



## **basis.point Donor Impact Report**

### **Junior Cycle Workshop Programme April 2020**



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**Prepared by:**

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TU Dublin Access & Civic Engagement Office (ACE) is very grateful to basis.point for their continued support of the Junior Cycle Workshop Programme in central Dublin. We are delighted to provide an update of our activities over the past academic year.

### **Overview**

The Access & Civic Engagement Office began delivering a Junior Cycle Workshop Programme to 4 local DEIS secondary schools in the Grangegorman Area in 2016. This Junior Cycle Workshop Programme is a unique initiative targeted at 1<sup>st</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> year students in Junior Cycle.

This is the only programme targeted at this age group, focused on presenting higher education as a realistic and achievable goal for students wishing to continue their education. The programme aims to demystify Higher Education by giving Junior Cycle students from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to experience college through hands-on workshops and age-appropriate activities on campus.

With additional support from basis.point the Junior Cycle Co-ordinator role was increased to a full time position in October 2019, which enabled us to increase the number of workshops delivered to sixty-five, expand the number of schools we deal with by three and incorporate additional elements such as increased TU Dublin staff and student engagement in the Programme.

We are delighted to confirm that the Junior Cycle workshop programme is being delivered to 13 out of 14 DEIS schools in central Dublin. Nine DEIS schools are funded solely by basis.point and the four original Grangegorman schools are funded by TU Dublin. In the past academic year, three DEIS schools participated in the programme for the first time. We continue to engage with the remaining DEIS school in our catchment area.



## Update on Targets Set as per Funding Submission, October 2017

	Target	Actual
<b>Year 1</b> (Jan - May 2018)	250	215*
<b>Year 2</b> (Sept 2018 - June 2019)	500	404**
<b>Year 3</b> (Sept 2019 - March 2020)	750	442*** (360 Covid cancellations)

\* The Junior Cycle Co-ordinator commenced in February 2018, resulting in a shorter academic period. Despite this, the target of five DEIS schools participating in the Junior Cycle Workshop was achieved and key recommendations from the original evaluation improved the delivery of the programme in following years

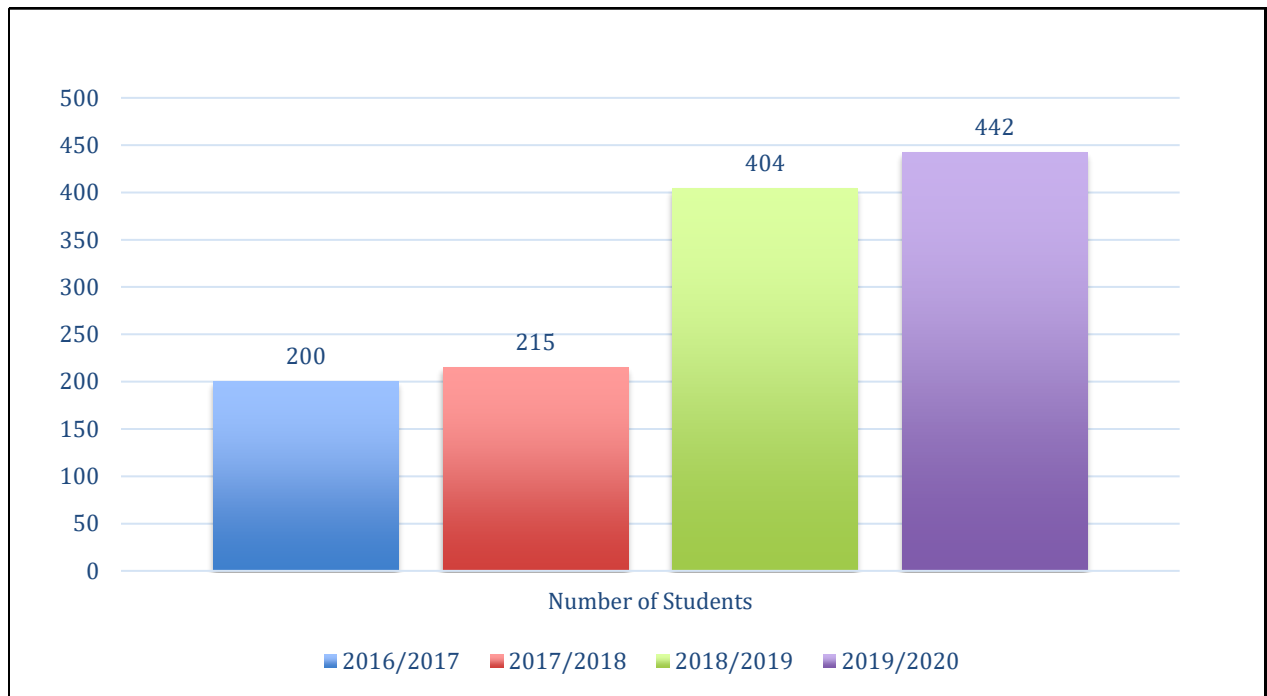
\*\* All the planned workshops were delivered by TU Dublin ACE colleagues, however the resignation of the Junior Cycle Co-ordinator in February 2019 impacted our ability to increase capacity in the final semester of the academic year.

\*\*\*As a result of Covid-19, the TU Dublin campus was closed in March 2020, resulting in the postponement of 15 workshops, 12 of which were for basis.point funded schools. This resulted in reduced numbers for 2019/2020. An additional 360 student visits were planned for basis.point funded schools including 270 unique student visits. If these workshops had taken place, we would have exceeded the target of 750 for the period year 3 (2019 – 2020) by 52.

Due to the school and university closures we did not achieve our overall target of 750 students across basis.point funded schools in the junior cycle programme in 2019/2020 but were on target to do so. We will offer all postponed workshops when schools reopen. With support from basis.point, we would endeavour to bring the Junior Cycle workshop programme to all 14 DEIS Schools in 2020/2021. The number of workshops booked in for the year including the cancellations is an indication of the success of the programme and also indicates the impact of having a full-time coordinator in place on the project.



## Campus visits and student growth over the three-year period:

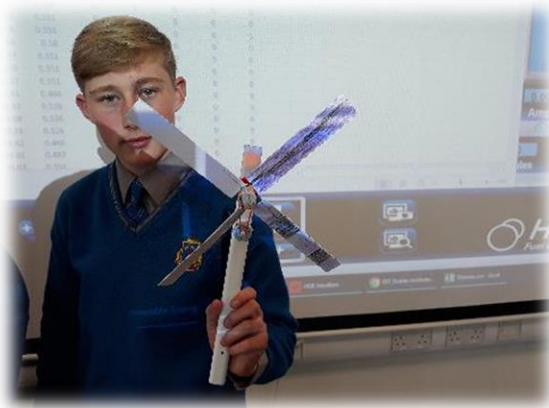


2016/2017- *Original Grangegorman Schools*

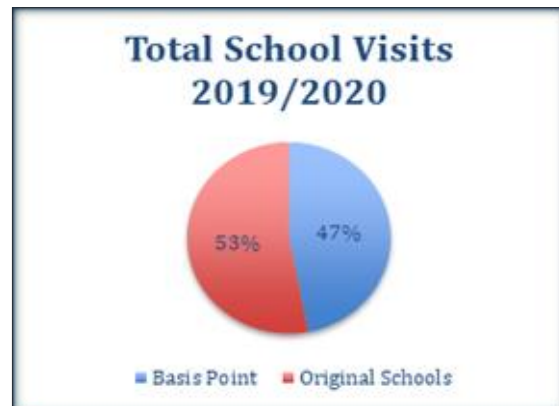
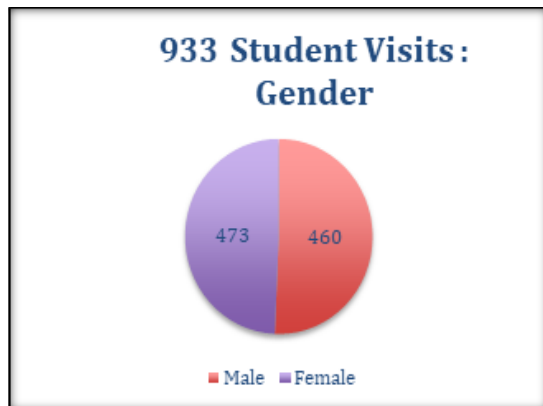
2017/2018 - *basis.Point Phase 1*

2018/2019 - *basis.Point Phase 2*

2019/2020 - *basis.Point Phase 3 (360 Covid cancellations)*



## Breakdown of Participation 2019 – 2020



This year combining 1st year, 2nd year and 3rd year Junior Cycle students across 13 schools there were a total of 933 **overall student visits to the TU Dublin Campus**. There was 473 male students and 460 female students. From the total figure of 442 basis.point funded schools 303 were male students and 139 female students.

A total of 49 workshops were delivered during 2019-2020 (combining 1st, 2nd and 3rd years across all 13 schools). 23 of these workshops were delivered to basis.point funded schools (combining 1st and 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup> years across 9 schools).



### Yearly Comparison - Total Number of Students Engaged

Year	No. of Schools	Total Student Visits	Total Unique Student Visits
2017-2018	9	609	453
2018-2019	11	858	494
2019-2020	13	933	633

### Yearly Comparison - Number of Students Engaged - basis.point funded

Year	No. of Schools	Total basis.point Funded Student Visits	Total basis.point Funded Unique Student Visits
2017-2018	5	215	93
2018-2019	7	404	268
2019-2020	9	*442	*295

\*Covid 19 resulted in the cancellation of workshops impacting an additional 360 basis.point funded students and 270 unique basis.point funded student visits.

In making comparisons it should be noted that the number of students attending the four original schools is larger on a school by school basis. The four original schools have two classes in each year group compared to one class per year group in the majority of the basis.point funded schools.

There has been overwhelming enthusiasm from teachers towards the Junior Cycle Workshop Programme. Teachers see the programme as being highly effective and also a much needed intervention as students are generally not exposed to third level and the opportunities that go with this until transition year is secondary school. Teachers have indicated that the visits to the University are great at demystifying what universities are about and also give students a real hands on experience that they enjoy.

The types and numbers of workshops delivered are outlined in the table below:

<b>Workshop Title</b>	<b>No. of Workshops Delivered</b>
<b>1st Year</b>	
Architecture	2
Design Process	2
Product Design	8
Business & Entrepreneurship	0 (6 cancelled)
Learning to Learn	0 (1 cancelled)
<b>2nd Year</b>	
Study Skills	6
Electronics	1 (2 cancelled)
Renewable Energy	3
Robotic Programming	6
Forensics	7
Sports Science	0 (4 cancelled)
Nutrition	0 (2 Cancelled)
<b>3rd Year</b>	
Well-Being & Mindfulness	6
Study Skills	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>49</b>

Students continue to engage in a range of college immersion activities including campus tours, gym sessions, lunch in the canteen and informal conversations with current TU Dublin students and staff.

## **Evaluation Methods**

The Junior Cycle Workshop Programme is evaluated using a number of questionnaires. While questionnaires are used throughout the programme for the majority of feedback school personnel also feedback verbally and by email to the co-ordinator during workshops and following workshops.

In accordance with guidelines from the Higher Education Authority (HEA), this evaluation method required approval from TU Dublin Research Ethics Committee. The Centre for Social and Educational Research (CSER) worked with ACE staff to design the evaluation questionnaires and supported the submission to TU Dublin's Research Ethics Committee.

**Pre and post programme questionnaires** are used to gain an insight into students' perceptions around attending further/higher education now and into the future. These questionnaires are circulated to school students at the beginning of the school year (September) to complete and then issued again at the end of the school year (May) to determine if any changes have taken place in students' perceptions with regard to attending further/higher education into the future as a result of students participating in the workshops. Unfortunately, this year we will not be in a position to circulate post programme questionnaires to school students due to Covid 19 but would aim to do so in September depending on schools willingness to complete them. In total 356 pre programme questionnaires were returned this year. We have included some of the initial findings in the Student Feedback Section below.

**Student questionnaires** are used to gain feedback on the workshops from the students' perspective. A total of 313 questionnaires were returned following workshops this year the feedback is outlined in the Student Feedback Section below.

**School Personnel questionnaires** are used to gain feedback from school personnel on workshop content. Feedback is provided in the School Personnel Feedback Section.

Now that we are coming to the end of a three year programme with 13 schools on board it is timely to undertake a review of the evaluation process, thus ensuring that we have a robust and effective system for capturing data and feedback into the future. This process has to work well for both the schools and also to allow us to gain relevant feedback to provide and improve the programme we offer.



## **STUDENT FEEDBACK – PRE & POST PROGRAMME QUESTIONNAIRES**

A total of **356 pre programme questionnaires** were returned from students in schools who agreed to participate in the programme. Unfortunately due to Covid 19 we currently do not have any post programme data for this year. We will revisit this with schools in September. The pre programme questionnaire did yield some very positive results. As we have worked with each year group for a longer period of between 1 and 3 years, the impact of this engagement can be seen through the responses we have received in the pre programme questionnaires as outlined below.

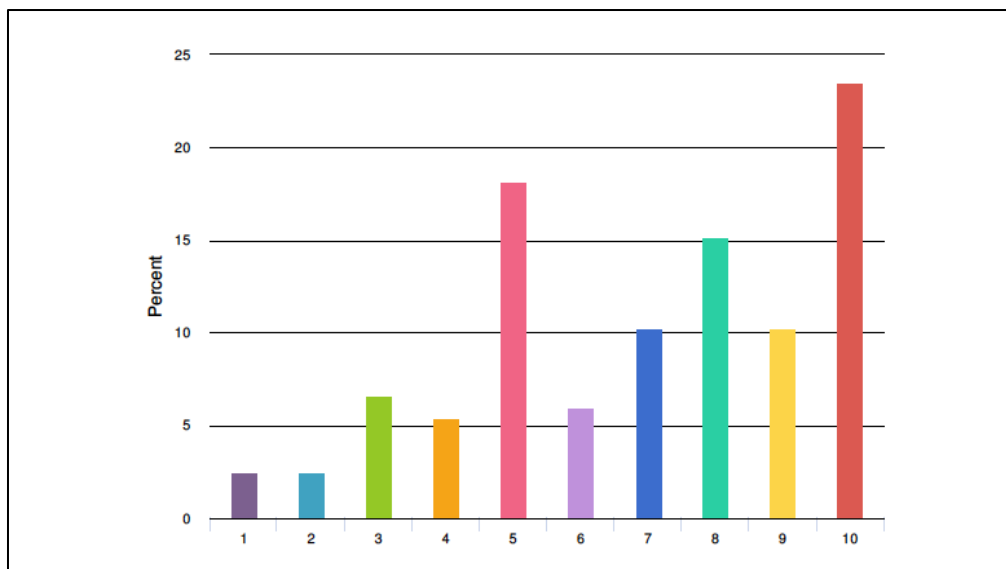
Students were asked on a 1-10 Likert Scale to respond to a range of questions

**How comfortable did you feel visiting TU Dublin on your own or with your family?**

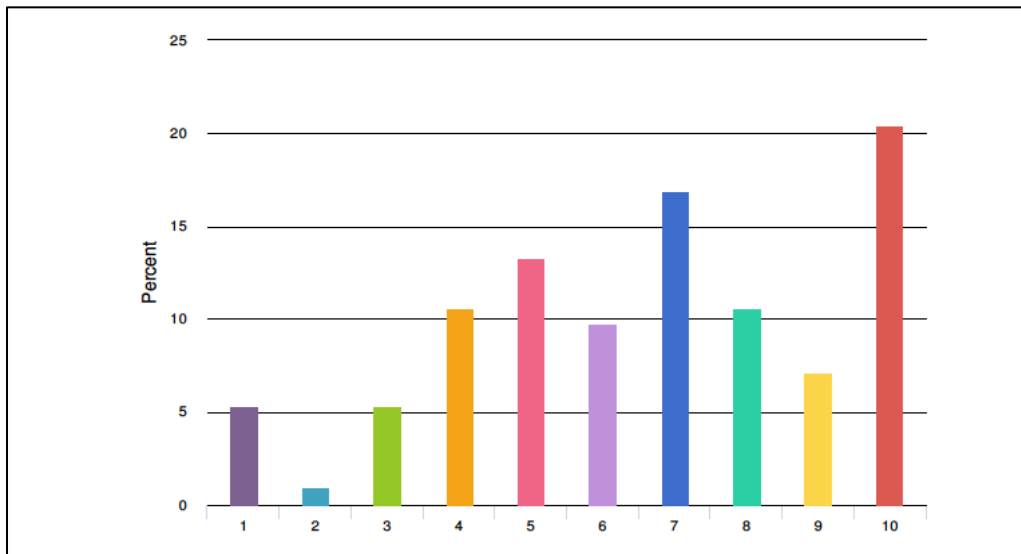
(1 = Extremely Uncomfortable, 10 = Extremely Comfortable).

Below is the feedback based on the Likert scale from 1st, 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students. This feedback indicates students felt comfortable visiting the campus, with the highest average in third year. This could be due to the fact that the students had now visited the campus on a number of occasions over the three year period and felt more comfortable as a result.

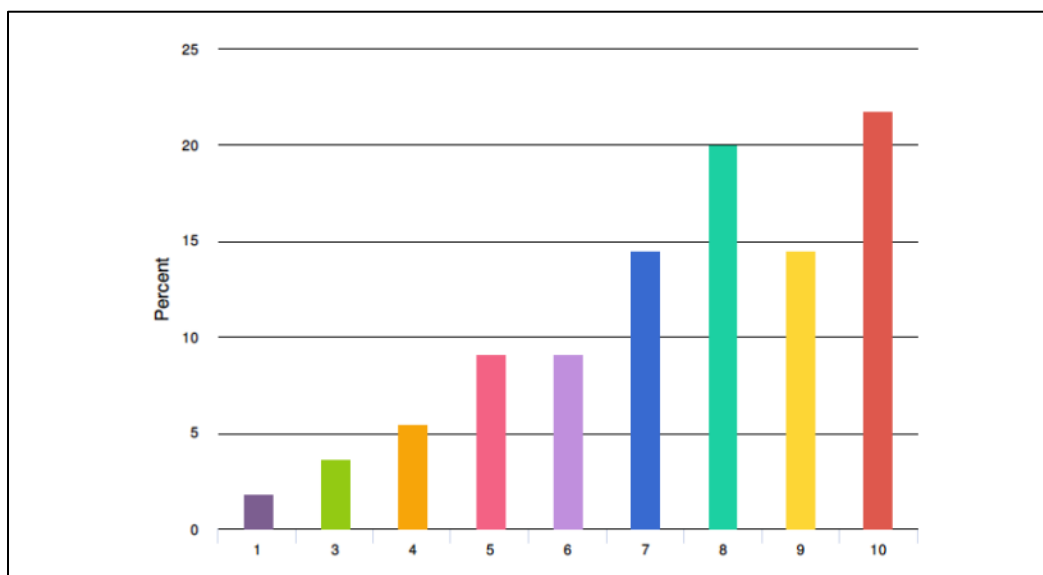
**1st Years – Students average level of comfort was 6.9 out of 10.**



**2nd Years - Students average level of comfort was 6.6 out of 10.**



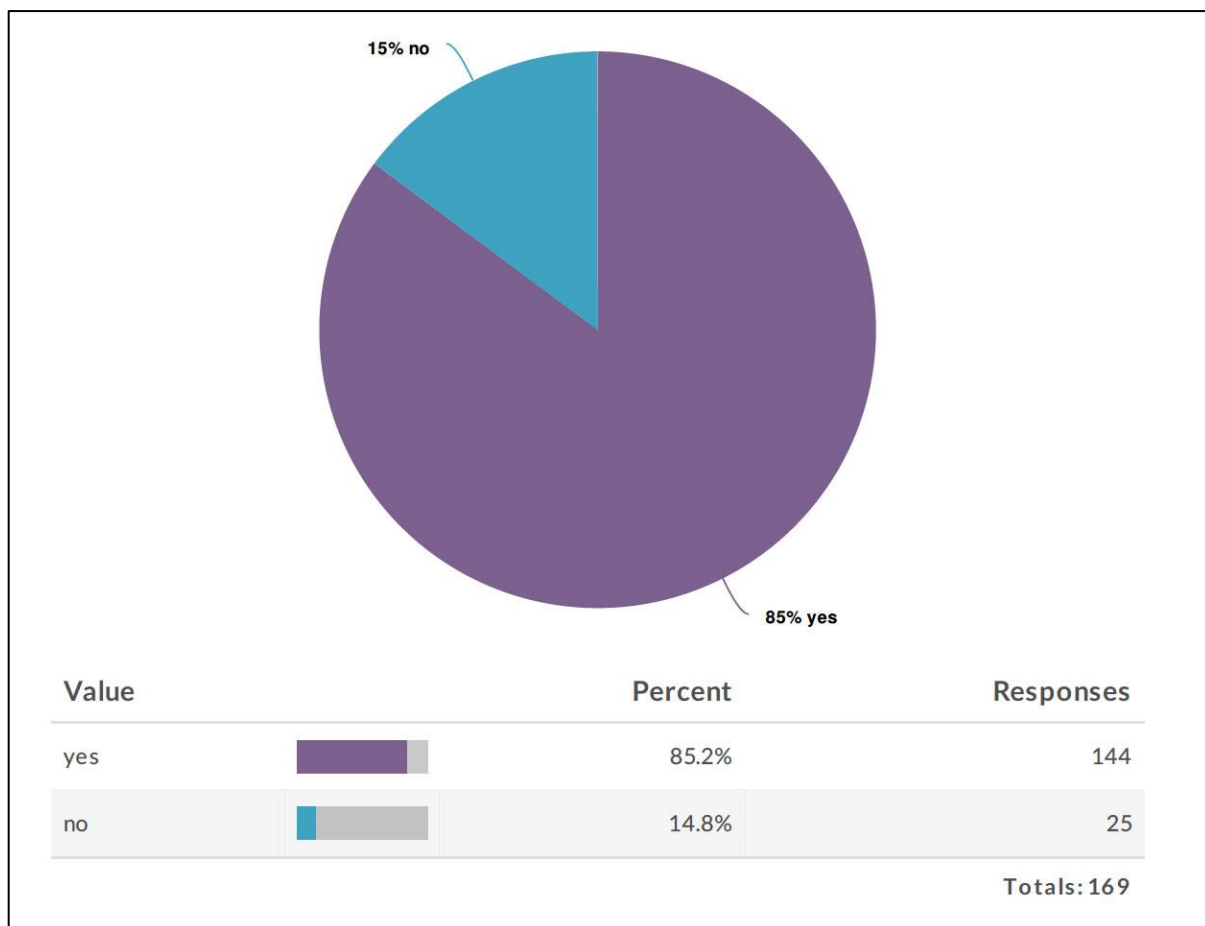
**3rd Years - Students average level of comfort was 7.5 out of 10.**



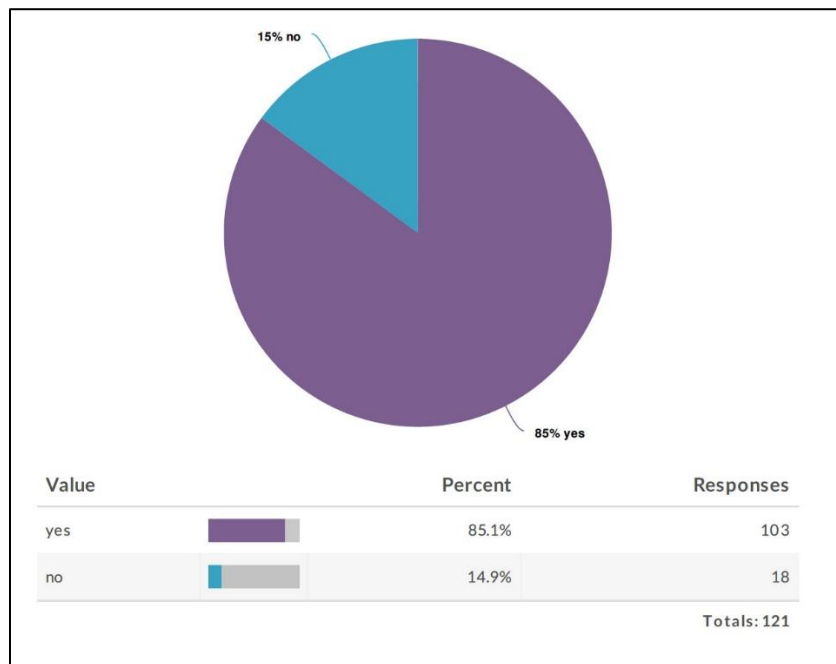
**How interested are you in attending college one day?**  
(Yes / No response)

Below is the feedback based on a yes / no response from 1st, 2nd and 3<sup>rd</sup> year students. The highest interest rate again as per previous question was 3<sup>rd</sup> years. This is possibly due to an increased awareness that third level education is a realistic goal and the students increased level of comfort on campus as a result of previous visits over the three year period.

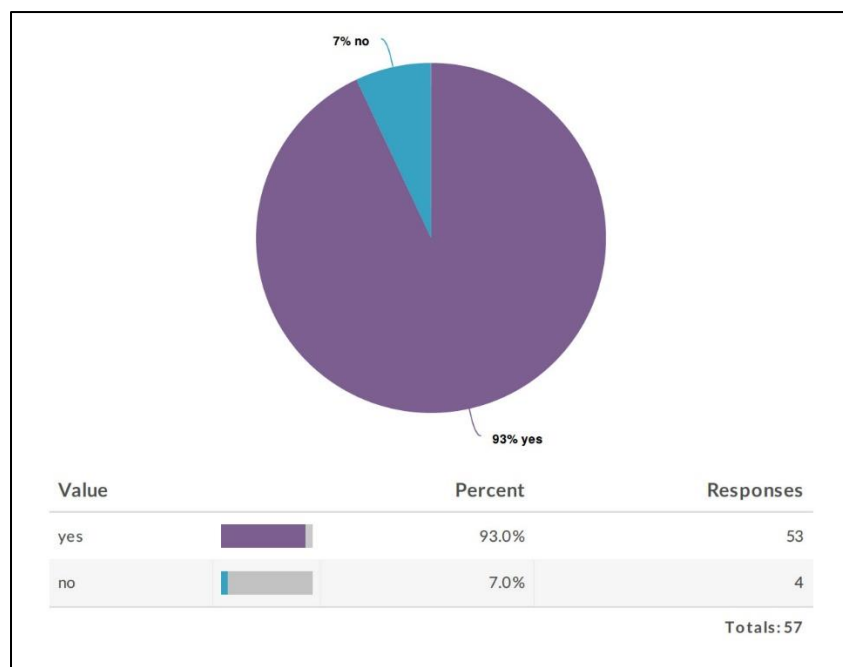
**1st years - 85.2% of students indicated that they were interested in attending college one day.**



**2<sup>nd</sup> years - 85.1% of students indicated that they were interested in attending college one day.**



**3<sup>rd</sup> years - 93% of students indicated that they were interested in attending college one day.**

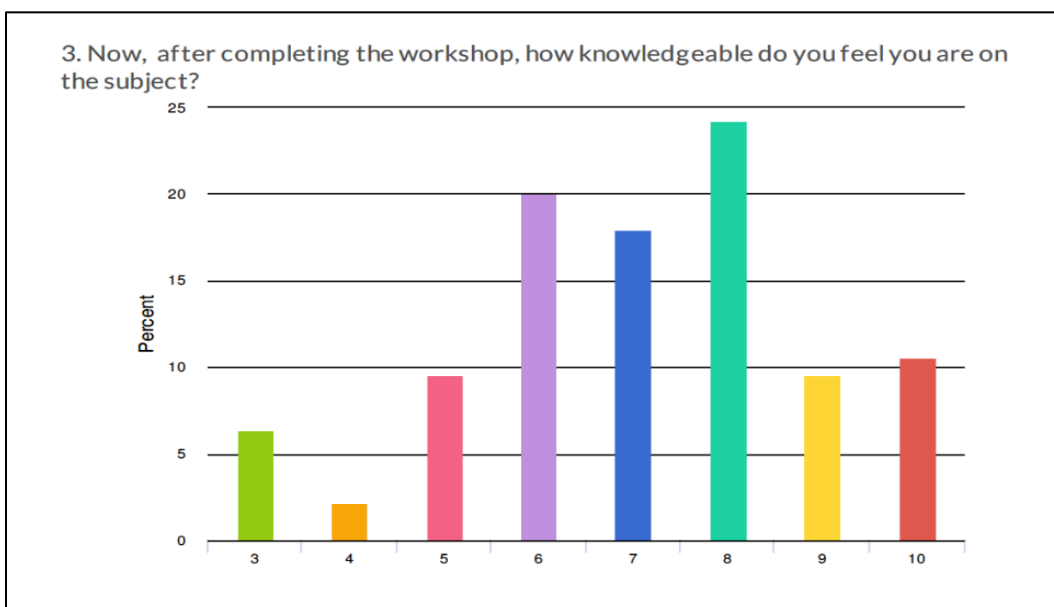
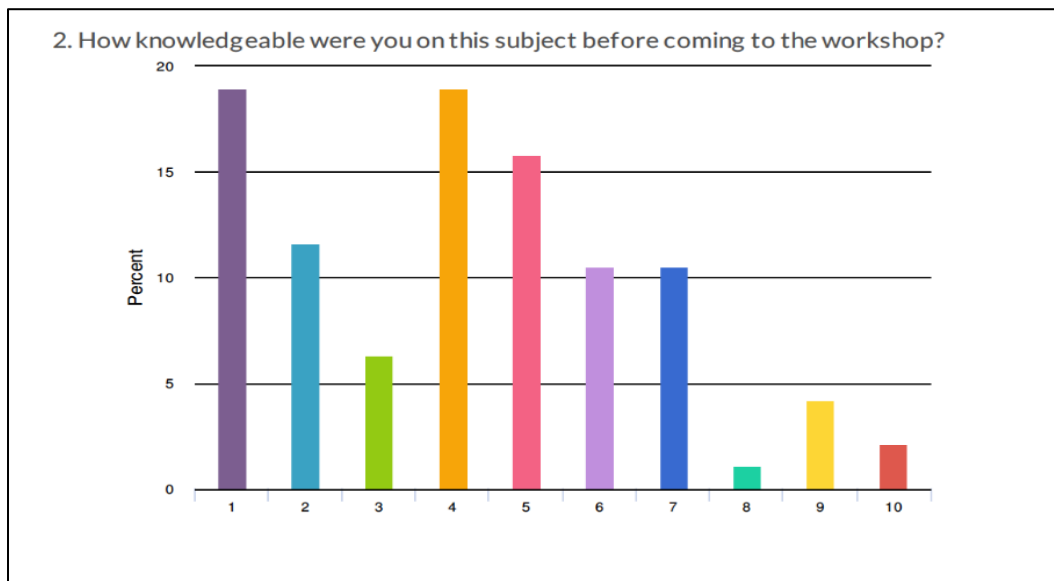


## STUDENT FEEDBACK - WORKSHOP FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE

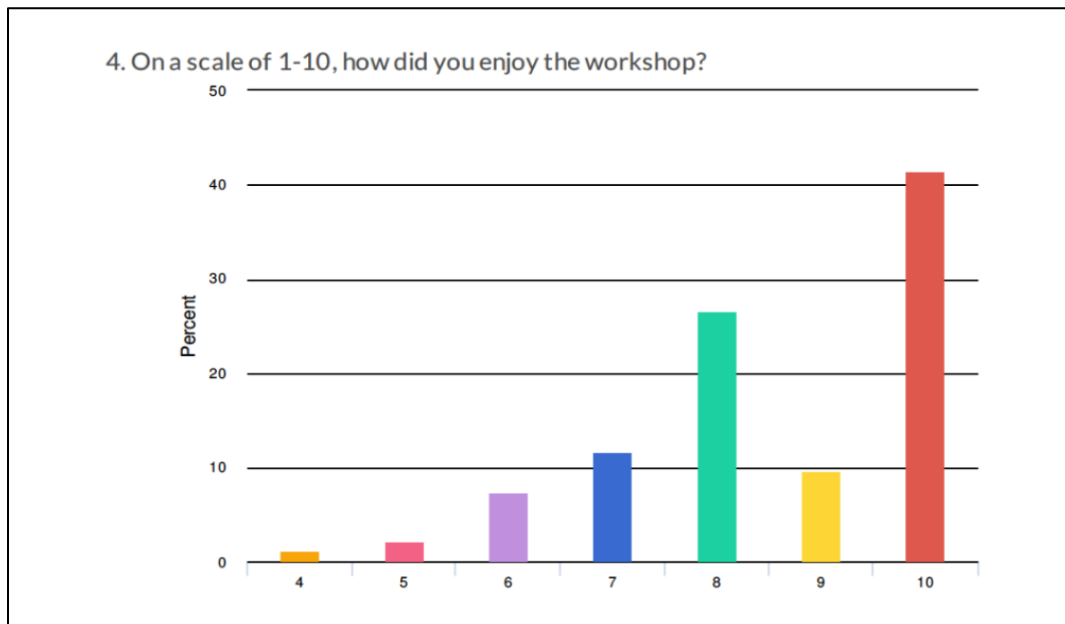
A total of **313 workshop questionnaires** were returned from students who participated in workshops. Feedback on a number of these workshop is outlined below.

### DESIGN PROCESS & PRODUCT DESIGN WORKSHOPS

In all workshops students indicated an **increase in knowledge gained** based on a Likert Scale 1-10 (1 = not at all knowledgeable, 10 = extremely knowledgeable). The increase in knowledge gained in a number of these workshops is presented below from a sample of 95 students' responses.



When students were asked if they **enjoyed the workshops**, on a Likert scale of 1-10 (1 = disliked it, 10 = loved it). The range of scores for both workshops combined is indicated below.

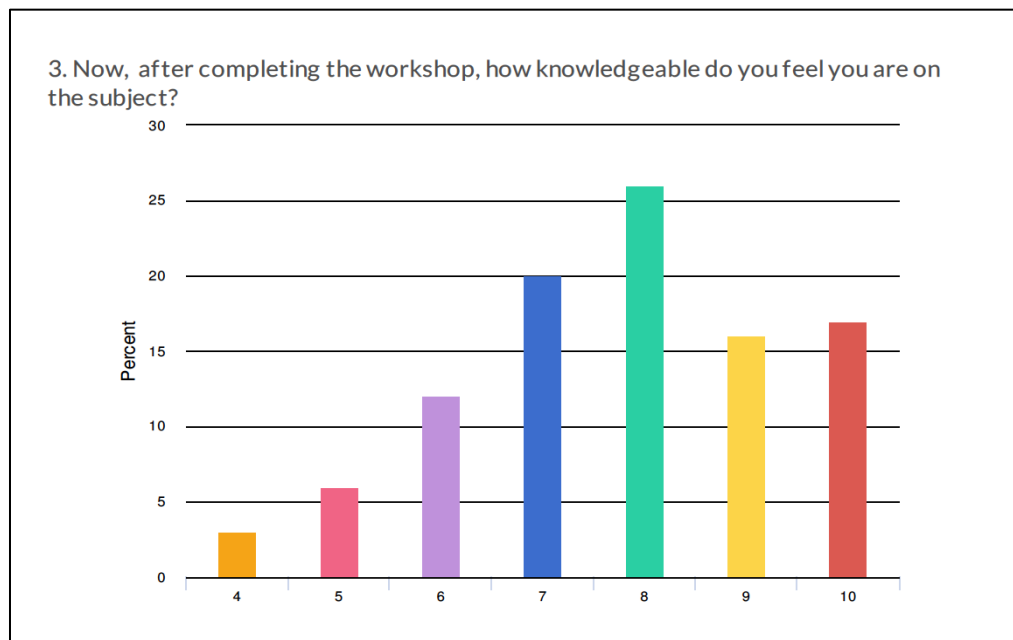
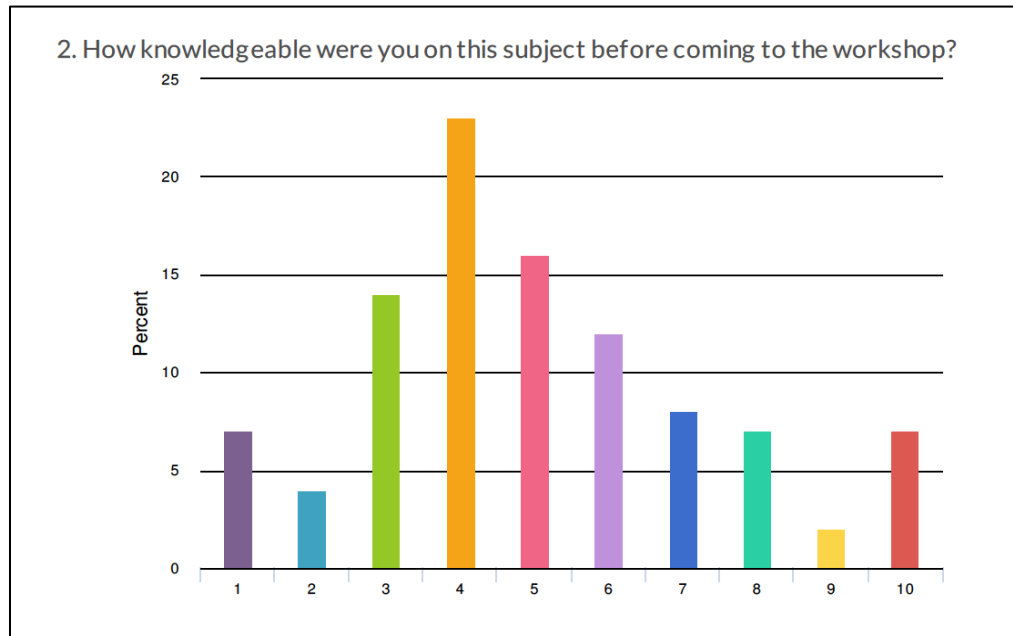


5. What was the most interesting thing you learned today?

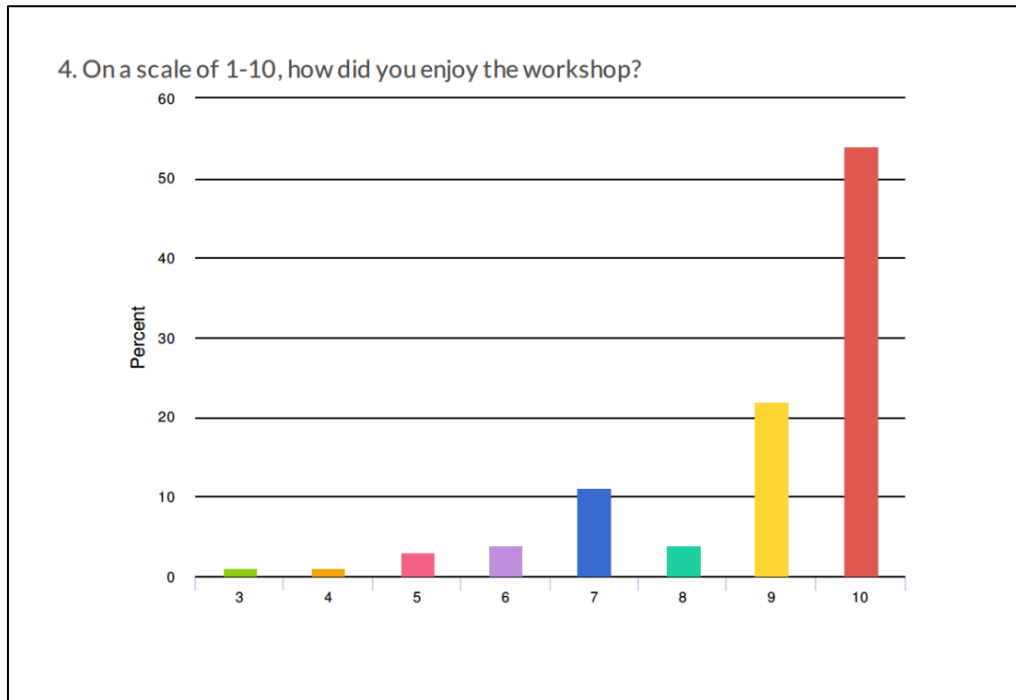


## CSI FORENSICS & RENEWABLE ENERGY WORKSHOPS

In all workshops students indicated **an increase in knowledge gained** based on a Likert Scale 1-10 (1 = not at all knowledgeable, 10 = extremely knowledgeable). The increase in knowledge gained in a number of these workshops is presented below from a sample of 100 student responses.



When students were asked if they **enjoyed the workshops**, on a Likert scale of 1-10 (1 = disliked it, 10 = loved it). The range of scores for both workshops combined is indicated below.



5. What was the most interesting thing you learned today?

people bodies magnets making  
finger dead long body energy  
crime crimes windmill  
copper fingerprints colours criminals  
catch prints insects learning wind  
interesting turbine works learned



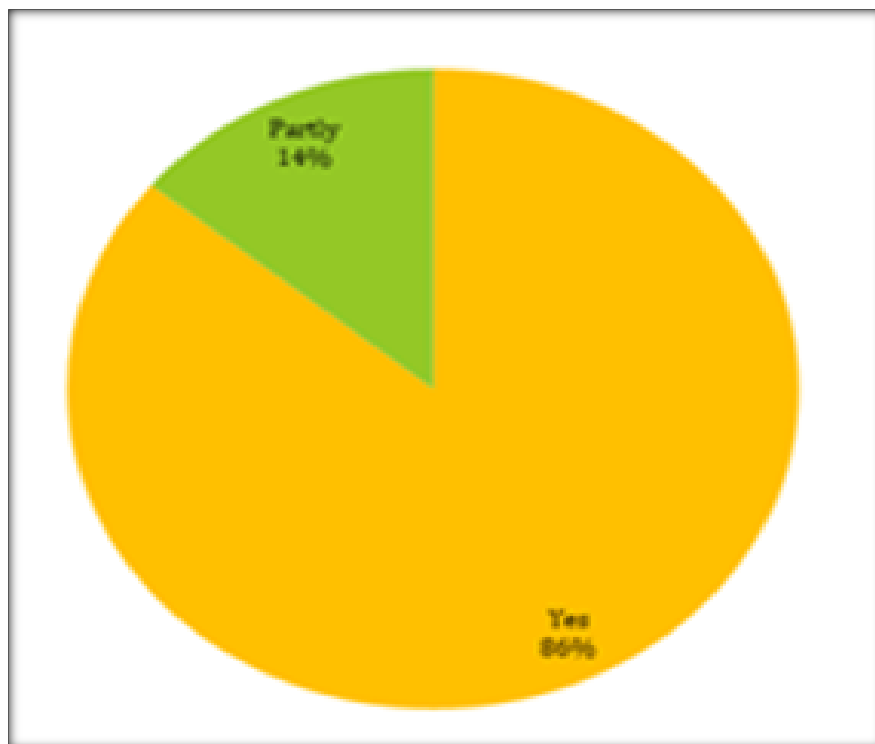
## **SCHOOL PERSONNEL – WORKSHOP FEEDBACK QUESTIONNAIRE**

Following each workshop school personnel (guidance counsellors/teachers/support staff) were asked to complete and return questionnaires. Feedback was received on seven of the workshops provided.

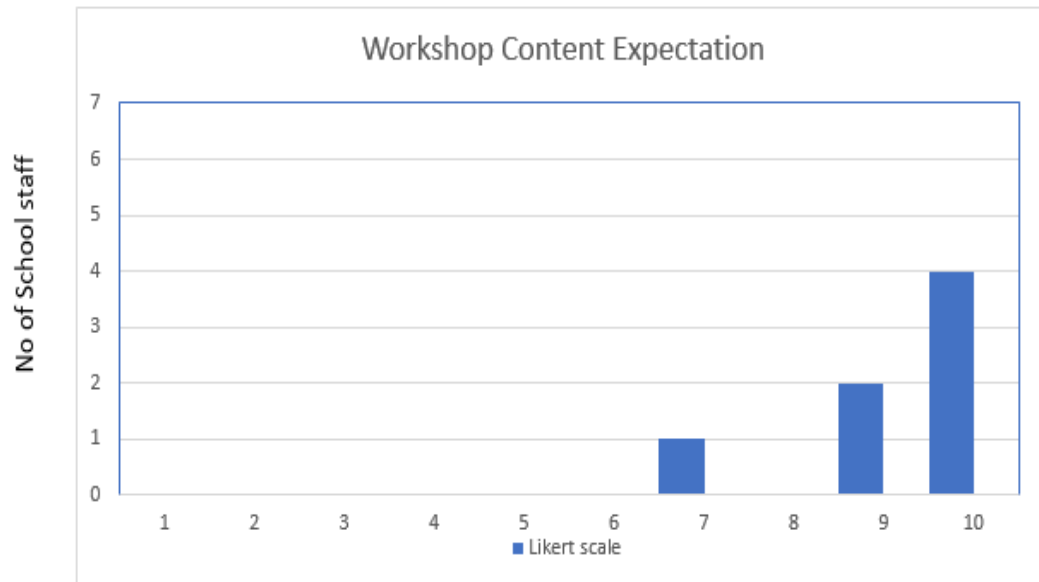
From analysing this data **86% of school personnel indicated that the workshops fully achieved the aims set out for the programme.**

*“open the TU Dublin Campus to DEIS schools, provide opportunities for secondary school students to engage with TU Dublin in a meaningful way and make them aware of a variety of different career options, link areas of secondary school curriculum being studied to opportunities available to higher education and specifically TU Dublin, engage students and encourage them to learn, dream and actively participate”.*

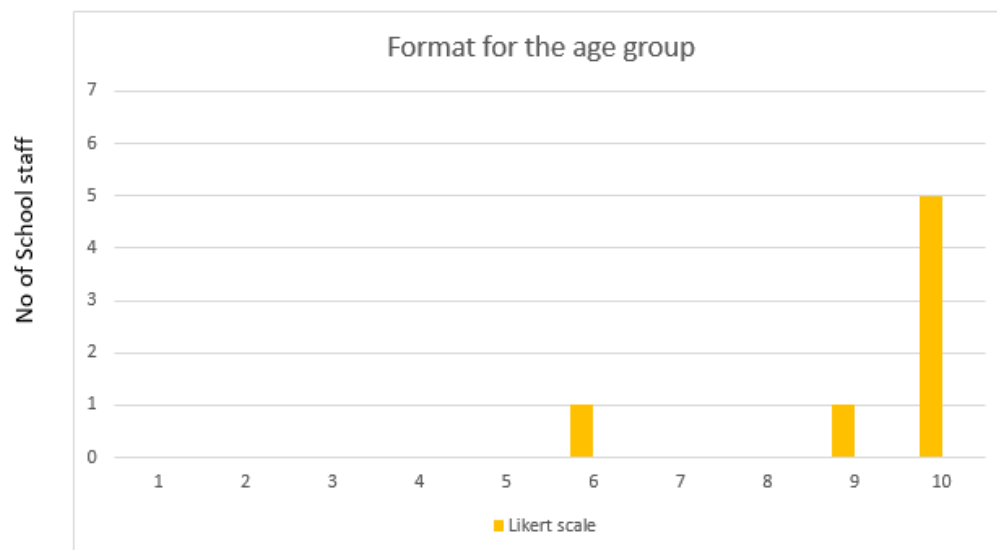
### **Did the Campus visits achieve the programme aims?**



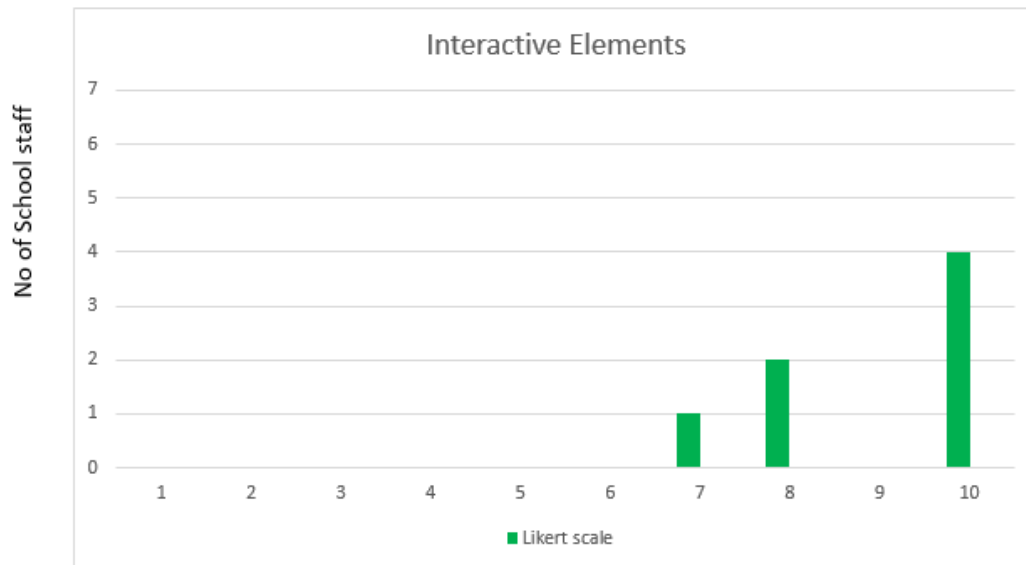
On average based on a 1-10 Likert Scale, school personnel indicated their satisfaction with the ***workshop content*** as **9.3**.



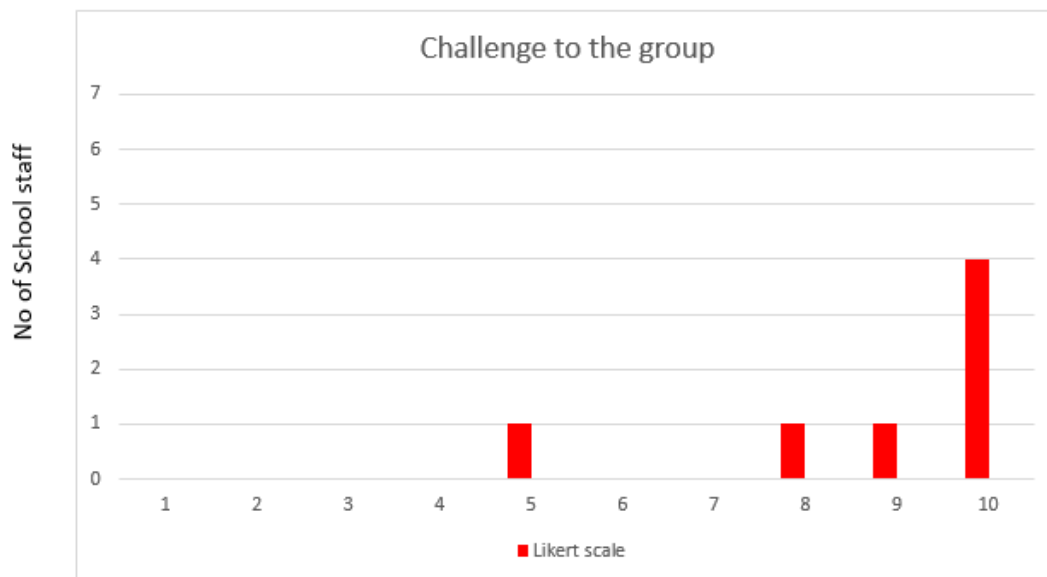
The average satisfaction score in relation to ***workshop format*** was **9.3**.



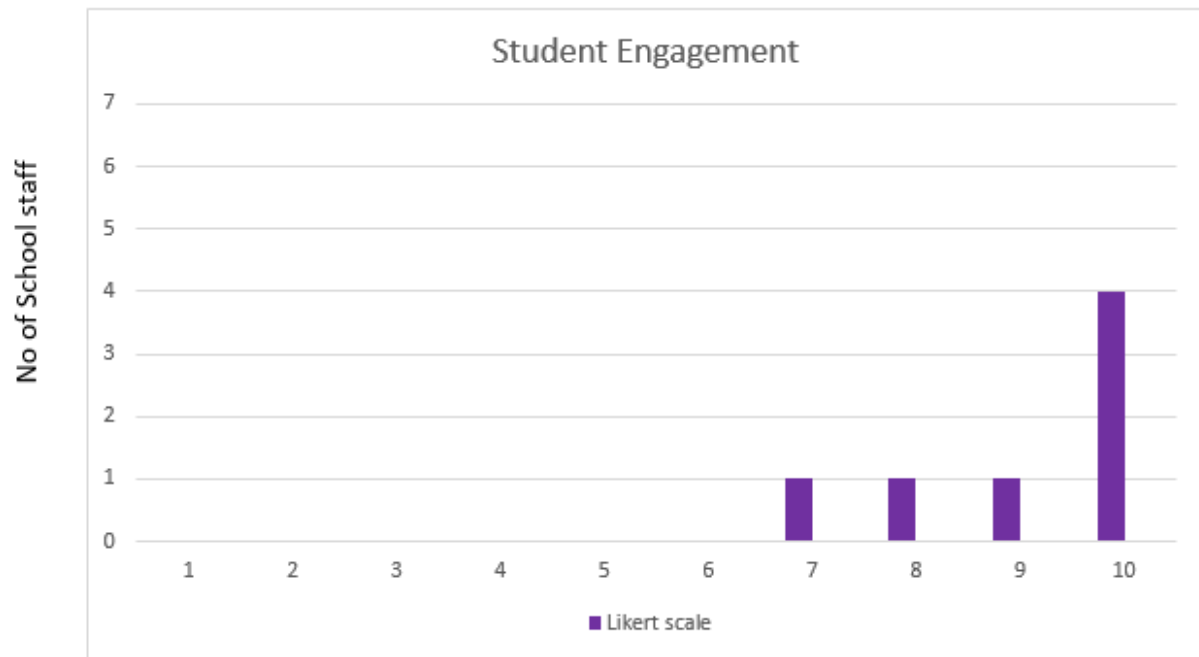
In terms of the range of ***workshop interactive elements***, school personnel on average indicated a **satisfaction level of 9.0**.



The average satisfaction level of school personnel with the ***level of challenge for students in workshops*** was **8.9**.



When asked about their perceptions of the degree to which *students were kept engaged during the workshops*, school personnel indicated an *average of 9.0*.



### Yearly Comparison - School Personnel Feedback

	Average Rating 2017-2018	Average Rating 2018-2019	Average Rating 2019-2020
School Satisfaction with Workshop Content	7.2	8.5	9.3
School Satisfaction with Workshop Format	7.5	8.5	9.3
School Satisfaction with the Range of Interactive Elements	8.7	8.5	9.0
Schools' Perception of Student Engagement during Workshops	7.5	8.4	9.0

It was also noted that all school personnel who completed questionnaires would recommend the workshops to other schools and found the workshops have been an enormous benefit to the students who participated.



Individual qualitative feedback from Guidance Counsellors has indicated that the workshops have been an enormous benefit to the students who participated.

### **Testimonials 2020**

*“Thank you for an enjoyable and informative workshop yesterday. When the girls got back to school, they invited the Principal and any teacher who was in the area to watch the balloon cars race across the foyer area! It was great to see!”*

*Patricia Garry  
Deputy Principal  
Warrenmount Secondary School*

*“Thank you for hosting the Wellbeing workshop yesterday.....The students were extremely happy leaving and mentioned the movement, relaxation, safe place, smells, lighting and ambience as particularly special. Already looking forward to the next one”.*

*Róisín Moroney,  
CSPE & French Teacher  
Stanhope Secondary School*

*“The best thing I can say is that the students enjoyed the session, participated positively, came back to school with new energy and would love to do more of that type of work. There was a great rapport between the instructor and the students”.*

*John Davis  
Guidance Counselor  
Westland Row CBS*

*"Excellent work, if we keep on investing in education and harness talent like this the future of the country is bright! Thanks to all".*

*Sean McSweeney  
Maths Teacher  
St. Pauls CBS*

*"Again, thank you for facilitating us re Yoga/Meditation session..... We really enjoyed the session ..... it was great to see how the students engaged so willingly in the session. I think this was testament [to the instructor's] calm, non-judgemental and easy-going persona and the relaxed setting of the room. It meant that the student could engage at a level that felt 'safe' for them".*

*Patricia Garry  
Deputy Principal  
Warrenmount Secondary School*

*"Giving the students the code first and letting them figure out what distance it moved was a good constructivist approach. The guidelines were good and challenged our students to the right level. Also has a high ceiling as the 'better' students could devise their own code. I have never seen students running to complete a task in school, they love the competitive nature to the challenges". They learned the importance of attention to detail, how coding works and how achievable it is for them to participate in coding activities".*

*Sean McSweeney  
Maths Teacher  
St. Pauls CBS*

*"I felt that the students, no matter what their level of academic ability is, were engaged and challenged, so I feel that the content worked well for the intended age group. The workshop was fun and exciting".*

*Patrick Flynn  
Home School Liaison Teacher  
Stanhope Secondary School*

## **CONCLUSION**

The Junior Cycle Workshop Programme funded by basis.point has reached an additional nine DEIS schools since February 2018. We are delighted with the response to from these schools and their students to the Junior Cycle workshop programme. We are confident that we have achieved the overall aim of the programme in highlighting that higher education is a realistic and achievable goal and in instilling additional confidence in these students as they progress through secondary school. The increased interest from schools in the programme and feedback given have led us to identify areas for further development going forward.

With the additional funding from basis.point to extend the coordinators role into a full time position the Access and Civic Engagement office has now begun the process of implementing the following:

### **Evaluation**

Significant time went into establishing the evaluation process initially. As we now are at the end of a three year programme it is appropriate to review the evaluation process used to date. This review will include feedback from school personnel and will engage with all stakeholders in the Junior Cycle Workshop Programme. We are also considering a video-based interview approach with students and school personnel, which also could be used for promotional purposes in the future, subject to the appropriate consents.

### **Relationship Building**

The relationships with the schools are paramount to the success of the Junior Cycle Workshop Programme. This requires a significant investment of time in order to deepen and maintain the relationships with the schools involved in the programme. Turnover of staff in DEIS schools occurs on a regular basis and therefore building of new relationships is an ongoing process. We will re-engage with schools currently on the programme and re-visit the remaining school who did not have the capacity to take part this year.

### **Workshop Development & Review**

While all workshops offered to date have been successful and have been well received, we strive to improve existing workshops and explore opportunities to develop new offerings. A small number of the existing workshops (Study Skills and Wellbeing) are delivered by external organisations resulting in additional costs. Our goal is to deliver these workshops with colleagues within the University. We will continue to align the workshops to the new Junior Cycle Curriculum and national awareness weeks.

### **Parent Engagement**

Engagement of parents is key to ensuring students have the support necessary to pursue further and higher education. We aim to engage parents both formally and informally in the programme throughout the year through award ceremonies, end of year celebrations, performances related to music and multimedia workshops and information sessions. An information morning and

campus visit for parents was scheduled for May 20th, 2020. We will re-schedule this session in September 2020.

### **Coordination of TU Dublin Resources**

We aim to engage the wealth of knowledge across TU Dublin to further enhance the programme. Significant time is required to coordinate all resources including staff, students and societies. Utilising this human capital will expose students to all the opportunities available in campus life. TU Dublin staff and students will be able to provide workshop support, student Question & Answer sessions, campus tours and school in-reach visits. We are currently collaborating with departments who are moving to the new campus at Grangegorman and developing workshops to suit their expertise and subject knowledge in areas relating to STEM.

We are currently supporting a pilot of a new student led workshop with 1st Year TU Dublin Social Care students in the Department of Languages Law and Society. This involves developing study skills and learning techniques for Junior Cycle students.

We also have developed a Nutrition workshop to be delivered by TU Dublin students in the Department of Biological and Health Sciences in educating students as to the importance of diet and nutrition. This will be followed by a session in the gym subject to timetabling and resourcing.

### **Support to Guidance Counsellors**

The Guidance Counsellor in each school is the main link for the Junior Cycle Workshop Programme and is often overburdened with requests along with managing the day job. We can support Guidance Counsellors by organising and hosting information sessions/workshops and by providing training to assist them in navigating the changes in Higher Education in conjunction with our Access colleagues. An information session was held on October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to inform Guidance Counsellors of plans for the year and to discuss additional activities and make recommendations in general about the programme. Seven Guidance Counsellors attended the meeting representing six out of the thirteen DEIS schools we are working with. This will now be a yearly event with Guidance Counsellors.

### **In-reach**

We will add an in-reach element to the Junior Cycle Workshop Programme in which the Project Officer will visit participating schools and give college-awareness talks to reinforce and add value to what has been delivered on campus. The Junior Cycle Workshop Coordinator had the opportunity to visit one of the schools this year during College Awareness Week to give a presentation on Going to College.

### **Branding & Marketing**

There is the potential to attract more interest in the programme both internally and externally. To do this we intend to improve our online presence, publications and social media. We currently produce a newsletter which is circulated to all schools participating in the programme and to those who have yet to engage. However, we feel more work in relation to branding and marketing will enhance the programme further. The programme co-ordinator took the



opportunity during the school closures over the last month to create a promotional video for the workshops which we will use to further engage schools.

**We are extremely grateful to basis.point for their continued support of the Junior Cycle Workshop Programme.**

If you require any further information or clarification, please contact Anne-Marie Corry on 01 - 402 4139 or [annemarie.corry@tudublin.ie](mailto:annemarie.corry@tudublin.ie)



## **Partner Secondary Schools**

- St. Paul's CBS – D7
- St. Joseph's Stanhope Secondary School – D7
- Cabra Community College – D7
- CBS Westland Row – D2
- Ringsend Technical College – D4
- Presentation Warrenmount Secondary School – D8
- Mount Carmel Secondary School – D8
- Marino College – D3
- St. Joseph's Secondary CBS – D3
- CBS James Street Secondary School – D8
- O'Connell Secondary School – D1
- Larkin Community College-D1
- Mercy Secondary-Inchicore-D8



**Thank you**

