



The Bridging Project

IMPACT REPORT

2022-2023



The Bridging Project: our impact in 2022/23

About us

The Bridging Project supports undergraduates from underrepresented backgrounds to succeed at university. We do this by providing coaching to students throughout their first year.

Our work matters because the university drop-out rate for students from underrepresented backgrounds is twice as high as for students from wealthier backgrounds. This drop-out rate has a negative effect on the young people concerned, both in terms of their mental wellbeing and their employment prospects. It also means the institutions they leave do not benefit from the talents of outstanding young people from diverse backgrounds.

Founded in 2019, we have already enabled 134 young people to successfully bridge the transition from school and settle into life at university.

2022/23 impact

This impact summary presents headline findings from pre- and post-programme surveys completed by students on The Bridging Project programme during the 2022/23 academic year. This summary is structured in line with the six main goals set out in The Bridging Project's evaluation framework:

1. Belonging
2. Soft skills
3. Access to support
4. University life
5. Retention
6. Process

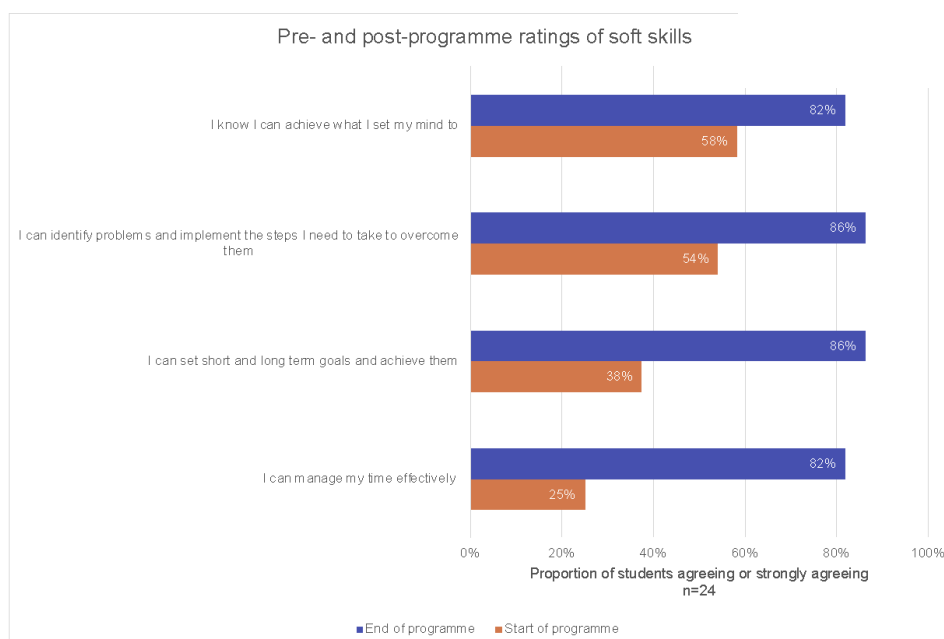
Belonging

At the start of the programme a third of students felt they belonged at their university, rising to almost three quarters at the end of the programme. 82% of students felt the programme had helped them feel a greater sense of belonging.

"I feel more confident in knowing my place at university is deserved, and in really enjoying and taking part in university life which was very scary at first!"

Soft skills

Students reported improved self-assessments of a range of soft skills between the start and end of the programme, with the largest increases appearing to relate to time management and goal setting.

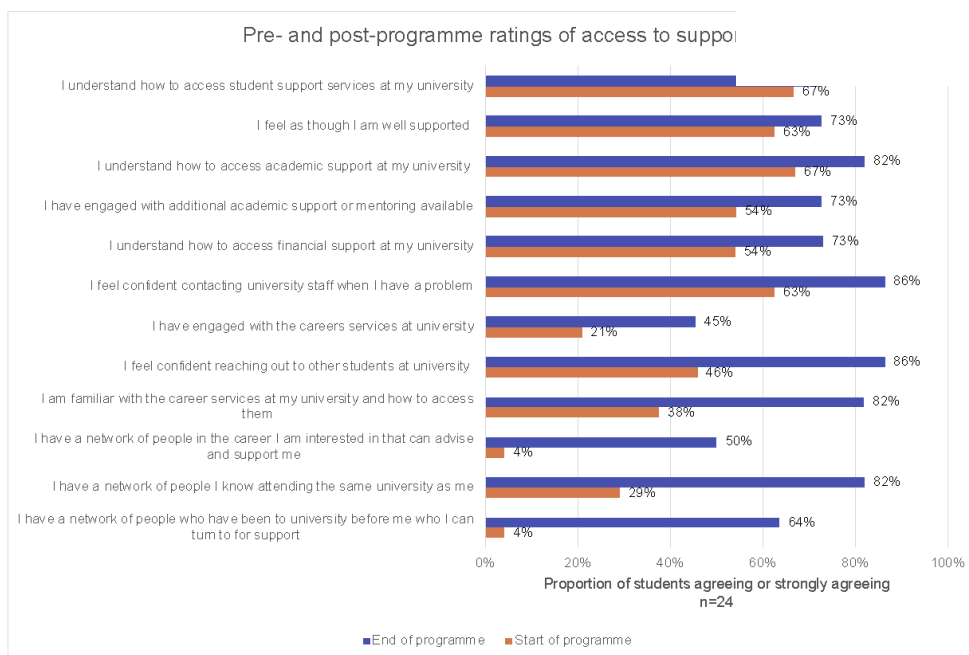


95% of students felt the programme had helped them develop their soft skills.

"I have been on top of my studies throughout the year and I have drastically improved my soft skills such as public speaking."

Access to support

Students reported improved knowledge and understanding of different forms of support, as well as their confidence in making use of support. The largest increases related to students' self-assessments of their support networks, in terms of knowing people who had been to university, who attended the same university as them, and who worked in careers that interested them.

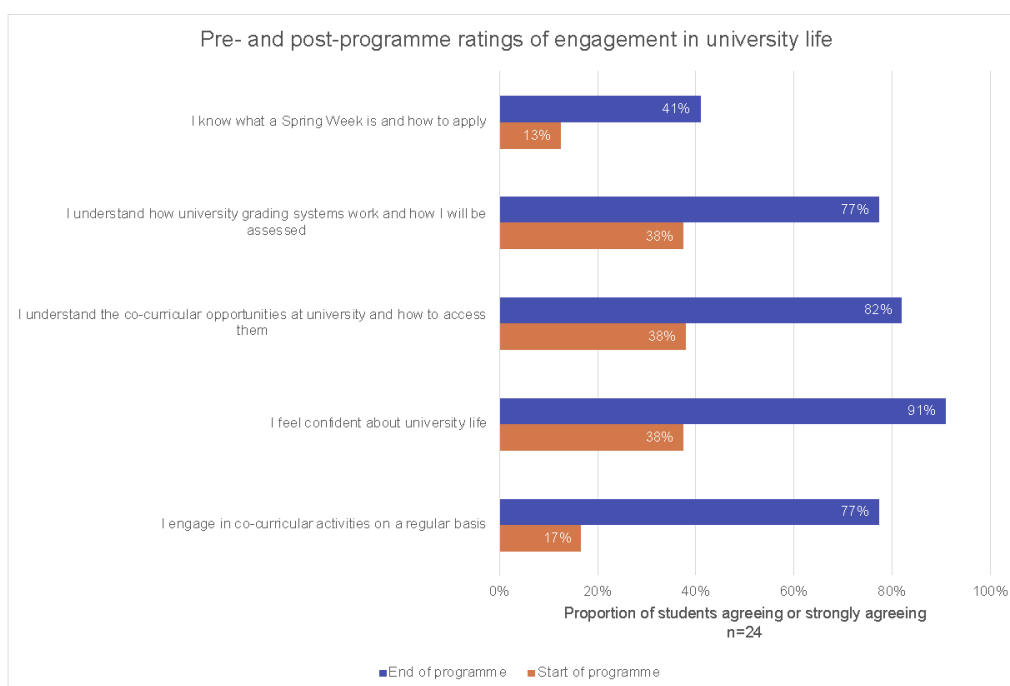


91% of students felt the programme had helped them access support at university.

"I know how to navigate my adult life better and who to go to for help."

University life

Students reported improved knowledge, understanding and confidence in relation to various aspects of university life between the start and end of the programme. The largest increases appeared to relate to students' engagement in co-curricular activities and their overall confidence about university life.



86% of students felt the programme had helped them €
 91% felt the programme had helped them feel more cor

"I've learnt to take time to enjoy non-academic areas of university and set a range of goals for other non-academic pursuits."

Retention

77% of students felt the programme had helped them remain at university during their first year, and all students on the programme planned to continue their studies.

Process

86% of students rated their experience on the programme as 5/5, and 95% would recommend the programme to other students. When asked to describe the programme in three words, the most common descriptors were 'supportive', 'helpful' and 'encouraging'.



Case study: University College London

In 2022-23 we delivered our programme to a group of 10 care experienced young people starting at UCL. The aim was to develop their sense of belonging, confidence and engagement in wider university life. The results are as follows:

Pre Programme	Post Programme	Bridging Project Impact
33% of students stated they felt they belonged at UCL	75% of students stated they belonged at UCL	100% of students stated The Bridging Project improved their sense of belonging
20% of students stated they felt confident to engage in activities beyond their studies	100% of students stated they were confident to engage in activities beyond their studies	88% of students stated they felt the programme helped them engage in university life
10% of students stated they felt they could set goals and achieve them	100% of students currently feel they can set goals and achieve them	100% of students stated the programme helped them develop their ability to set goals and achieve them

"The programme has given me a more positive and confident outlook on university. Initially, I was struggling with imposter syndrome and was worried about approaching people, but The Bridging Project helped reshape my thinking into a strength which was useful. My coach also encouraged me to speak up more and attend career services."

Summary

2022-23 was a year of significant success for The Bridging Project. All students supported in 2022/23 chose to remain at university – this is compared to the UK drop-out rate of 1 in 12. We have big plans for 2023/24 as we build towards our goal of supporting 800 students in 15 Russell Group universities by 2028.

For more information or to support our work, please contact:

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