

PROGRAMMES UPDATE

We kicked off our 2019-20 programme year with six new members of staff joining us to help deliver our programmes to 239 schools across the UK, in London, Manchester, the West Midlands, Bristol, and Liverpool.



We continued our Accelerate Programme in 39 schools, an intervention programme designed to help students with behavioural, social, or academic challenges re-engage in education and build communication skills.

Additionally, we have expanded our Debate Mate Plus (DM+) programme to 13 schools in London. DM+ is an extension of the Core Programme which is aimed at students in years 11 and up, focusing on higher education and employability.

We are currently running a pilot of the Blended Programme in Leeds and Nottingham this year, which combines mentoring and the use of our [online platform](#) to deliver weekly sessions.

A highlight of this year was our Urban Debate League (UDL) Round 1 and 2 in January and February, which took place at schools across the country. Students passionately and insightfully debated motions such as implementing an 8 PM curfew for under 16s and banning zoos. In Round 2, students were challenged to debating a prepared motion, where they were able to complete research in advance. The secondary motion was 'This House believes that billionaires should not exist', and students offered extremely critical and considered arguments for both sides.

We also hosted a round of the Accelerate UDL at the University of East London and DM+ UDL rounds at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Garden Halls, all of which were incredibly inspiring experiences for Debate Mate students.

We engaged nearly 4,000 students in total in the first round of the UDL, and close to 4000 students in our sessions each week. Due to the coronavirus outbreak, we unfortunately had to cancel some of our UDL Round 2 competitions. Students affected by this still qualify to take part in the final event. We have announced our UDL finalists for both primary and secondary schools nationally on our website, which can be accessed [here](#). We hope to be able to confirm a date and venue for our finals soon!