies on FAA and to ensure their recruitment processes are accessible to young people.
- Early Connect focuses on 18-year-old students. We know that 29% move into employment without training or end up NEET, 36% move into HE and 18% into FE: some of these will embark on low value courses and there is scope to divert these onto apprenticeships.

NE starts ambition and school engagement

- In 2022/23 the North East achieved 1404 Starts (6.8% population).
- To increase starts to pre pandemic levels (2018/19) would mean 1,962 starts (8.9% population).
- We have agreed a NE ambition of 15% increase above baseline (2022-23): 211 starts (total starts 1,615).
- Live vacancies from engaged Early Connect employers in NE: 1037 (starts from July 2024 onwards).

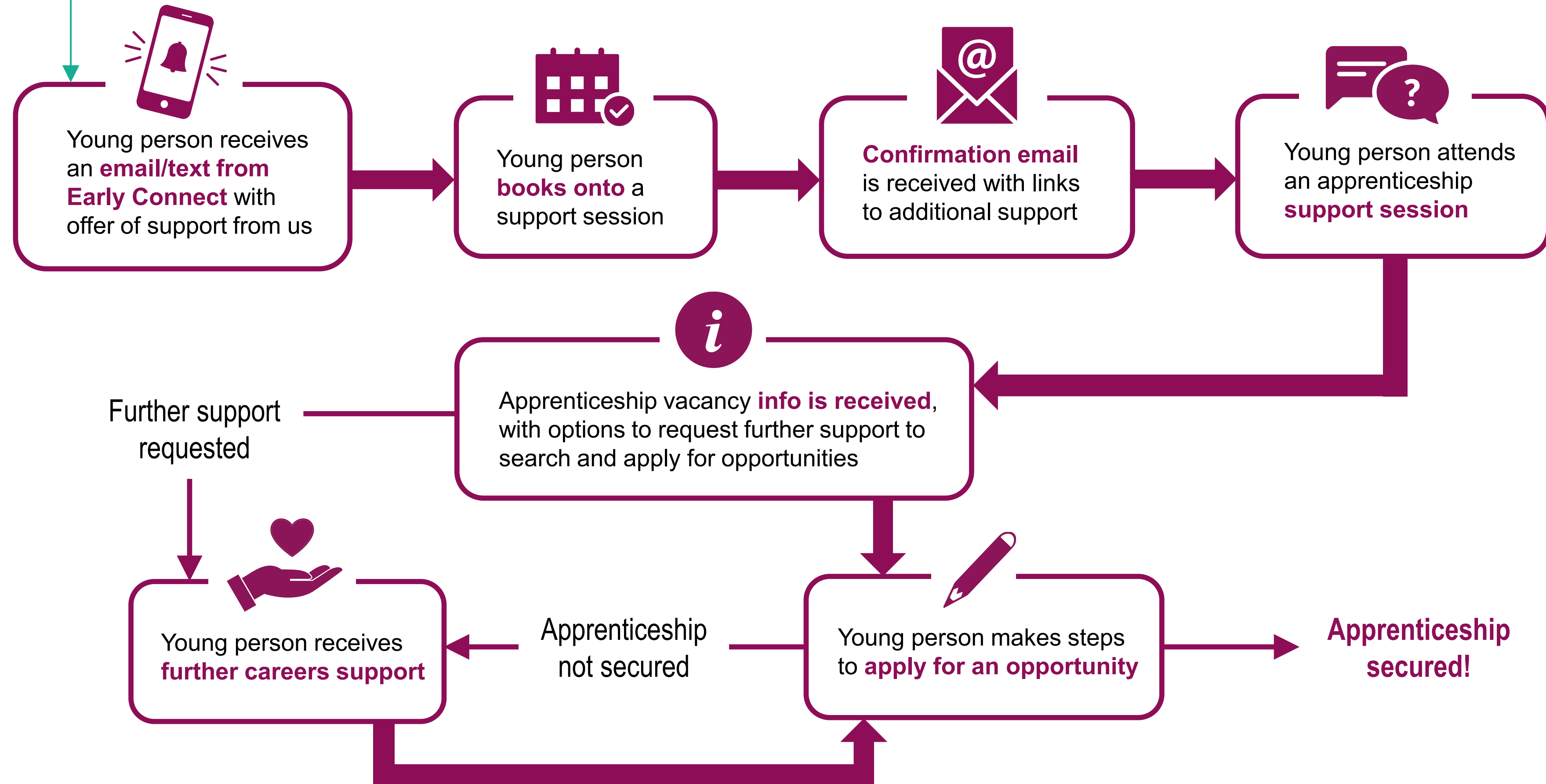
We are committed to supporting NE schools to participate:

- 88 schools and colleges in NE signed up to Early Connect pilot so far.
- Dedicated web page published with resources: <https://www.ucas.com/early-connect>
- We are running a series of live CPD sessions to support school staff.

3. The learner journey

Jo Gonzalez (Education Development Trust)

Young person logs into UCAS site and **signs up to smart alerts** for apprenticeship info and support



4. Myth Busters

Jo Gonzalez (Education Development Trust)

Myth Busters...engagement

It's only worth registering on the UCAS Hub for higher or degree level apprenticeships

No it's not! Vacancies start at level 2 (equivalent to GCSEs grade 4)

Early Connect is for mainstream schools not SEND schools

No it's not! It's for all 18 year olds interested in apprenticeships

It will cost money to register and there'll only be 5 choices

No it doesn't and no there aren't! There's no cost and no limit

Applications will still need personal statements and references

No they won't! This is a different system with minimal admin

Students will end up being registered on 2 sites if they are already on the FAA site

No they won't! UCAS pulls in vacancies from Find an Apprenticeship

A student can also twintrack their application!

In other words, they can apply to university and be registered for apprenticeships.

But they will need to make sure their preferences are updated and the 'smart alerts' box ticked.

5. What about current Year 12?

Exclusive offer for institutions who request it

To start preparing your Year 12 students for the 2025 UCAS cycle – which now includes apprenticeship applications – you can request bespoke presentations covering:

- 1) An apprenticeship assembly co-delivered with a young apprentice
- 2) How to find and apply for an apprenticeship
- 3) What are employers looking for?
- 4) How to prepare for an interview

6. Q&A

7. Important links

Important links

[Sign up for Early Connect – schools and colleges](#)

[Sign up for Early Connect – students](#)

[CPD modules for schools and colleges](#)

[Explore apprenticeships on the UCAS website](#)

[Resources:](#)

- Powerpoints for students, parents/carers and staff
- Apprenticeship Development Framework
- Student registration video

[Radio 1: Getting ahead with apprenticeships, with Katie Thistleton | Apprenticeships, 16-18 Choices | UCAS](#)

[Apprenticeship Guide 2024](#)

Thank you
