



UNIVERSITY OF
BATH

Theory, Evaluation and Practice in Widening Participation

A framework to evaluate WP interventions

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What is success?

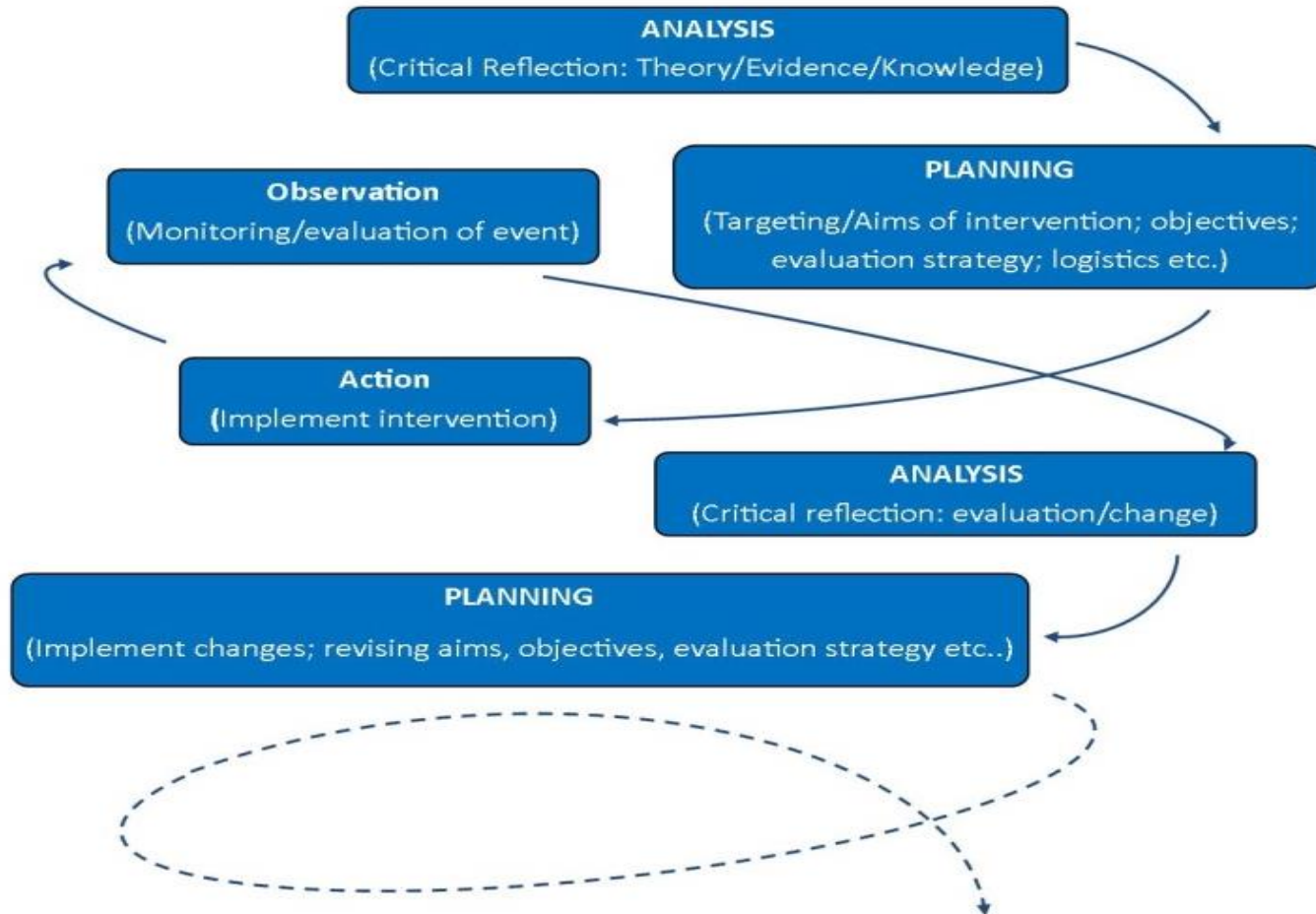


- Government, OFFA, HEFCE, University SMTs interested in the **long term impact on progression** e.g longitudinal tracking
- WP practitioners, students and school teachers interested in the activity itself and its short term impact – **success is a positive experience** for participants on a single activity
- Both essential but represent a real dichotomy in how we think about WP interventions

“ Those advocating specific interventions often claim success for them, but most interventions have had no rigorous evaluation. We encountered no randomised controlled trials or similar. This makes it difficult to judge the success, or otherwise, of any attempts to widen participation in the short term.” (Gorard & Smith, 2006)

- Increased understanding of reasons for low participation and attainment of under-represented groups
- Research insights don't inform evaluation and monitoring/aren't disseminated to practitioners.
- Practitioner research/evaluation focussed on the successful delivery of activities - engages only partially with research literature
- Day-to-day practices informed by tacit knowledge – resonance with research findings, but no direct link.

Reflexivity at the heart of change



A Theoretically-informed evaluation framework

- Bourdieu – Field, Capitals and Habitus
- Cultural model of Widening Participation that locates interventions within a wider *field* of engagement
- Capitals - expressions of differences within an unequal social system – enable/restrict engagement with education
 - Intellectual capital (Scientific capital) - subject expertise
 - Academic capital - understanding of rules/customs within academy
 - Social capital – social connections
- Habitus – situated cultural identity/set of dispositions

Evaluation Framework

SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC CAPITAL		HABITUS	EDUCATIONAL SKILLS CAPITAL?	INTELLECTUAL & SUBJECT CAPITAL
PROGRESSION CURRICULUM		STUDENT IDENTITIES	SKILLS CURRICULUM	KNOWLEDGE CURRICULUM
KNOW	CHOOSE	BECOME	PRACTISE	UNDERSTAND
Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education	Develop students' capacity to navigate Higher Education sector and make informed choices	Develop students' confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenges of university life	Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment	Develop students' understanding by contextualising subject knowledge

Aims and Objectives (Level 3 activities)



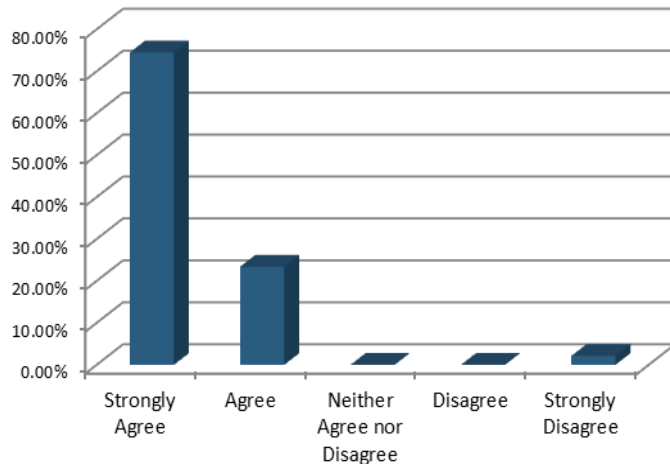
			Aims:	Top-level Objectives
				Enable students to:
SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC CAPITAL	PROGRESSION CURRICULUM	KNOW	Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment	Investigate course and placement options, and social and leisure opportunities at the University of Bath and other universities
		CHOOSE	Develop students' capacity to navigate Higher Education and graduate employment sectors and make informed choices	Evaluate course, student finance & graduate opportunities and make informed choices that align with personal interests and career aspirations
HABITUS	STUDENT IDENTITIES	BECOME	Develop students' confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenge of university life and graduate progression	Anticipate challenges they will face in Higher Education and make a successful transition to university
EDUCATIONAL CAPITAL	SKILLS CURRICULUM	PRACTISE	Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment and successful graduate progression	Enhance academic skills through collaborative projects that develop capacity for critical thinking, independent research and self-directed learning
INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL	KNOWLEDGE CURRICULUM	UNDERSTAND	Develop students' understanding by contextualising subject knowledge	(a) Situate existing knowledge within wider fields of knowledge and apply to other contexts
				(b) Situate existing knowledge and interests within the context of university degree programmes and academic disciplines

Aim 1: Develop students' knowledge and awareness of the benefits of higher education and graduate employment

Evaluation Question:

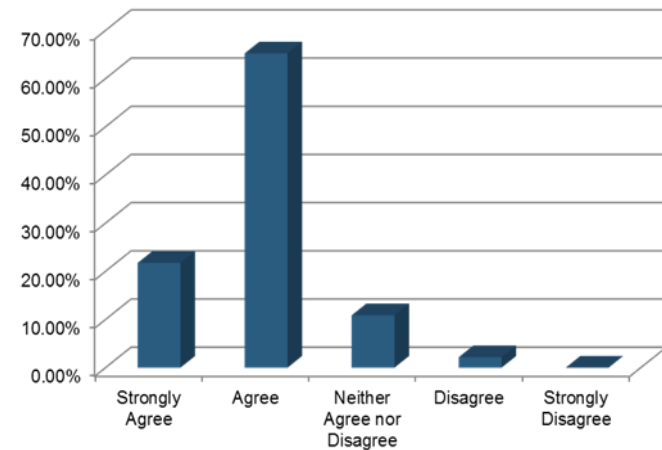
I now know more about opportunities in Higher Education and for university graduates

STEM Summer School



“It was good to be learning something new. It showed you where you could go if you continued doing Chemistry and it was really interesting.”

HSS Summer School



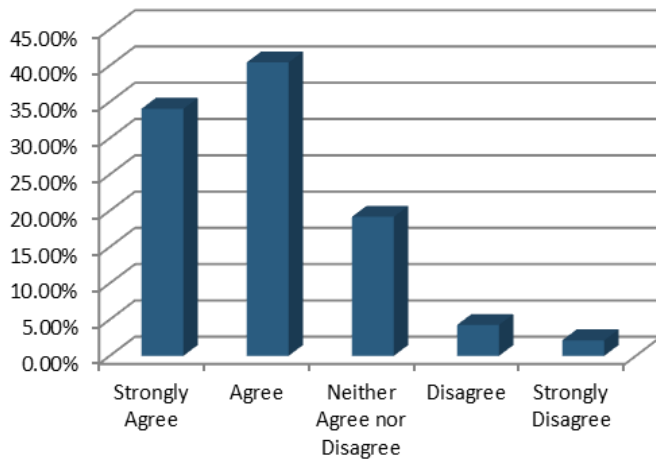
“This has really confirmed that I want to go to university and I want to study Social Science.”

Aim 2: Develop students' capacity to navigate Higher Education and graduate employment sectors and make informed choices

Evaluation Question:

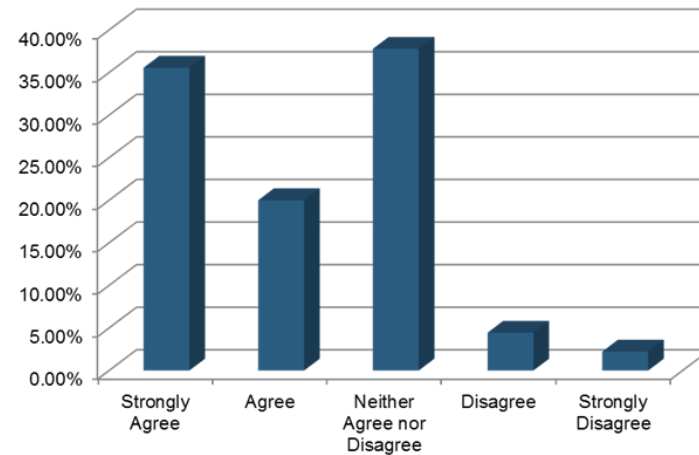
The Summer School has helped me to make an informed choice about university and my future

STEM Summer School



“The Summer School really strengthened my knowledge of what course I want to do. I wasn’t sure if I wanted to take a Science or Engineering course, but now I definitely know what course I want to do.”

HSS Summer School



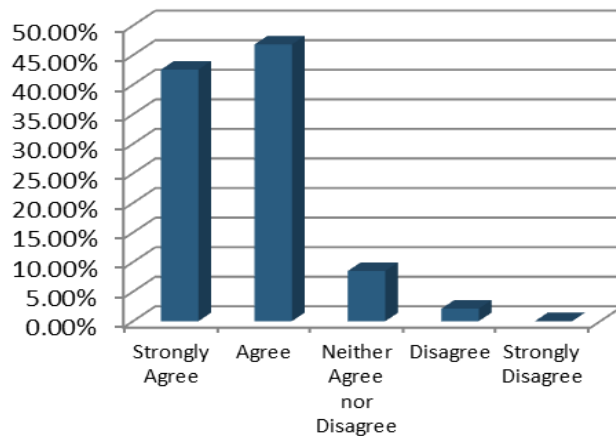
“Coming on the summer school has really helped me work out what I want to do.”

Aim 3: Develop students' confidence and resilience to negotiate the challenge of university life and graduate progression

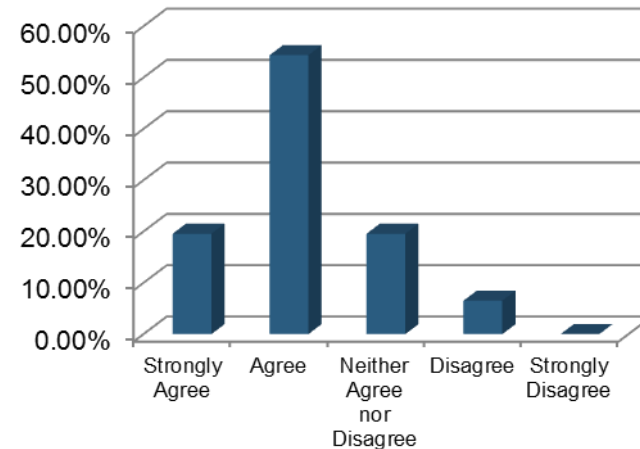
Evaluation Question:

The Summer School has helped me to feel more confident in my ability to succeed at University

STEM Summer School



HSS Summer School



“I had never done anything like this before, and university just seemed really scary. Doing this has made me feel much more confident about going and like I really want to go to university.”

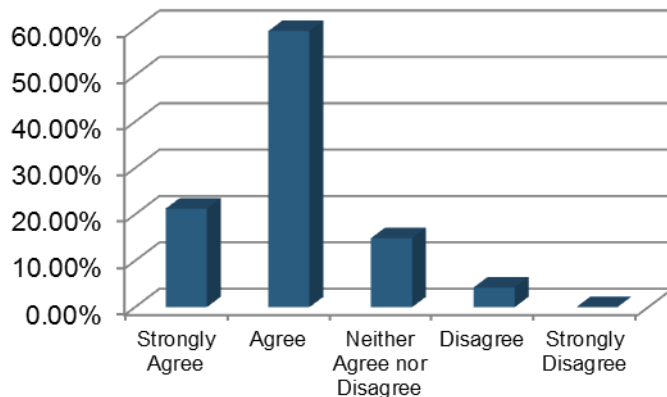
“This has shown me that university study and the course work isn’t really that daunting. I didn’t know what to expect, but this has shown me it is something that I can do.”

Aim 4: Develop students' study skills and capacity for academic attainment and successful graduate progression

Evaluation Question:

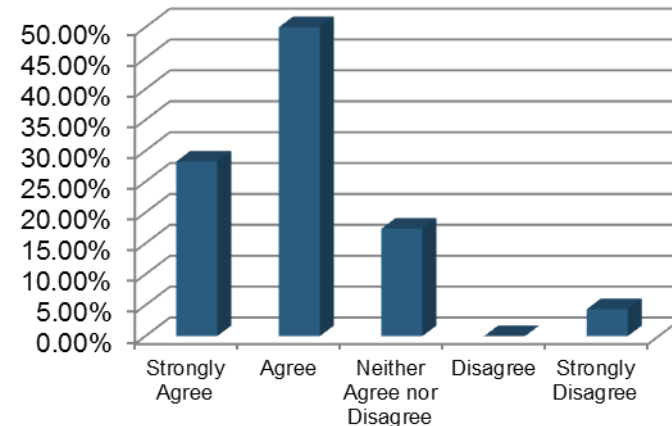
The summer school has given me skills that will help me to succeed in my studies

STEM Summer School



“The experience has certainly fuelled my enthusiasm to continue to study hard and get the grades that I need for taking a chemistry degree. Within this I will be looking at Bath as an option.”

HSS Summer School



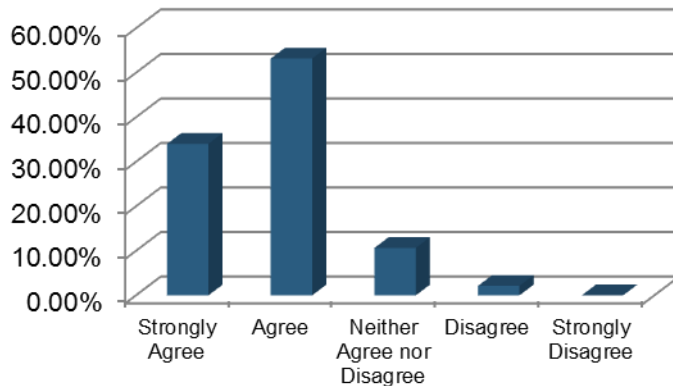
“I have learned loads of things about how to do research, and simple things like referencing. We don't have to do that really at college, so it has been really useful to get this experience.”

Aim 5: Develop students' understanding by contextualising subject knowledge

Evaluation Question:

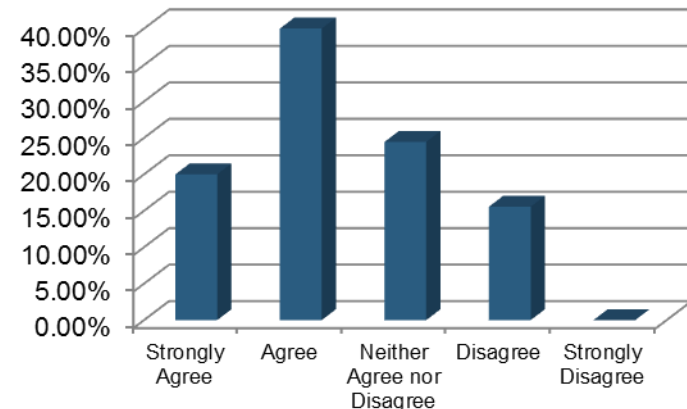
The Summer School has increased my understanding of my subject area

STEM Summer School



“The Biology project gave you a real insight into how Science really works. With GCSEs you don’t really go down to the source of the information. The lecturer gave us a real insight into her work. You feel much more exposed to the scientific world that you do in a school classroom.”

HSS Summer School



“I definitely know that I want to do Social Science. I didn’t know that much about it until the summer school, but now I know it is what I want to do.”

Is the Framework effective in other contexts?

NERUPI (Network for Evaluating and Researching University Participation Interventions)

Application of Framework:

- Exeter: Discover and Explore Days for Year 10 and 12
- Bath Spa: White Working Class Boys Initiative
- Oxford Brookes: sustained Engage programme
- Oxford: Uniq Summer Schools
- Sheffield: designing a new programme for Year 8 and 9
- Plymouth: Articulacy Programme for Year 8s
- Bath: BTEC Maths Support Project