**Dr Tracey Bowell – Ōritetanga Learner Success Conference, August 2019**

[MUSIC PLAYING]

So I've got the privilege today to talk about a programme that we've now run for two years, which is a sort of summer academy programme, which we call Jump Start. And good.

So what is it? Well, so it's now a four-week programme that we run in that period just before our first semester. It's for credit, which is something that's quite unusual about programmes of this type. We now give ourselves a choice of papers.

I'm going to give you some-- an overview. And I'm going to break down a lot of detail later. So students have a choice of papers. They do a full-time week, so a kind of full-time school day. And around that-- the paper, the sort of workshops, and tutorials, and lectures for the paper, there's a programme of learning development and support. So it's that-- it's essentially a paper, but with a lot of targeted wrap-around support.

We open it to all of our new undergraduate students who have passed UE. But we've really designed it-- the students we have in mind are anyone who might need a bit of additional time to adjust to university life and to study, those students who need to consolidate or fill gaps in their-- in essential understanding, knowledge, or skills for the subject area that they've-- on which they've chosen to embark and those also who just want a head start on their year of study.

So the program's eligible for Fees Free. And we give-- offer students a subsidised rates in the halls of residence. So there's-- so not such a challenge-- and the cost of accommodation if they're moving to Hamilton to study.

So why do we-- why this particular programme? How do we get there? So we-- we had-- we came at a point where we had a renewed focus in our institution at the University of Waikato on student success and retention. We realised that it was something that we really needed to turn our attention to and to put energy, time, and resources into.

So many of you will be familiar with Vincent Tinto's work and this sort of programme that we're doing, a sort of summer bridge or summer academy programme, is one of a number of sorts of initiatives that are identified as supporting student success.

So we modelled it-- so myself and the Director of Student Services, we took a study tour to the US a couple of years ago now and were lucky enough to visit about five institutions, I thought. I think. And we really wanted to learn about the sorts of initiatives that might be-- that would be-- might be a good fit for our learners and would be sustainable as well.

So we-- we came back with a wish list. And this Jump Start Summer Academy was really the first thing-- cab off the rank, the first thing that we thought we'd be able to get going and we would be able to sustain if it was successful. And many of you are familiar with the summer academy type programme in the US.

But there, they'll often be designed for particular cohorts of students. So, for example, we talked a lot about summer academy with colleagues at University of Arizona. And there they have academy programme-- summer academy programmes that are specific for different cohorts of Hispanic students, for example.

So ours currently is somewhat more general. So what we do we try to achieve? What we're trying to achieve? So we wanted to better support that transition from the learning environment in school to university.

But-- but we also wanted to give students the opportunity to create community, to earn that-- to gain that sense of belonging that they belong to the university, that they belong at university, and that university belongs to them, that it can work for them. It's a way of making university smaller for students and making it feel more manageable, so, again, creating nurturing and that sense of belonging.

It enables them to see that it works for them and that they will be able to be successful. And so the ability-- so having a paper that's for credit and passing that paper gives them that sense of achievement, that sense that they can continue and be successful. So what we-- what we're also seeing there is actually some kind of-- it's more incidental than intentional.

But that opportunity to start building some of that academic mind-set that Tristan [Denley] just talked about so we've got purpose in there. We've got belonging in there. We've got self-belief in there, the opportunities to gain confidence and to-- and to build and also exercise grit and perseverance.

So, also, as you'll see in a minute when I start to talk about, drill down into some of the subjects that we're offering. Within the sub-- the array of subjects we offer, we offer a math paper and a writing paper. So we’re also, again, wasn’t necessarily intentional at the time, maybe intuitively, but it certainly wasn’t sort of as well informed by the data as initiatives in Georgia.

But those are some of those kind of catapult papers that—that—that Tristan’s talked about. So I’m a philosopher by trade, or I was. And—and so—so there is a way that—there’s a way that Wittgenstein talks about sort of coming to be in a world, or in a community, or a way of being that—that you come to know your way about.

So I often think of Jump Start as that—that students come to know their way about. And I don’t just mean way finding in the geographical sense, although that’s also kind of quite useful. But I mean that they’ve come to know their way about this way of being at a university and this way of being a student, and a learner, and a friend, and how—and still a whānau member and maintaining all of those other connections, but while they—while they are being at university.

So how do we—what did we do? So we started with a pilot in 2018. And we started with engineering. Now you might wonder why we started with engineering.

Well, I’ve had some conversations with some local employers about their workforce needs and engineering and about how they would really like to be able to employ—employ local—local people as engineers who’d been—and possibly had been trained as engineers at the University of Waikato, but that students tended—so then we started to see the problem was that—and it’s something that someone brought up in the questions earlier, that students—a lot of the schools that are local to our region tended not to be taking the right math credits in NCEA or not to achieving the right math credits in NCEA and so weren’t feeding through into engineering programmes.

So that was one reason for starting there, also, the willingness of our colleagues in Engineering to come on board with this. So we developed—so the engineers and colleagues developed a general physics and mathematics paper that would start to plug some of those areas or provide students opportunities to gain the skills, and knowledge, and understanding in some of the areas that they maybe hadn’t covered in their schooling and NCEA level 3.

And at that point, we had a three-week paper, again, for 15 credit points. And we started small. But it was a toe in the water. So we had 21 students. And in that paper, we had an 80-- sorry, a 90 percent pass rate. All of the students-- so we started-- we tracked these students. And I'll talk more about the outcomes shortly.

So we've been tracking these students. And they all-- so last year, they all progressed beyond their first semester into their second year of study. And they-- here are their-- some of their results. So-- so they take four-- most of them if they're taking a full-time load, they'll take four papers in their first semester. And there, the orange lines. And you can see that in most of those papers, there's a sort of pretty significant difference in their pass rates.

And I'm going to talk a little bit about that 184. So 184 is Calculus for Engineers. And that's going to come up a little bit in my discussion later. So those are the-- so those are their final marks. And then that's the participation and assessment.

So you can see even in that-- in that calculus one at the top, the Jump Start students who are outperforming the other students in terms of doing-- you know, doing the quiz, handing in the lab report and so on. So on that-- on the basis of both the outcomes of that sort of-- these kinds of outcomes from 2018, but also on the basis of the feedback that we got from students and from the-- all of the teachers and other colleagues who had worked with them.

We expanded this year. And this year, we expanded to four papers. So we still had the engineering paper. Then we've introduced a basic mathematics paper, pre-Law, and a writing paper.

So we chose those-- again, we chose those papers on the basis of where we saw need. So numeracy, literacy, students who are not quite prepared for-- for law, for the first-year law, or who need to find out whether the law is really for them.

We extended to four weeks on the basis of feedback that we had from the students in 2018 that three weeks in the-- I would-- you could imagine it would be three weeks is somewhat intensive, or too intensive. And so this year, we had 80 students. So, again, that's not-- you know, like I said, I acknowledge it's not a great number. But it's four times as many as we had the previous year, so you know--

And 44 percent of those were female. 56 percent were male. And I think that actually is probably almost a switch so the converse of what our-- the gender makeup of our population, our student population. And 12 of those were admitted under special admission. So that means-- so for our visitors, that means that they hadn't quite achieved university entrance.

But we had agreed to admit them and decided that they would-- you know, it was-- we were given that chance, that opportunity. So this is what-- so this next slide, it's not going to be terribly clear. But I'm going to break it down in a second for you.

But this is-- this is-- if you’re a student in the writing paper, this is what your week looks like. And so the dark blue ones, you're doing your lectures. The pale blue ones, your workshops, and the ones that are workshops and tutorials. And the things I want to really highlight are what we've built around that.

So instead of going-- coming to class and going home or going to the coffee shop, you come to class. And then later in the afternoon, there's an independent study session. So you might be preparing for the assignment you've got the next day. And they'll be-- and that's optional but we really encourage the students to attend those.

We had group study sessions in the evenings where we had a tutor present to answer questions. We also provided some pizza for dinner in those sessions. And we timed those so they were coming up before there was a test or a major assignment.

The-- those yellow sessions, those are what we called-- so we didn't call them support or development. We called those extension sessions. And those were those opportunities to develop as a learn-- to really develop as a learner and as a student in this community. And so we had things that you see like-- you probably can't read it. But we have things like staying healthy, we had things like.

So there's one there-- my place at uni. And that was where my colleague, Sonya, who's across the room here, she actually did some work on growth mindset with students there and used some surveys and so on. So we've dipped our toe in that-- that water a little bit as well.

So we-- this year, we were able to-- we had a much longer lead-in time. So we were able to-- to develop it much more as a program instead of a paper with some kind of wrap-around activities. So the first day, we had an Orientation day. And we began with a whakatau. And that's just after that, I think, on that first day.

So-- and we had this mix, as I said, of lectures, workshops, tutorials and these supported study sessions. So each paper had a timetable-- each of those four papers had a timetable that looked like that splattered sort of four-coloured rainbow that you-- I just showed you.

And so-- so we had that very structured day and that very structured week with the aim of transitioning students from the structure of school to becoming independent and self-directed learners. So this is how they-- this year, this is how students distributed across the papers.

So the colours are pretty easy enough to-- to decipher, I think. So we still have a good cohort in engineering and then these other cohorts. And I'll talk a little bit about math later because I think it's a problem. So not math for it-- you now, generally, just this particular math paper and enrolments in it.

So, OK, and this is how-- how this year's cohort broke down in terms of ethnicity. And so 26 percent Māori is just slightly higher than the proportion of Māori students in our population generally and 18 percent Pacific. I think I'm right, Keaka, is quite significantly higher than the proportion of Pacific Island students in our-- in our student population.

And we don't have it-- I didn't-- we didn't break it down. But-- and so I can't tell you how many students with disabilities we had. But I-- I just do know from that-- we had at least one student who had additional learning needs, who has additional learning needs. And so here you can see where they come from. And you can see that the largest proportion of them were school leavers.

OK, so I clicked ahead before my hand. Right. So our income-- our incomes. That would be a bit much to disclose on the podium, wouldn't it? OK, so our outcomes this year. So across all four papers, we averaged a 94 percent pass rate. So Māori students had a 95 percent pass rate as did our Pacific students.

And of the 12 special admission students, 10 passed. So you see that slightly lower pass rate as a-- I promise that we'll talk about special admissions soon. By paper, we break down like this. And so those are really extraordinarily good pass rates. And I'll talk about right shortly. But notice-- notice, you know, that's still an 85percent pass rate in that writing paper.

So what do the students think? So the students expressed 95 percent satisfaction overall for these papers. So what does that mean? So that part of student voice was collected through our regular student assessment of-- student evaluation of teaching.

So by that usual methodology, we use an online platform called Blue. I don't know if anyone else-- surely someone else must do it. Yep. And we had a 52 percent response rate in that. So even there, these students do better than the average because that's a better response rate than we can generally gather or achieve, sorry.

And we use top-box schools. So that 95 percent satisfaction means that 95 percent of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement that, overall, this paper provided me with a good learning experience. OK, so, overall, students were happy with the timing, and the content, and the modes of delivery.

But many did find that four weeks intense. And those extension sessions, and those other things that we offered were—we got very positive feedback about those. So why did they join Jump Start?

So the main reasons that they joined were, as you can see, to gain confidence, to get used to university before the majority of students started, to complete their paper early, and to make friends. So it’s interesting, I think, also that their motive—students’ motivations for signing up for Jump Start are aligning with our intentions and our aims.

So I guess we could give us a wee pat on the back that we've managed to communicate what Jump Start was about relatively effectively. These two students here are performing a haka. That's from our end-of-programme lunch. So we had a sort of celebratory lunch.

And each of the groups of students from the papers quite sort of spontaneously, completely off their own bats, decided to contribute some kind of performance, or song, or waiata for everyone. So that was a really lovely lunch time that we spent there.

So here's some more of their voice. So, again, this is at the lunch. And so "Thanks to Jump Start, I made so many new friends, giving me a confident step into the new uni life." "Having the timetable with the extension sessions enabled students to understand university."

"Jump Start is great. So far, I've found friends and made connections with teachers. I'm glad I took Jump Start. I strongly recommend joining Jump Start if it's your first year in uni."

So I'm going to break down a little bit more now the outcomes and the student-- and the make-up of the student population in terms of for Māori learners and Pacific learners. So-- so the-- so how students kind of arrive with us is pretty much the same as across the whole Jump Start population, more or less, slightly more school leavers.

And so remember this-- so you probably didn't remember. Why would I expect you to? So N here is 21. There were 21 of these students. 33 percent are female and 67 percent were male. And four of these students were special admission. And they distributed across the papers that we offered in this way, so quite evenly, actually, apart from mathematics, which, again, I'll come back to. I promise.

And these are the-- these are the qualifications that they had enrolled into, so predominately engineering, business arts. OK. Social sciences. So some of the other data that I've got, but didn't-- I didn't present-- haven't presented for you is like-- so we've got age distribution.

And we've got the last school attended and the region that students come from. And so and from that, we can see that-- so 12 of these Māori learners were from Hamilton and the wider Waikato. And we have others from the Thames Valley, from the South Waikato, from Hawke's Bay, from the Bay of Plenty, from Auckland, Northland, and from the Manawatū.

So if we look again-- so again, so there's the Pacific learners. Again, slightly more of those are coming straight from school. Here we're looking at 14 learners. And so I do acknowledge these are pretty small numbers.

71-- so a bit more of-- even more of a sort of gender split. Here's a split-- but around the other way. So 71 percent of these students were female. And 29 percent were male. And three of these entered under special admission. And all of those-- so both-- so the special admission-- the Māori students were special admission. And the Pacific students with special admission all passed.

And here's how they distributed across the papers. So we had a really nice-- well, they're all-- all the learners are nice. But we had a great cohort of young Pacific women in the legal paper. So that's how those numbers kind of went down.

And here's their choice of qualifications. And that's a much more competent slide than the previous one that I showed you. So there are more students in law and not so many in engineering and then breaking down across other programmes. So, again, I've got-- we've got age distribution and data about the school, the schools they attended, the reasons they come from, and from that.

So nine of these students are from Hamilton. And they are just from Waikato. And then others were from the Thames Valley. And this is really the remainder. So there's one of each from the Thames Valley, from the South Waikato, from Manukau, from Hawke's Bay, and from the Bay of Plenty.

So and here are-- so we've-- so that's how those cohorts within the Jump Start cohort break down. And then we've tracked our-- so we tracked the whole cohort into a semester. So, obviously, we're running sort of quite a few weeks into B semester. And we'll have another set of data, I guess, in October, November.

And so these are the paths. So what this is-- so all the students who took the Engineering 100, what's their pass rate for the papers that they took in A semester? And then as against all other students.

So you can see that we've got a positive differential for all of the-- for engineering, legal, and math, not so good for write-- for the writing paper. So just breaking that-- and this that-- so that-- all other students is an 82 percent pass rate. And the overall pass rate for Jump Start papers, including the write-- the writing paper is 89 percent.

So in the write paper, 35 percent of the class were special admission students. And if you-- and special admission students had a 39 percent pass rate in the A semester—overall in the A semester paper. So that’s what’s bringing that pass rate for write students down.

And so what are the identified-- well, what I think we're starting to identify from that, and I'll talk about this a bit when we talk more about the future, is that those students need more of this kind of experience as they move into their first year. So-- and I mean, and I'm sure that lots of other students do as well. And so that's really helped us to see that.

So the next one shows us retention. So of these students broken down by paper, our retention rate into B semester. So we've got 97 percent overall retention. And that would compare with an 85 percent retention across our first year generally.

And some-- of that-- and we also know that some of these students of that three percent who have left at the end of A semester-- or we know that some of those were pass-- they were passing fine. So the reasons that they are not with us don't seem to be to do with-- or at least not to do in terms of academic success measured by their outcomes in these papers.

So as we build into the future, as I mentioned, so we know that our special admissions students need more ongoing wraparound support. And that shouldn't come as a surprise, those students. And-- and we started to think about what that might look like.

And at the moment, I'm not sure that this would scale up. But at the moment, it sort of would be weekly one-on-one learning development sessions to keep supporting that transition around things like time management, making sure that we attempt every piece of assessment, what do you need to be able to attempt this piece of assessment successfully and so on.

In 2020, we'll have at least five papers. We'll also offer the writing paper on our Tauranga on the campus. And I think we have the ability to scale up. So we-- and it'll scale up in several different ways. So we can scale up Jump Start itself.

Obviously, our partnership in the Ōritetanga program means we'll be scaling up the way that we use data. And-- but we'll also be, as part of that scaling up, the support, and advice, and extension that we offer for students. I'm concerned about the low-number of enrolments in the mathematics paper.

And, again, for the future, that's something else to work on how we talk to prospective students about the mathematics paper and the importance of numeracy skills and numeracy understanding for success in all sorts of areas of study. Another thing that I think is interesting, and I thought this might be an opportunity to get it on the radar of-- I'm sure it's already on the radar of my colleagues at TEC [Tertiary Education Commission], and that is that these papers are an example of blocking.

There is an example of the students having one relatively-- the experience of taking one paper at a time relatively intensively. And there are institutions now internationally. So the poster child in Australasia is University of Victoria at Melbourne. But then there's also-- there are institutions in the US doing this as well where the whole of a student's program is blocked. Or in some cases, it's the whole of the first year.

And, certainly, Victoria at Melbourne are seeing really good results with that. So I just wanted to put that out there on the radar as well. So I have no idea on the time. But I've got some other people I want to introduce to you as well shortly.

So, first, I want to thank some people. And I want to thank some people personally. So my colleague Sonya Breen is Associate Director of Student Retention Projects. And she-- she, along with the colleagues in our Business Information and Analytics Team. Well Sonya is really responsible for making Jump Start work because without Sonya, there wouldn't have been Jump Start.

I [INAUDIBLE] Sonya, well, this is a really good idea. Can you do it? And then, well, I think it's a really good idea. Can you to that Sonya? And that's what Sonya really did with Jump Start. And she, along with our colleagues in the Business Information Analytics Team, pull together all of that data and the data representations.

And then my colleague from-- from our Communications and Engagement team has pulled together something that I'm going to show you very shortly. And he showed-- pulled it together in a matter of days. So I want to thank him, even though he's not here.

I'd like to thank the TEC for asking me to present. I was really excited to be able to talk about Jump Start. But, most importantly, I want to thank the academic and professional staff involved in Jump Start, both last year and this year, for the tremendous work they've done and-- and for the students, for having-- the learners having faith in us and the teachers. And the teachers having faith in the learners.

And I'm going to end by introducing you to some of our Jump Start students.

[VIDEO PLAYBACK]

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- I decided to join Jump Start because I'm in my later 20s. And I wanted to have a start to study before the semester A began. I also am studying teaching and an elective that was in the teaching paper, was the Write 100 paper. So because I found study quite challenging as well, I wanted to get a head start and get in the routine before the semester began.

- It wasn't actually my choice to join Jump Start. It was my mum’s decision.

[LAUGHTER]

Initially, I thought I'd be better off just coming straight into uni. And now that I've done Jump Start, I'd see how wrong I would have been. So that's the reason why I joined Jump Start.

- English is not my first language. Exactly I feel that it helped me struggle with my language when I'm doing my work in my high school. So I think it's the best way to start with an early course that I could improve my-- some skill-- like writing.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- One of the top things I got out of the Jump Start was building relationship with the group of people that were assigned to the Write 101 paper. We also got to know others in the Jump Start program, and other staff members, and different areas of the uni. And I think that's really important transitioning to such a big environment.

There were people from lots of different cultures and backgrounds. And, also, some people that voiced about anxiety. And building this familiarity and routine really helped with preparing students for the unknowns, because it became more familiar. And it enabled me to enjoy O Week more because I was able to understand how the university worked.

And if I missed one of the O Week seminars, I wasn't too worried because I had already started a routine. And that really helped with semester A.

- The top things I got out of Jump Start would probably be meeting new people. Also getting out into the campus before you get into hectic A semester and just being comfortable around not being at home.

- The course I took part in was just Writing 100. That teach me some academic writing skills for the university essays. I think it's different from the things I had learned when I at high school helped a lot with my essay writing.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- Jump Start has laid a foundation. So the study tips, time management, meeting different staff, and getting to know familiar faces. Both are a really strong foundation for me for when things outside of uni happened, lots of pressures outside of uni, which put a lot of extra pressure on studying this term.

And I honestly am not-- I'm not sure if I would have completed the semester without having those tips and understandings before starting. That's helped me cope well with pressure when studying.

- Jump Start actually exposed me to all the helpful resources on campus, whether they be the tutors or the library resources. Everything like that we learned prior to Orientation Week. And that made everything a lot less stressful.

- Jump Start saved plenty of time compared with the student who didn't take passing the course, they probably had to spend much more extra time on their study.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

- So some advice for starting university would be when you look at assignments, just remember that they are made up of lots of little steps such as readings and referencing. And Jump Start really helps cover those little-- cover those little steps. So if you don't do Jump Start, still be willing to ask for help and lean on student learning and other support services available because they're so willing to help break down those assignments so that they are more manageable and achievable.

- If you are the person who are looking for some personal improvement, it's a good place you can start with.

- My advice would be don't be scared to take the leap. Transitioning, coming into uni life was not easy. Everybody's been there. And it all gets better in time. And, trust me, it's worth the while coming to uni and especially doing Jump Start.

[MUSIC PLAYING]

[END PLAYBACK]

Thank you.

[APPLAUSE]

[MUSIC PLAYING]