

Evaluating the effects of the provision of information on the impact of effort on rewards

Submission date 19/09/2016	Recruitment status No longer recruiting	☐ Prospectively registered ☐ Protocol
Registration date 19/10/2016	Overall study status Completed	☐ Statistical analysis plan ☐ Results
Last Edited 31/10/2017	Condition category Other	☐ Individual participant data ☐ Record updated in last year

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

The class of degree obtained by university students can have a big influence on how much they earn as graduates, and how hard they study at university can impact on the class of degree they obtain. If students were more aware of how their study effort could influence their grades and their subsequent earnings, would they study harder? This study aims to test whether providing students with information on the relationships between study effort, grades and earnings affects their study effort and the grades they then achieve.

Who can participate?

Full-time undergraduate students in the Department of Economics at the University of Warwick

What does the study involve?

Students are randomly allocated to one of two groups. The first group receive information on the relationship between effort, academic achievement and graduate outcomes. Information is provided to the students before arriving at the university, followed with more information over the course of their degree. Students are also sent follow-up emails and hard copy communications at intervals of about two weeks. In total there are four follow-up interventions over a period of two months. The second group receive no treatment.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

There are no known benefits or risks of participating. The study is intended to discover whether students put in more effort as a result of receiving the information about the effort and graduate outcomes.

Where is the study run from?

University of Warwick (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

January 2016 to June 2019

Who is funding the study?

University of Warwick (UK)

Who is the main contact?
Prof. Robin Naylor

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

Contact name
Prof Robin Naylor

Contact details
Department of Economics
University of Warwick
Coventry
United Kingdom
CV4 7AL

Additional identifiers

Protocol serial number
UOW (RANAJOJPS)

Study information

Scientific Title
In university students, does the provision of information on the impact of study effort on academic performance and graduate earnings, compared to no treatment, increase study effort and performance?

Study objectives
Providing students with information about the effects of study effort on academic performance and graduate earnings will lead them to increase their own effort and performance.

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
University of Warwick Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee, 16/05/2016, ref: 101/15-16

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Randomised controlled trial

Study type(s)
Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Behavioral choices regarding extent of study effort

Interventions

Half of a cohort of undergraduate students within a single university department will be randomly assigned to a treatment group, the other half will form the control group. The treatment group will be provided with information regarding the empirical relationship between student effort, student academic achievement and graduate outcomes. The treatment will be administered in phases: initial information will be provided to students prior to arriving at the university and this will be followed up with further phases of information provision over the course of the students' registration on their degree. Students in the treatment group will be sent follow-up emails and hard copy communications containing further research evidence on the relationships between student effort, academic grades and post-university labour market outcomes. These follow-ups will be sent at intervals of approximately two weeks. In total there will be four follow-up interventions over a period of two months. The control group will receive no treatment.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

1. Records of attendance in seminars, submission of coursework, and attendance at tests
2. Marks obtained in all forms of coursework throughout the academic year and in end-of-year examinations (in each year of study)

Measures of student academic performance will be taken continuously through the academic year as students' marks on coursework (essays, test and problem sets) are marked and at the end of the academic year when students' end of module examination marks are confirmed.

Key secondary outcome(s)

1. Engagement in studies, such as meeting contact points
2. Engagement in the life of the department, such as volunteering as student ambassadors

Measures of student engagement in their studies will be taken at the end of each of the three study terms based on monitoring points of attendance in seminar meetings, personal tutor meetings, examinations and tests and submission of module evaluations.

Completion date

30/06/2019

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Full-time undergraduate students in the Department of Economics at the University of Warwick
2. All full-time students are aged 17 or over. There is no upper limit, though in practice almost all students are below the age of 30

Participant type(s)

Other

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Adult

Sex

All

Key exclusion criteria

None

Date of first enrolment

09/09/2016

Date of final enrolment

14/10/2016

Locations**Countries of recruitment**

United Kingdom

England

Study participating centre

University of Warwick

Department of Economics

United Kingdom

CV4 7AL

Sponsor information**Organisation**

University of Warwick

ROR

<https://ror.org/01a77tt86>

Funder(s)**Funder type**

University/education

Funder Name

University of Warwick

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

The dataset will consist of sensitive data on individual student characteristics such as attendance, performance, and graduate destinations. The data will be held on a secure server.

IPD sharing plan summary

Not expected to be made available