

Factors impacting long-term academic achievement for students with autism

Evidence from Queensland administrative data

Professor Michele Haynes, Karen Kusuma, Dr Melanie Spallek

Contact details: Professor Michele Haynes | Phone: +61738616166 | Email: Michele.Haynes@acu.edu.au | acu.edu.au/ilste

BACKGROUND

This study examined academic achievement trajectories for students with autism using historical Queensland administrative data



Research Aims

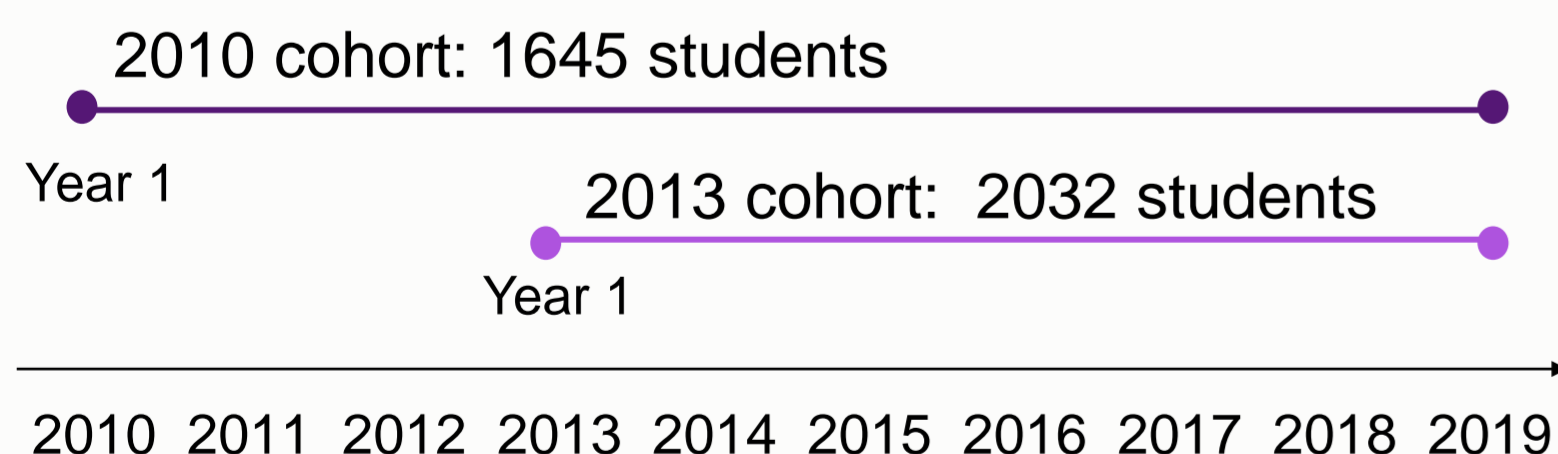
1. Identify distinct groups of academic trajectories
2. Identify factors that support successful long-term academic achievement

METHOD



Cohorts

Data includes 2 cohorts of students, verified with autism through EAP, in Queensland state schools:



Statistical Analyses

Latent growth mixture models and multilevel regression models were used to group similar academic achievement trajectories (into classes) and to investigate associated factors

SUPPORTING FACTORS



Factors associated with improved academic achievement:

- ✓ Early verification of autism through EAP by age 8
- ✓ Tailored learning supports
- ✓ Less than 6 personal absences per semester
- ✓ No suspensions
- ✓ Consistent EAP quartile rating across time

MATHEMATICS ACHIEVEMENT TRAJECTORIES

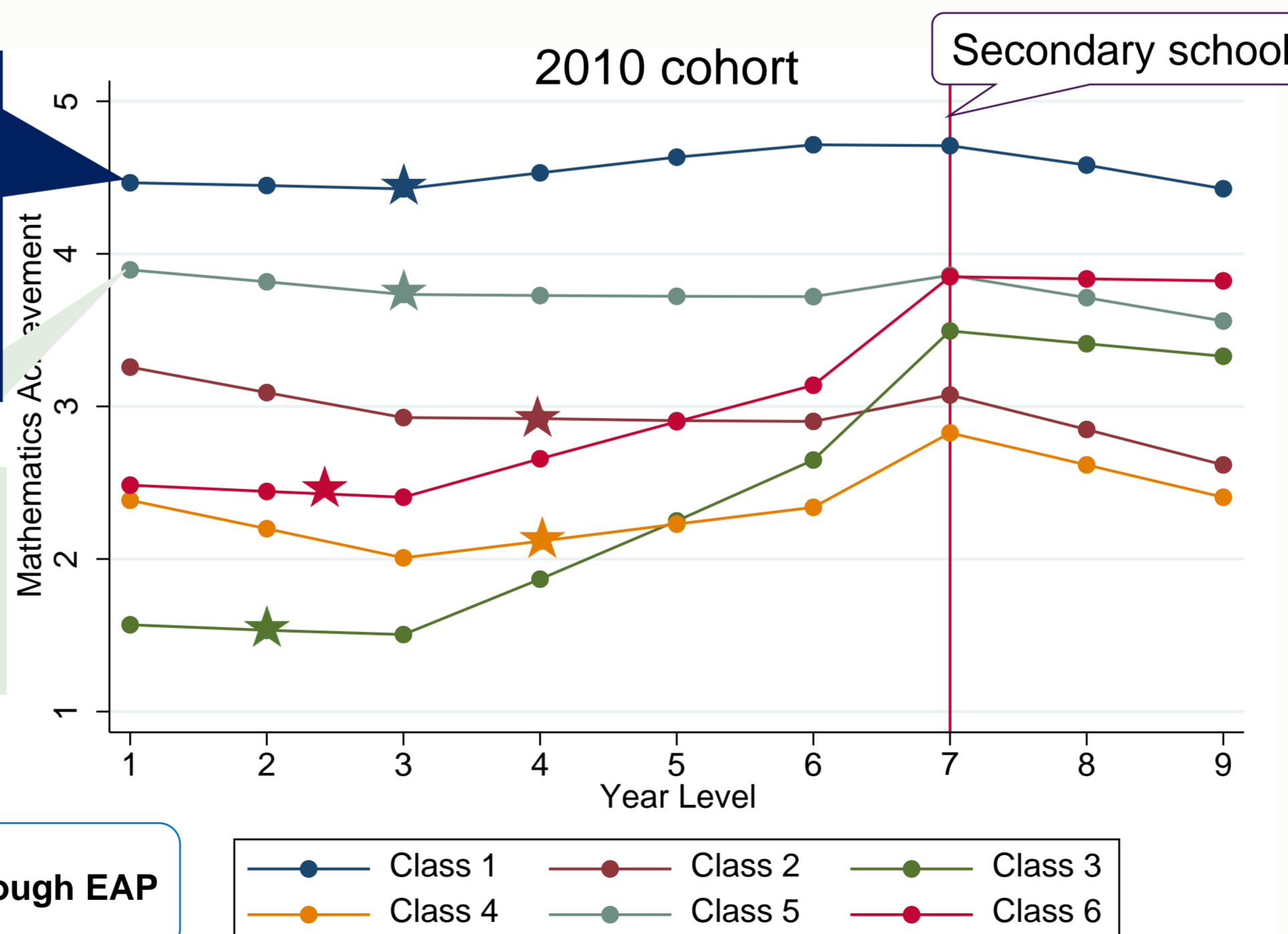
Class 1 (7.1%):

- Average above B
- No suspensions
- Lowest number of personal absences

Class 5 (15.8%):

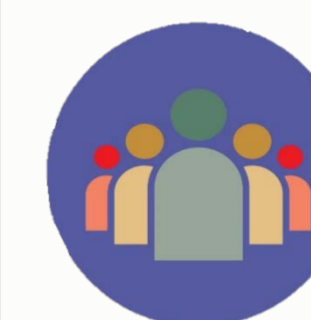
- Average achievement marginally below B

☆ Year level verified through EAP

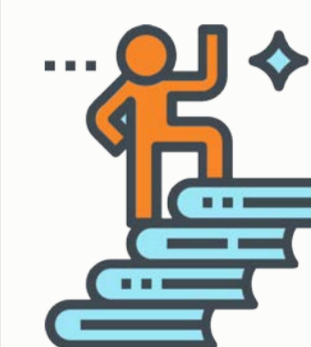


Academic achievement is measured on a 5-point scale: A=5, B=4, C=3, D=2, and E=1

FINDINGS



Students with long-term successful academic outcomes (class 1 and 5) come from **diverse backgrounds**



Students from **rural areas** could be as successful as their peers in other regions



Low personal absences and **no suspensions** are important for successful outcomes in school retention and improved academic achievement

The trajectories demonstrate that students with autism have diverse academic achievement outcomes. **Individualised educational adjustments** are important for enabling academic success.

IMPLICATIONS



Identify support needs early
Students who achieved the greatest improvement in mathematics were verified with autism at a younger age



Closely monitor students' behaviour and academic performance following an EAP quartile change.



Changes to EAP quartile ratings impact subsequent academic achievement