Using Student Analytics with ALs to increase retention

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Background

Previous work within the university includes targeting students using the analytics we have available. A project of this kind run by the advisors in Scotland was successful and we want to build on this approach but involving the students own tutor. Projects which have sought to engage tutors using other analytics tools have foundered. Tutors found the other analytics tools they were given unwieldy. We aim to build a method of delivery for the tutors which they found useful and engaging.

Beyond the use of analytics to target vulnerable students, we want to give concrete suggestions for working with vulnerable students that can change the outcomes for this cohort.

The project focuses on students new to the university on our entry level module and so undergoing their biggest transition in their learning journey. We want to straight away embed good learning practices and beliefs in this vulnerable group of students.

The Project

The project has recruited a group of volunteer tutors. The project will target students who are identified of having a 40 – 60% chance of completing the module. Tutors will receive a list of the students in this bracket. Students in this bracket who are in the tutor group of participating tutors will receive specific bespoke interventions delivered by their own tutors. Throughout the duration of the presentation the tutors will receive updates on the students VLE usage in the form of a flag when students VLE usage has changed. This has been shown to be a good early indicator of potentially dropping out of the course.

The vulnerable students will be telephoned. The discussion will address the four factors in developing mathematical resilience (see Figure 1). The call will include an explanation of the 'growth mindset' in mathematics and learning. These themes are then linked to a discussion of how much time the student plans to spend practicing mathematics and strategies to use when students get stuck.

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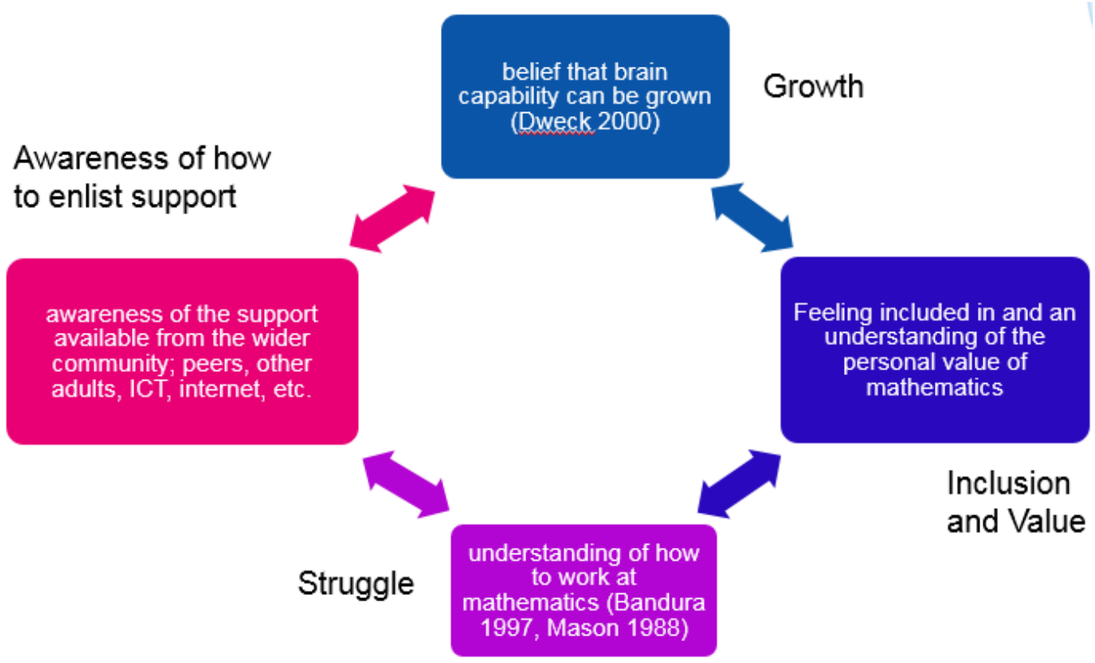
These students will receive a pre and post attitude to maths survey. We hope to see an improvement in their attitude to maths and to see a better outcome in retention for this group of students.

Fig 1. The Four Factors in Developing Mathematics Resilience



Conclusion

This project seeks a delivery method to ALs of the analytics that the university holds on its students. We wish to ascertain if this further empowers the tutors in retaining students on the module.
The addition of mathematical resilience training to tutors is a further benefit of the project.