

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE ACCESS TO UWE BRISTOL SUMMER SCHOOL FOR CONTEXTUAL OFFER HOLDERS

In 2022/23, UWE Bristol introduced contextual admissions alongside Access to UWE, a targeted programme supporting contextual offer holders' transition to higher education, of which the Summer School is a key component.

ACCESS TO UWE SUMMER SCHOOL

The Summer School is a free, four-day residential experience held before results day and open to UWE Bristol contextual offer holders. It aims to develop knowledge, skills, and confidence to navigate student life. It involves:

- Presentations from UWE support services staff
- Campus tours
- Group activities and social networking
- Workshops on finances, budgeting and managing money.

EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

We used a mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design approach with an intervention and comparison group.

Our data collection for both groups comprised:

- Pre, post, and follow-up surveys consisting of TASO Access and Success Questionnaire's academic self-efficacy and prospective sense of belonging scales, and an internally-developed knowledge and confidence scale
- Focus groups
- Analysis of offer acceptance rates
- Analysis of module marks and continuation into second year for those who came to UWE Bristol (currently in progress).

Results from the pre and post-Summer School surveys have been analysed and are presented in this poster. We conducted:

- Statistical tests: Wilcoxon signed-rank test, Mann-Whitney U test, Kruskal-Wallis Test
- Difference-in-difference analysis using linear regression and ordinal logistic regression.

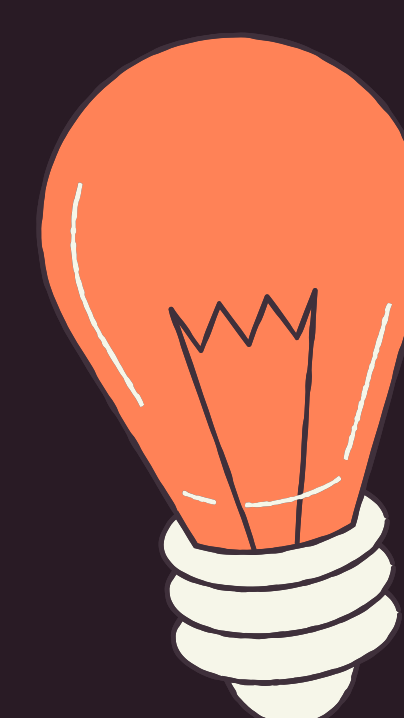


APP

The Summer School is included in UWE Bristol's APP, contributing to the aim of reducing the IMD Q1 to Q5 access gap.

EVALUATION OBJECTIVE

We aim to understand the impact of the Summer School on contextual offer holders' university preparedness, prospective sense of belonging, and confidence navigating student life.



PARTICIPANTS



Intervention Group

n = 22

Composed of attendees to the Summer School (self-selected to attend)



Comparison Group

n = 50

Self-selected from pool of 560+ contextual offer holders

Compared to overall UWE applicant population, both groups were overrepresented in IMD Q1 and Q2, women, disability, and Global Majority. Greater representation of IMD Q1 and Q2 supports one of UWE Bristol's APP aims.

UNIQUENESS

Pre-university summer schools are relatively common and tend to focus on year 12 students or form part of a conditional offer for entry. However, the Access to UWE Bristol Summer School appears to be unique in the sector as it specifically supports applicants who already hold a contextual offer from UWE as they prepare for university life.



RESULTS AND FINDINGS

BEFORE AND AFTER ASSESSMENT

There is a statistically significant increase between pre and post scores for the intervention group for all sense of belonging and knowledge and confidence questions with medium to very large effect sizes. This suggests that Summer School attendance has a positive impact on these areas.

SENSE OF BELONGING

University is for people like me



I fit in well academically



I fit in well socially



KNOWLEDGE AND CONFIDENCE

I'm confident managing money



I know what support is available



I know how to access support



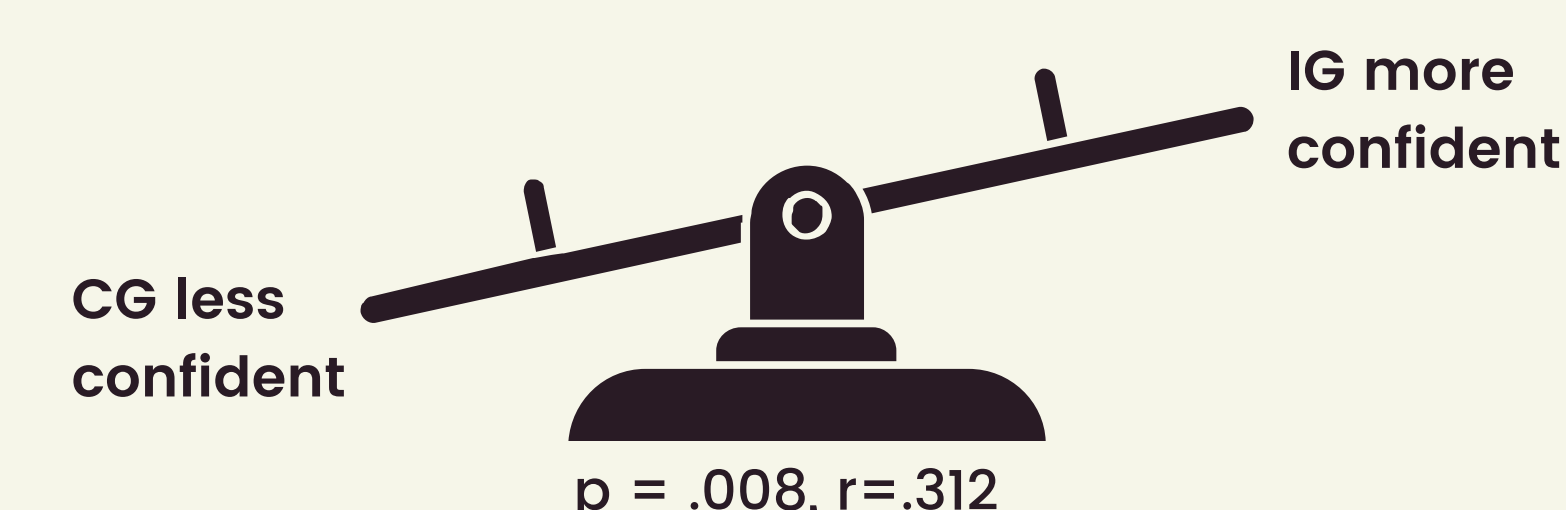
I'm able to navigate student life



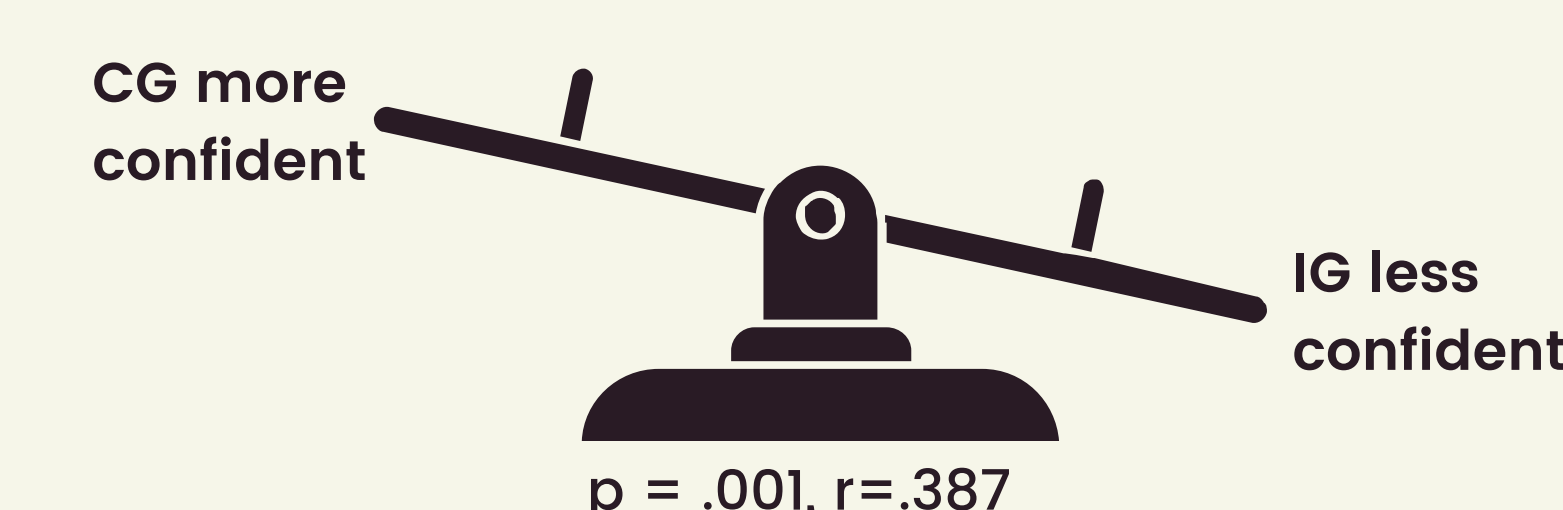
PRE SURVEY GROUP DIFFERENCES

We found statistically significant differences between the intervention group (IG) and comparison group (CG) in some areas of academic self-efficacy that may have influenced the decision to self-select to attend the Summer School.

I WILL RECEIVE REQUIRED GRADES FOR ADMISSION



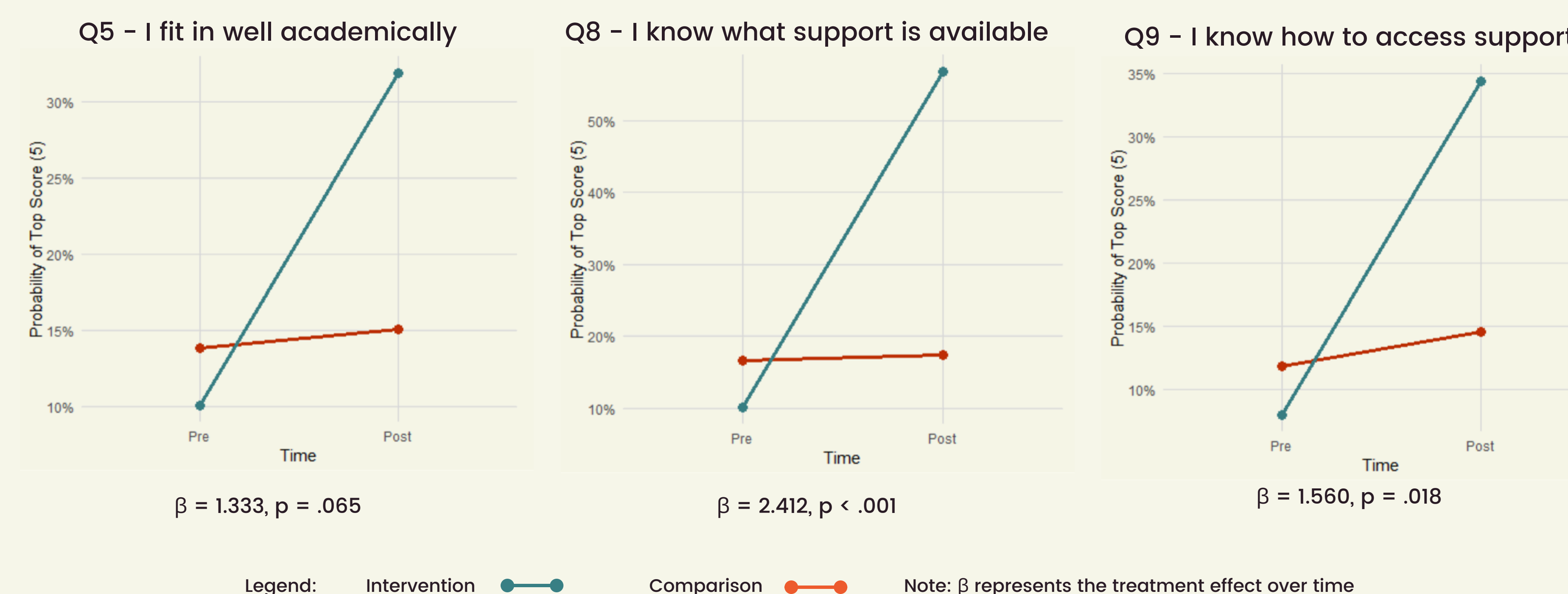
I'M ABLE TO MANAGE UNIVERSITY-LEVEL STUDY



DIFFERENCE-IN-DIFFERENCE ANALYSIS

Our analysis identified three outcome items of interest: these all met the assumption of parallel trends and two showed statistically significant treatment effects (one - Q5 - was close to statistical significance).

PREDICTED PROBABILITY OF TOP SCORES: INTERVENTION VS COMPARISON GROUP ACROSS TIME



These results suggest a potential causal effect of the Summer School, particularly the specific area of knowledge of support available at university and how to access that support. Perceived academic fit (Q5) is close to statistical significance and would benefit from further testing with a larger sample size. Analysis of other items found either that the parallel trends assumption was violated and/or results were not statistically significant.

CONCLUSION AND NEXT STEPS

The Summer School appears to be associated with short-term, positive improvements in prospective sense of belonging and knowledge and confidence, with potential causal effects in knowledge of support and seeking support. We are currently continuing our evaluation, analysing follow-up surveys, focus groups and academic outcomes. We are also planning to deliver a randomised control trial of the Summer School (August 2025) to better understand causal impacts.

Author

Bek Rengel - UWE Bristol
With contributions from Sarah Gettings - Future Quest