



Dublin City University
Educational Trust



jumpAgrade Impact Report

Prepared for
Dublin Diocese
September 2020



The Life-Changing Gift of Education

In 2019, the Dublin Diocese generously agreed to support the DCU Access Service's outreach programme to deliver an innovative online grinds programme to fifth and sixth year students attending DCU Access linked post-primary schools in Dublin.

With thanks to this support, the DCU Access Service has partnered with jumpAgrade, an online grinds platform, to create the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme to help students in DEIS (disadvantaged) schools improve their grades and prepare for third level education.

The DCU Educational Trust is extremely appreciative of your ongoing and consistent support for this gift. We have prepared this report which we hope will illustrate for you, the substantial and transformative impact which your donation has had on helping to end educational disadvantage in Ireland.



DCU Access Programme & jumpAgrade

In the 2019/2020 academic school year, jumpAgrade and DCU's Access Service built on the success of the previous year's pilot year to deliver the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme. With the support of the Dublin Diocese, this programme provided online grinds to 33 post-primary students already involved in the DCU Access UFirst Programme.

UFirst is a programme for fifth and sixth year students in DEIS post-primary schools, which is designed to give students the knowledge, confidence and skills needed to begin their university journey. Since October 2019, the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme has provided extra support to UFirst students through providing personalised support from a qualified teacher, delivered weekly online.

Due to the closure of schools across Ireland as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020, the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme took on a new level of importance as participating students had access to high-quality online support from the safety of their own home. The DCU Access jumpAgrade programme alleviated the digital divide that many primary, post-primary and third level students experienced throughout the pandemic.

A study carried out by Trinity College Dublin in July 2020 showed that teachers in DEIS post-primary schools were almost three times more likely to report low engagement from their students in comparison to those in non-DEIS settings. With students studying from home, the DCU Access jumpAgrade Programme was a vital key in helping to keep participating students motivated and concentrated on their studies throughout the Covid-19 pandemic.

Programme Overview

Before beginning the programme, participating students complete a need analysis to identify their level, topics covered in class or topics they may need help with, their starting grade and their target grade. Students are then assigned their own personal tutor, with all tutors registered with the Irish Teaching Council.

Students receive weekly assignments online, which they work on when and where it suits them. Once assignments are submitted, assigned tutors provide personalised video feedback and a new assignment to be completed for the following week. Through the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme, participating students also received access to revision courses, study skills seminars and wellness programmes.



2019/2020 Programme Impact

33 post-primary students participated in the programme from 14 different schools throughout Dublin. Students received extra support in three main subjects—Maths, English and Irish. On average, students took part in the programme for a period of 13 weeks, with UFirst students completing 435 weeks of the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme in total in the 2019/2020 academic year.

There was a reported 17% average grade increase among fifth year students who had completed at least one week of the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme, while 83% of students reported an increase in confidence in their chosen subject of support.

If this 17% grade improvement were to be applied to the Leaving Certificate, it would be an average increase of 28.8 points per student. This average grade increase can improve even more when students are engaged with the programme for longer periods of time.

Linked Schools

- Beneavin de la Salle College Finglas
- Chanel College
- Coláiste Eoin
- Donahies Community School
- Grange Community School
- Mercy College Coolock
- Pobalscoil Neasain
- Rosmini Community School
- St Aidan's CBS
- St David's CBS
- St Michael's Holy Faith Finglas
- St Finian's Community College
- St Vincent's Secondary School
- Trinity Comprehensive Ballymun

Student Profiles

Mark is a fifth year student who completed 16 weeks of the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme in 2019/2020. With support from the programme, Mark improved his Higher Level Maths grade by 25.5% from his Christmas exams (45%, H6) to his summer exams (70%, H3).



Speaking on the programme, Mark said:

"Before I started this programme, I had almost no drive to do any maths questions as I had fallen behind quite a bit on the understanding of how to properly answer the questions.

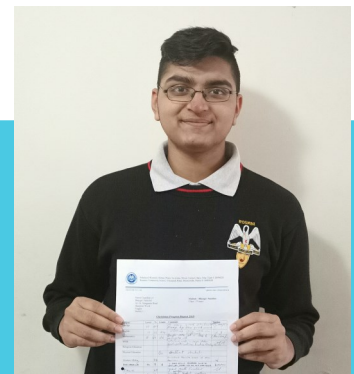
Thanks to the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme, I now understand the structure of questions and what I need to do to answer them. Now I know this, it feels much more relaxing and less frustrating when studying Maths, and I feel more motivated than ever to try my best.

If this programme has taught me anything, it's that nothing feels better than to understand. The questions seem way easier than before now that I understand what I'm doing."

Mark's mother, Olga, outlines how Mark has benefited from the extra support:

"I would say that the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme has really helped Mark reach a higher grade in Maths. He says he now understands what he needs to do and how to approach Maths questions, which I feel is really important for his studies. Overall, the programme has really helped Mark to strengthen his Maths skills and benefitted him in his exams greatly."

Bhargav is a fifth year student who completed 19 weeks of the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme in 2019/2020. Bhargav improved his Higher Level Maths grade by 8.5% from his Christmas exams (77.5%, H3) to his summer exams (86%, H2).



Bhargav explains what he found most beneficial from the programme:

"I really enjoyed receiving the corrections on my worksheets from my tutor in a video style format. My tutor explained the solutions with me step by step so that I could understand and see first-hand how the problem was solved and where I made the mistake.

I was able to learn from my errors very quickly and found that my Math skills improved a lot from this programme. I know the change in my grade wouldn't have been possible without this extra support."

Bhargav's father, Ramdas, also commented on how Bhargav found the programme:

"I've seen a remarkable improvement in Bhargav's Maths grade since he began receiving tutoring from the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme. I've seen him working really hard on his worksheets and he's told me that his Maths tutor was incredibly understanding and adapted to the different topics that Bhargav wanted to study in more detail. The improved grades speak for themselves, so I can definitely see the benefits of the programme as a parent."

Nurturing Talent



Student Feedback

As you can see, participating students have benefited hugely from the extra support provided by the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme. Not only were grade increases seen with students taking Higher Level subjects, but also with students taking Ordinary Level subjects too. For example, a fifth year student in St Aidan's CBS improved his Ordinary Level Maths grade from an O5 to an O2 after completing 10 weeks of the programme, while another fifth year student in Pobalscoil Neasain improved their Ordinary Level Irish grade from an O5 to an O4.

Below is further feedback from students on their experience participating in DCU Access jumpAgrade programme:

“Thanks so much for all the help with my revision classes, they were really helpful and made me more confident in my subjects.” - Piercia

“I would like to say a huge thank you for your help and support throughout my time receiving grinds with this programme.” - Conor

“Thank you so much for everything you’ve done for me, you’ve made me enjoy Irish that bit more and found it so much easier to understand everything.” - Amy

“It was wonderful working with my tutor on the DCU Access jumpAgrade programme! It was so clear to me that my tutor put a lot of effort into assigning and explaining my work my work, and her videos and written feedback were always so helpful in my learning.” - Andrada



About DCU

Transforming Lives Through Education, Research, Innovation & Engagement

DCU is a young, dynamic and ambitious university with a distinctive mission to transform lives and societies through education, research, innovation and engagement. Since admitting its first students in 1980, it has grown remarkably in scale and has established an international reputation for the quality of its graduates, its innovative approaches to teaching and learning, and the impact of its research.

DCU regularly features among the top young universities globally as measured by the Times Higher Education Top 100 under 50 and the **QS Top 50 under 50**. In the last ten years, DCU has twice been named **Sunday Times 'Irish University of the Year.'** Such achievements are based on a track record of academic excellence, cutting-edge research, innovative and inter-disciplinary degree programmes, and pioneering approaches to enhance the student learning experience.

DCU currently has 17,000 students across five faculties:

- Science and Health
- Humanities and Social Sciences
- Engineering and Computing
- DCU Business School
- DCU Institute of Education—the first faculty of education in an Irish university, created in 2016 following the incorporation of St Patrick's College Drumcondra, Mater Dei Institute and Church of Ireland College of Education.

Our Vision

DCU will be a globally-significant **University of Transformation and Enterprise** that is renowned for the development of talent, the discovery and translation of knowledge to advance society, its focus on creativity and innovation, the advancement and application of technology and its commitment to sustainability.

Our Mission

To transform lives and societies through education, research, innovation and engagement.



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The DCU Educational Trust is a registered charity (CHY 8960) established in 1988 to advance the development of Dublin City University.

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Dublin City University

