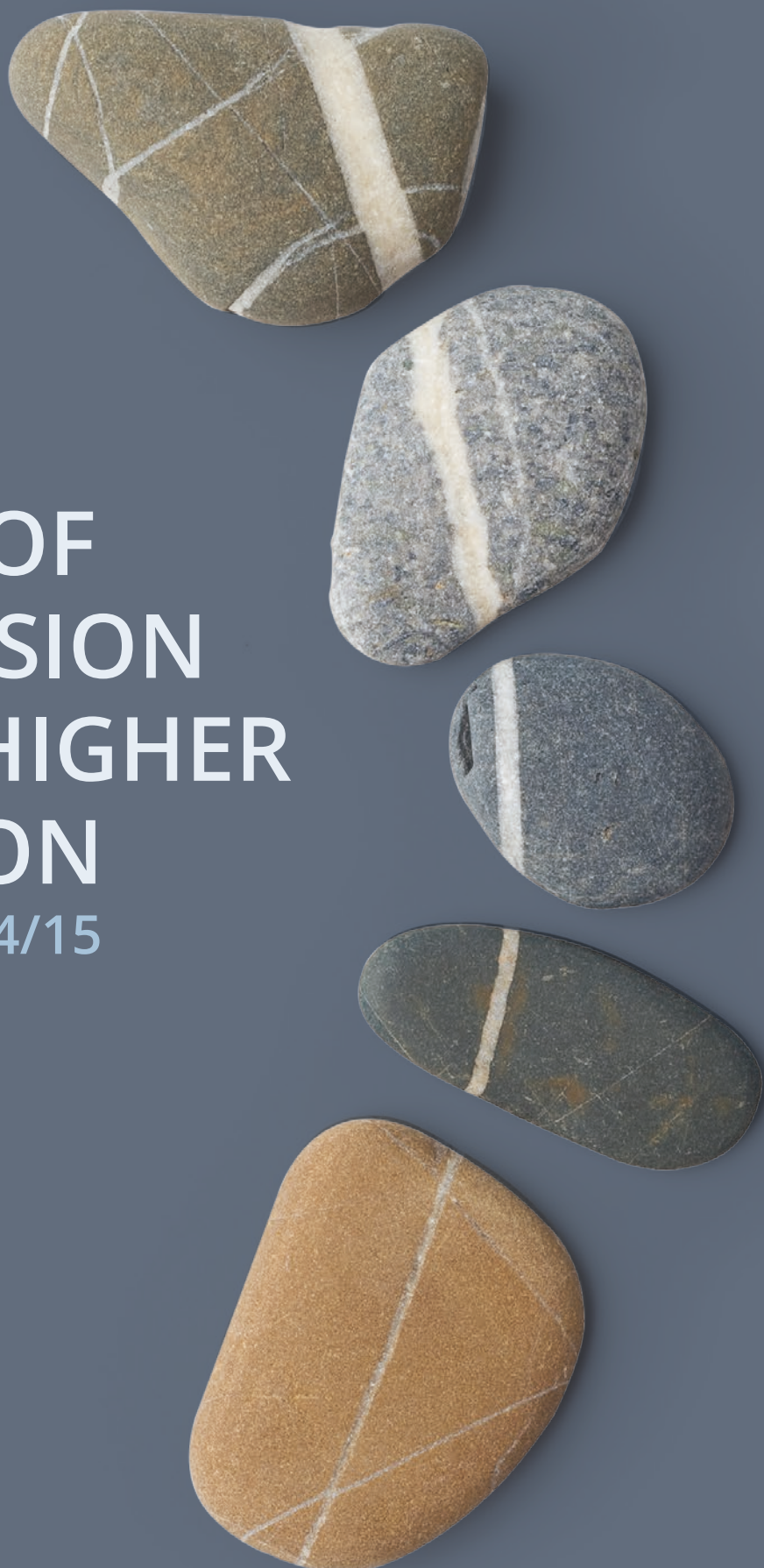


A STUDY OF PROGRESSION IN IRISH HIGHER EDUCATION

2013/14 TO 2014/15



A STUDY OF PROGRESSION IN IRISH HIGHER EDUCATION

2013/14 TO 2014/15

A report by the Higher Education Authority

March 2017

Denise Frawley, Victor Pigott and Dawn Carroll

Acknowledgements

The Authority wishes to thank higher education institution staff involved in returning student record data to the Higher Education Authority.

For further information, please contact: Mr Victor Pigott (Senior Statistics Manager), Ms Denise Frawley and Dr Dawn Carroll (Data and Policy Analysts) at statistics@hea.ie.

ISBN 1-905135-55-6

Contents

List of Tables	2
List of Figures	3
List of Appendix Tables	3
<i>Executive Summary</i>	5
Chapter 2 Non-Progression of 2013/14 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrants	6
Chapter 3 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study	6
Chapter 4 Non-Progression Rates by Student Characteristics	7
Chapter 5 Trends in Non-Progression Rates	7
<i>Chapter 1: Introduction</i>	8
1.1 Introduction	9
1.2 Data Sources and Methodology	10
1.3 Categorisation of Students	10
1.4 Limitations	11
<i>Chapter 2: Non-Progression of 2013/14 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrants</i>	12
2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Non-Progression of New Entrants by Sector and NFQ Level	13
2.3 Categorisation of Students in the Academic Year 2013/14	16
2.4 Key Points	17
<i>Chapter 3: Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study</i>	18
3.1 Introduction	19
3.2 Non-Progression among 2013/14 Undergraduate New Entrants by Field of Study across all Sectors and NFQ Levels	19
3.3 Non-Progression among 2013/14 Undergraduate New Entrants by Field of Study, NFQ Level and Institute Type	20
3.4 Profession-Oriented Courses	21
3.5 Key Points	22
<i>Chapter 4: Non-progression Rates by Student Characteristics</i>	24
4.1 Introduction	25
4.2 Non-Progression and Gender	25
4.3 Non-Progression and Age	28
4.4 Non-Progression and Nationality	29
4.5 Non-Progression and Socio-Economic Group	29
4.6 Key Points	31

<i>Chapter 5: Trend in Non-Progression Rates</i>	32
5.1 Introduction	33
5.2 Trend in Non-Progression Rates by Sector and NFQ Level from 2007/08 to 2013/14	33
5.3 Trend in Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study, Sector and NFQ Level from 2007/08 to 2013/14	33
5.4 Key Points	36
<i>Chapter 6: Conclusion</i>	38
<i>Bibliography</i>	42
<i>Appendices</i>	
Appendix A List of Higher Education Institutions	45
Appendix B ISCED Codes	46
Appendix C Details of Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study, Sector and NFQ Level (2013/14 to 2014/15)	46
Appendix D Non-Progression by Gender and Prior Educational Attainment	47
Appendix E Details of Non-Progression Rates by Socio-Economic Group (2013/14 to 2014/15)	49
Appendix F Overall Non-Progression Rates by Institution and NFQ Level	50
Appendix G Overall Non-Progression Rates by Institution and NFQ Level and Field of Study	51
Appendix H Multivariate Logistic Regression Models – Factors Influencing Non-Progression from 2013/14 to 2014/15	55
<i>List of Tables</i>	
Table 2.1 Non-Progression Rates by Sector and NFQ Level, 2013/14 vs 2012/13	13
Table 2.2 Most Common Points Attained by Sector and NFQ Level, 2013/14 vs 2012/13	14
Table 2.3 Non-Progression Rates by Prior Educational Attainment	15
Table 2.4 Breakdown of Students on March 1st 2014/15	16
Table 2.5 Percentage of New Entrants by Sector in 2013/14 Classified as Repeat in 2014/15	16
Table 2.6 Breakdown of Repeat Students by NFQ Level and Sector (2013/14)	16
Table 3.1 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study and NFQ Level in Institutes of Technology	20
Table 3.2 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study and NFQ Level in Universities and Colleges	20
Table 3.3 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study for Level 8 in all Sectors	21
Table 4.1 Breakdown of Mature New Entrants by Sector 2013/14	27
Table 5.1 Trends in Non-Progression Rates by Sector and NFQ Level from 2007/08 to 2013/14	33
Table 5.2 Trend in Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study for Level 8 across All Sectors	34
Table 5.3 Trend in Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study for Level 8 in Institutes of Technology from 2007/08 to 2013/14	35
Table 5.4 Trend in Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study for Level 8 in Universities from 2007/08 to 2013/14	36

List of Figures

Figure 2.1	Non-Progression Rates by Prior Educational Attainment and NFQ Level	15
Figure 3.1	Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study 2012/13 vs 2013/14	19
Figure 3.2	Non-Progression Rates in Profession-Oriented Courses, 2012/13 vs 2013/14	21
Figure 4.1	Gender Balance of New Entrants by Sector and NFQ Level	25
Figure 4.2	Non-Progression by Gender, Sector and NFQ Level	26
Figure 4.3	Non-Progression by Gender at Level 8 in Institutes of Technology	27
Figure 4.4	Non-Progression by Gender at Level 8 in Universities	27
Figure 4.5	Non-Progression by Gender at Level 8 in Colleges	27
Figure 4.6	Non-Progression by Age Category	28
Figure 4.7	Non-Progression Rates by Nationality	29
Figure 4.8	Non-Progression Rates by Socio-Economic Group	30
Figure 4.9	A Comparison of Non-Progression Rates by Socio-Economic Groups 2012/13 vs 2013/14	30

List of Appendix Tables

Table A1	Higher Education Sector and Institutions involved Non-Progression Study 2013/14 to 2014/15	45
Table C1	Number of 'Students who did not progress in the academic year 2014/15' and the Number of 'New Entrants' by Field of Study, Sector and NFQ Level	46
Table D1	Non-Progression by Gender and Prior Educational Attainment at Level 6 and 7 in Institutes of Technology	47
Table D2	Non-Progression by Gender and Prior Educational Attainment at Level 8 and All Levels in Institutes of Technology	47
Table D3	Non-Progression by Gender and Prior Educational Attainment at Level 8 in Universities and Colleges	48
Table D4	Non-Progression by Gender and Prior Educational Attainment at Level 8 in all Sectors and for all New Entrants	48
Table E1	Number 'Students who did not progress from the academic year 2013/14 to 2014/15' and the Number of 'New Entrants' by Socio-Economic Group	49
Table F1	2013/14 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrant Non-Progression Rates by Institute of Technology & NFQ Level	50
Table F2	2013/14 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrant Non-Progression Rates by University & NFQ Level	50
Table F3	2013/14 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrant Non-Progression Rates by Colleges & NFQ Level	50
Table G1	2013/14 Institute of Technology Level 6 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study	51
Table G2	2013/14 Institute of Technology Level 7 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study	52
Table G3	2013/14 Institute of Technology Level 8 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study	52
Table G4	2013/14 Institute of Technology All Levels Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study	53
Table G5	2013/14 University Level 8 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study	53
Table G6	2013/14 Colleges Level 8 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study	54
Table H1	A Multivariate Clustered Analysis – Factors Influencing Non-Progression (2013/14-2014/15)	56
Table H2	A Multivariate Unclustered Analysis – Factors Influencing Non-Progression (2013/14-2014/15)	58

Executive Summary

This report examines successful participation and progression in Irish higher education institutions. The data reflects whether a student is present in his/her institution in the year following entry. The findings of this report corroborate previous evidence that certain groups of students are more at risk, than their peers, of not progressing in their studies. This document aims to provide benchmark data, fill in the gaps in knowledge and offer a comprehensive overview of progression in the higher education sector in Ireland.

This quantitative study reports the findings of an analysis of a full-time 1st year undergraduate cohort of 40,142 new entrants from March 1st 2014 to March 1st 2015 in their enrolled institution. The main analysis of this report draws from data returned by HEA-funded institutions to the *Student Record System* (SRS) and examines the issue of non-progression across a range of fields of study, NFQ levels (6-8) and institutions. Non-progression rates in selected profession-oriented courses are also investigated. Significant attention is paid to the extent to which individual student characteristics, such as gender, age, nationality and socio-economic background may influence non-progression. This report also examines differences between the student cohort entering the institute of technology, university and college sectors. Furthermore, Appendix H provides findings of multivariate regression models which highlight the importance of prior educational attainment on successful progression.

This study provides a purely statistical analysis. It does not account for factors around motivation, financial well-being, study patterns, student views on teaching methodologies and staff, attendance and participation in extra-curriculum activities as well as the work practices of students.

The report is structured into six chapters, the key findings of which are summarised below.

CHAPTER 2

Non-Progression of 2013/14 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrants

- The proportion of new entrants in 2013/14 who did not progress is 15% across all sectors and NFQ levels. This compares to 16% in 2012/13.
- The rates of non-progression in 2013/14 varied within and between sectors ranging from 26% and 27% at levels 6 and 7 compared to 16%, 11% and 6% at level 8 in universities, institutes of technology and colleges respectively.
- Between 2012/13-2013/14 and 2013/14-2014/15, non-progression rates remained the same for level 6 courses and dropped by one percentage point at level 7. Non-progression rates also reduced by one percentage point at level 8 in the institute of technology sector (from 17% to 16%), while there was no change in non-progression rates at level 8 in the universities and colleges.
- In general, courses at NFQ level 6/7 admit students on a lower points range (255-300) than NFQ level 8 programmes (405-450). The most common points attained at NFQ level 8 varied across the sectors with a 100-point difference between universities/colleges and institutes of technology.
- While these findings suggest a link between prior educational attainment on entry and successful progression after the first year of study, more detailed analysis (see Appendix H) confirmed this relationship. Those with higher prior educational attainment are more likely to progress to the second year of study than those with lower educational attainment.
- In total, 3.6% of all students are repeat students. The institute of technology sector, at level 7, has the greatest proportion of repeat students.

CHAPTER 3

Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study

- Rates of non-progression vary across fields of study. *Construction and Related* disciplines have the highest non-progression rate at 28%, while *Education* disciplines have the lowest rate at 4%.
- All students entering the *Education* field of study did so at level 8, while 43% of new entrants to the field of *Construction and Related*, entered at level 6 or level 7.
- Across all NFQ levels in the institutes of technology, *Construction and Related* Disciplines had the highest rate of non-progression. The same is also true for level 8 in the universities.
- At level 8 for all sectors, students in the disciplines of *Construction and Related Disciplines* have the highest non-progression rate (20%), followed by Computer Science (16%) and Services (16%).
- *Medicine* has the lowest non-progression rate of all 2013/14 new entrants in profession-oriented courses, at 3%, while *Architecture* has the highest rate at 20%.



CHAPTER 4

Non-Progression Rates by Student Characteristics

- Females are more likely than males to progress to the following year, across all NFQ levels and sectors, with the exception of level 8 in the college sector. This relationship holds true across the majority of prior educational attainment categories in the institutes of technology and universities.
- In the institute of technology sector at level 6 and level 7, mature students are more likely to progress to the following year of study than a new entrant who is under the age of 23. The opposite is true at level 8 in the university sector, where traditional students are more likely to progress than mature students.
- Across all levels and sectors, Irish students had a non-progression rate of 15% compared to 18% among non-Irish students.
- In relation to socio-economic groups, the lowest level of non-progression is found among *Farmers* at 9%. The highest level of non-progression is among the *Manual Skilled* and *All others gainfully employed and Unknown* groups, at 16%.

CHAPTER 5

Trends in Non-Progression Rates

- The overall new entrant non-progression rate has reduced by one percentage point between 2012/13-2013/14 and 2013/14-2014/15, from 16% to 15%.
- At level 8, for all sectors, the non-progression rate across *All Fields of Study* was 11% in 2007/08, 2010/11 and 2011/12. It was at 12% in 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- At level 8 in the institutes of technology sector, there was a slight decrease in the most recent proportion of students who did not progress to the following year of study – from 17% in 2012/13 to 16% in 2013/14.
- At level 8 in the university sector, the non-progression rate for *All Fields of Study* was 9% in 2007/08 and 11% in 2013/14. The *Construction and Related* field of study had a 5% non-progression rate in 2007/08, compared to a 13% non-progression rate in 2013/14.
- It is important to note that this analysis does not account for fluctuations in student numbers over time.

The following report (the fifth in a series) represents a full study of progression in HEA-funded Irish higher education institutions from 2013/14-2014/15. Future research directions will include a comprehensive study of completion in higher education at institute, sector, discipline and NFQ level.

CHAPTER 1

Introduction



1.1 Introduction

Despite a continued increase in the number of students entering higher education over recent decades, non-progression rates continue to give cause for concern, particularly for students studying certain disciplines and at certain levels of award. Internationally, there has been a notable shift towards analysing how students fare after entry into higher education and likewise, in Ireland, there has been an important policy shift in highlighting the negative consequences of non-progression. The *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030* emphasises the importance of a positive first-year student experience to achieving the goals of higher education, as ‘failure to address the challenges encountered by some students in their first year contributes to high drop-out and failure rates, with personal and system-wide implications’¹. Moreover, it states that:

*If Ireland is to achieve its ambitions for recovery and development within an innovation-driven economy, it is essential to create and enhance human capital by expanding participation in higher education. The scale of the projected widening and growth in participation over the period of this strategy demands that Ireland’s higher education system become much more flexible in provision in both time and place, and that it facilitates transfer and progression through all levels of the system*².

International research³ emphasises that having a better understanding of which students are more likely to withdraw is vital in order to maximise the use of resources in higher education and support the development of retention strategies. To date, the HEA have developed two national plans for enhancing equity of access to higher education⁴. Importantly, the concept of ‘access’ is understood to encompass not only entry to higher education, but also retention and successful completion⁵. One of the actions identified in the *National Access Plan* is to address the issue of non-completion, specifically ‘to address the issue of non-completion of programmes particularly for those in under-represented target groups’⁶. The HEA have established a Working Group to consider the area of student success. This Working Group draws on a wide membership from across the higher education sector and is working closely with the *National Forum for Teaching and Learning*, with a report due in the last quarter of 2017.

*The National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education*⁷ has funded a series of focused research projects focusing on transitions to higher education, student completion and retention, open education resources and open access, recognition of prior learning and research on higher education teaching and learning in Ireland. Furthermore, in 2013, Ireland launched its first *Irish Survey of Student Engagement* (ISSE) to take the views of students into account, particularly when looking at discipline data and rates of non-progression. The results of the ISSE survey will continue to guide future policy decisions on improving student experience and retention across all years of higher education. Retention is connected with other key issues in higher education, ranging from the promotion of equality to the pursuit of greater efficiency for producing high calibre graduates to meet the demands of a ‘knowledge economy’⁸.

1 DES, *National Strategy*, 56.

2 *Ibid.*, 10, 11.

3 See Gérard Lassibille and Lucía Gomez, “Why do higher education students drop out? Evidence from Spain”, *Education Economics* 16, no. 1 (2008): 89-105; Glenda Crosling and Margaret Heagney, “Improving Student Retention in Higher Education: Improving Teaching and Learning”, *Australian Universities Review*, 51, no. 2 (2009): 9-18.

4 The first plan is *Achieving Equity of Access to Higher Education in Ireland: Action Plan 2005-2007* (Dublin: HEA, 2004) and the second is the *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013* (Dublin: HEA, 2008).

5 HEA, *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013* (Dublin: HEA, 2008).

6 *Ibid.*, 26.

7 See <http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/>.

8 Higher Education Authority (HEA), *A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education* (Dublin: HEA, 2010). Available at: http://www.heai.ie/sites/default/files/study_of_progression_in_irish_higher_education_2010.pdf.

1.2 Data Sources and Methodology

The student data used in this analysis was extracted from the HEA's in-house database, the *Student Record System* (SRS), which contains an individual record for each student, in 26 HEA-funded institutions. The SRS gathers data from the university and colleges sector since the 2004/2005 academic year, and from the institutes of technology since the 2007/08 academic year. The data on which this analysis is based was extracted from the SRS by tracking student IDs within institutions and across academic years. This report focuses on 26 Higher Education Institutions, including seven universities, 14 institutes of technology and five colleges⁹.

The census dates used for this analysis – 1st March 2014 and 1st March 2015 – span the academic years 2013/14 and 2014/15. Students who repeated a year or who changed course or programme type within their original institution were identifiable and are grouped with those deemed to be still present. For the purposes of this report, only student data pertaining to full-time undergraduates (NFQ levels 6-8) was analysed: student records pertaining to undergraduates studying at NFQ levels 6 and 7 in the universities and other colleges were not included.

The socio-economic data in the SRS was collected by surveying the student body during the registration process in the 2013/14 academic year.

1.3 Categorisation of Students

New Entrants

A first year full-time undergraduate new entrant is defined as a student entering an undergraduate higher education programme for the first time.

Re-Enrolling Students

Students classified as re-enrolling are those students progressing to the next year of study on the same course without any interruptions. This category does not include repeat or transfer students.

Repeat Student

A repeat student is classified as being present in the institution on their original course the following year, but enrolled in the same year of study as the previous year.

Internal Transfer Student

Students transferring from their original mode or course of study to another programme within an institution, at the start of the new academic year, are described as internal transfer students.

External Transfer Student

Students transferring from a course of study in their institution to another institution are described as external transfer students. These students are not tracked in this study and are deemed as having 'not progressed'.

Non-Progression

In instances in which a new entrant student ID does not appear in their institution's data return for the following academic year, the student is described as 'non-progressed'. While re-enrolling, repeat and internal transfer students are identified separately in the analysis, it is not possible to distinguish external transfer students from those described as 'non-progressed'.

In summary, this study examines the non-progression of full-time first year undergraduate new entrants in the academic year 2013/14 to the academic year 2014/15 in their institution. The data for this cohort is examined by sector, NFQ level, field of study, gender, age, socio-economic background and nationality.

⁹ See Appendix A (Table A1) for a list of HEIs.

1.4 Limitations

The reader should be aware of the limitations that the dataset poses for analysis. The HEA non-progression study provides a purely statistical analysis. It does not provide information on the motivation for enrolling in higher education, the financial well-being of students, study patterns, student views on teaching methodologies and staff, attendance and participation in extra-curriculum activities as well as the work practices of non-progressing students.

Furthermore, since the census dates used are 1st March 2014 and 1st March 2015, this analysis does not take into account those students who left their institution prior to 1st March 2014. However, previous analysis of the data set undertaken by the HEA showed that just 4% of new entrants de-register from their original course of study prior to 1st March of the academic year in which their course commenced. Reasons for this may include disliking a course or in order to prevent a student paying full fees. In addition, the study does not take into account differing progression practices across institutions. For example, some institutions may allow students to progress into second year carrying failed modules while others will not allow this practice.

CHAPTER 2: Non-Progression of 2013/14 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrants



2.1 Introduction

This section examines the non-progression rates among full-time 2013/14 new entrants to HEA-funded institutions by sector, NFQ level and prior educational attainment. Details of the breakdown of students who have not progressed in the academic year 2014/15, are also provided. New entrants are classified as 'non-progressed' if they do not appear in the statistical returns of that institution in the following academic year (2014/15). Overall, there were 40,142 new entrants across all sectors in 2013/14. While the majority of students (85%) progressed into the following academic year, 6,203 (15%) students did not.

2.2 Non-Progression of New Entrants by Sector and NFQ Level

Table 2.1 illustrates the non-progression rates of first year new entrants by sector and NFQ level. The column entitled 'Level (% New Entrants in IOTS 2013/14)' shows the percentage of new entrants, at each NFQ level, that make up the overall new entrants in that sector. For example, 13% of new entrants within the institute of technology sector are studying at level 6. The '% Non-Progressed' columns show the percentage of new entrants who did not progress to the following year of study by NFQ level within each sector for both 2013/14 and 2012/13. The table shows that the rates of non-progression varied within and between sectors. The overall non-progression rate in 2013/14 is 15%, compared to 16% in 2012/13.

Table 2.1 *Non-Progression Rates by Sector and NFQ Level, 2013/14 vs 2012/13*

SECTOR	LEVEL (% OF NEW ENTRANTS IN IOTS IN 2013/14)	% NON-PROGRESSED (2013/14)	% NON-PROGRESSED (2012/13)
Institutes of Technology	Level 6 (13%)	26%	26%
	Level 7 (39%)	27%	28%
	Level 8 (48%)	16%	17%
	All Levels	21%	23%
Universities	Level 8*	11%	11%
Colleges	Level 8	6%	6%
All Institutions	Level 8	12%	12%
	All Levels	15%	16%

* There were 30,529 new entrants at level 8 across all sectors in 2013/14. 65% of these students are in the university sector (n=19,864), 29% in the institute of technology sector (n=8,795) and 6% in the college sector (n=1,870).

Table 2.2 provides further detail of new entrants in 2013/14 and 2012/13. The column 'Most Common Points Attained' shows the most common prior educational attainment in the Leaving Certificate examination by students entering higher education by sector and NFQ level.

Table 2.2 *Most Common Points Attained by Sector and NFQ Level, 2013/14 vs 2012/13*

SECTOR	LEVEL	MOST COMMON POINTS ATTAINED (2013/14)	MOST COMMON POINTS ATTAINED (2012/13)
Institutes of Technology	Level 6	255-300	255-300
	Level 7	255-300	255-300
	Level 8	355-400	355-400
	All New Entrants	305-350	305-350
Universities	Level 8	455-500	455-500
Colleges	Level 8	455-500	455-500
All institutions	Level 8	405-450	405-450
All institutions	All New Entrants	355-400	355-400

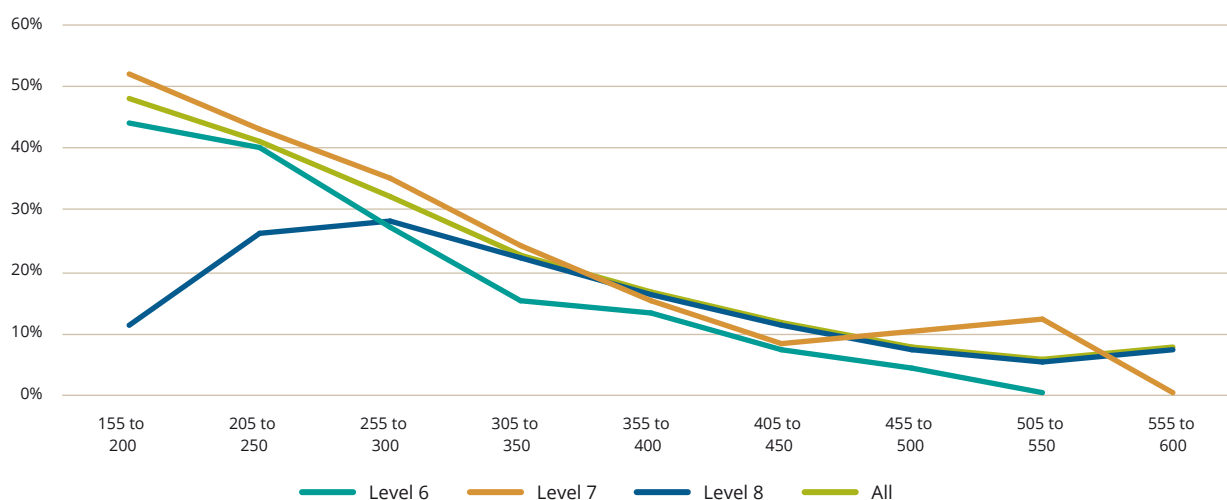
The most common points attained differs across sectors and levels. There is a gap of 200 points between entrants at level 6 into institutes of technology and level 8 entrants to both universities and colleges. Within the institute of technology sector alone in 2013/14, there is a difference of 100 most common points attained between entrants at level 6 and 7 (255-300 points) and entrants at level 8 (355-400 points). These findings, perhaps unsurprisingly, suggest that those on a lower points range enter the sector on a lower NFQ level. Differences in most common points attained also vary across sectors at the same NFQ level. The most common points attained by level 8 entrants in universities and colleges in 2013/14 was 455-500 in comparison to 355-400 attained by level 8 new entrants in the institute of technology sector. As shown in table 2.2, there has been no change from 2012/13 in the most common points attained.

Non-progression rates by prior educational attainment are outlined in Table 2.3. The findings show that those with higher prior educational attainment at all levels and sectors, are more likely to progress to the following year of study than those with lower educational attainment. For example, while 48% of all new entrants in the lowest points range did not progress into year two of their studies, this decreased to 7% among those attaining between 555 and 600 points. Figure 2.1 further depicts non-progression rates by prior educational attainment and NFQ level.

Table 2.3 *Non-Progression Rates by Prior Educational Attainment*

POINTS RANGE	ALL NEW ENTRANTS % NON-PROGRESSED	INSTITUTES OF TECHNOLOGY				UNIVERSITIES L8 % NON-PROGRESSED	COLLEGES L8 % NON-PROGRESSED	ALL L8 % NON-PROGRESSED
		IOT L6 % NON-PROGRESSED	IOT L7 % NON-PROGRESSED	IOT L8 % NON-PROGRESSED	ALL IOT % NON-PROGRESSED			
155 to 200	48%	44%	52%	n/a	49%	n/a	11%^	11%^
205 to 250	41%	40%	43%	31%	42%	0%^	8%^	26%
255 to 300	32%	27%	35%	30%	32%	19%	20%	28%
305 to 350	22%	15%	24%	22%	22%	25%	12%	22%
355 to 400	16%	13%	15%	14%	14%	18%	10%	16%
405 to 450	11%	7%	8%	12%	11%	11%	6%	11%
455 to 500	7%	4%	10%	8%	8%	8%	4%	7%
505 to 550	5%	0%^	12%^	10%	9%	5%	1%	5%
555 to 600	7%	n/a	0%^	8%	8%	8%	4%	7%
Other	15%	27%	23%	15%	20%	11%	8%	12%
Total	15%	26%	27%	16%	21%	11%	6%	12%

^ Points range with 25 or fewer students enrolled in year 1.

Figure 2.1 *Non-Progression Rates by Prior Educational Attainment and NFQ Level*

2.3 Categorisation of Students in the Academic Year 2013/14

In the academic year 2014/15, students who progressed were categorised as re-enrolling, repeat or internal transfer. The breakdown of students in year two can be seen in Table 2.4. After those who re-enrolled, repeat students form the largest number of students who progressed.

Table 2.4 *Breakdown of Students on March 1st 2014/15*

STUDENT BREAKDOWN BY CODE IN 2014/15	NUMBER OF STUDENTS
Re-enrolled (RE)	32,068
Repeat (RP)	1,427
Transfer Internally (TI)	444
Non-Progressed	6,203
Total	40,142

There were 40,142 new entrants across all sectors in 2013/14. In total, 33,939 students were categorised as progressing given that these students re-enrolled, repeated or transferred internally. The remaining students did not progress.

Table 2.5 examines new entrants who are classified as repeat students in the following academic year (2014/15). Repeat students constitute 3.6% of all new entrants. In total, 4.1% of students in the institute of technology sector are repeat students compared to 3.2% in the universities and 1.2% in the college sector.

Table 2.5 *Percentage of New Entrants by Sector in 2013/14 Classified as Repeat in 2014/15*

SECTOR	NO. OF NEW ENTRANTS	NO. OF 'REPEAT' STUDENTS	% OF NE BY SECTOR WHO ARE 'REPEAT' STUDENTS IN 2014/15
Institutes of Technology	18,408	760	4.1%
Universities	19,864	645	3.2%
Colleges	1,870	22	1.2%
All Sectors	40,142	1,427	3.6%

Table 2.6 provides a breakdown of repeat students by NFQ level and sector. The largest proportion of repeat students in 2014/15 were at level 7 in the institute of technology sector at 5.6%, followed by level 8 students in the institutes of technology sector at 3.4%.

Table 2.6 *Breakdown of Repeat Students by NFQ Level and Sector (2013/14)*

NFQ LEVEL	SECTOR	NUMBER OF NE	NO. OF 'REPEAT' STUDENTS IN 2014/15	% OF NE WHO ARE 'REPEAT STUDENTS'
Level 6	Institutes of Technology	2,465	62	2.5%
Level 7	Institutes of Technology	7,148	397	5.6%
Level 8	Institutes of Technology	8,795	301	3.4%
	Universities	19,864	645	3.2%
	Colleges	1,870	22	1.2%
Total	All Sectors	40,142	1,427	3.6%

2.4 Key Points

- ▶ The proportion of new entrants in 2013/14 who did not progress is 15% across all sectors and NFQ levels. This compares to 16% in 2012/13.
- ▶ The rates of non-progression in 2013/14 varied within and between sectors ranging from 26% and 27% at levels 6 and 7 compared to 16%, 11% and 6% at level 8 in universities, institutes of technology and colleges respectively.
- ▶ Between 2012/13-2013/14 and 2013/14-2014/15, non-progression rates remained the same for level 6 courses and dropped by one percentage point at level 7. Non-progression rates also reduced by one percentage point at level 8 in the institute of technology sector (from 17% to 16%), while there was no change in non-progression rates at level 8 in the universities and colleges.
- ▶ In general, courses at NFQ level 6/7 admit students on a lower points range (255-300) than NFQ level 8 programmes (405-450). The most common points attained at NFQ level 8 varied across the sectors with a 100-point difference between universities/colleges and institutes of technology.
- ▶ While these findings suggest a link between prior educational attainment on entry and successful progression after the first year of study, more detailed analysis (see Appendix H) confirmed this relationship. Those with higher prior educational attainment are more likely to progress to the second year of study than those with lower educational attainment, when individual and institution-related variables are controlled for in a model.
- ▶ In total, 3.6% of all students are repeating. The institute of technology sector, at level 7, has the greatest proportion of repeat students.

CHAPTER 3: Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study



3.1 Introduction

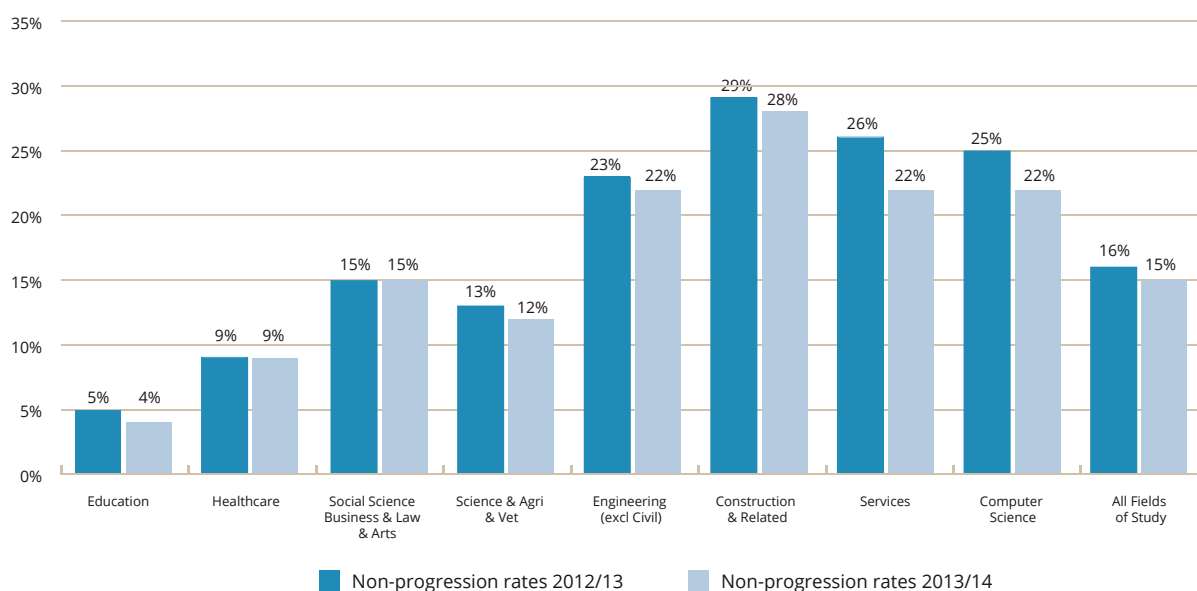
This chapter examines the non-progression rates of new entrants in Irish higher education by field of study. The classification system used is based primarily on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 2 (See Appendix B for ISCED details).

3.2 Non-Progression among 2013/14 Undergraduate New Entrants by Field of Study across all Sectors and NFQ Levels

As shown in figure 3.1, there is significant variation in non-progression rates across fields of study. The findings show that across all levels and sectors, non-progression rates in 2013/14 range from 4% in *Education* to 28% in *Construction and Related* fields of study. In line with the previous year's analysis, 2013/14 students on *Construction*, *Services*, *Computer Science* and *Engineering* programmes display non-progression rates above the national average of 15%.

Non-progression rates in the fields of *Education*, *Science*, *Agriculture and Veterinary*, *Engineering*, *Construction and Related*, *Services* and *Computer Science* have all decreased since 2012/13, while they have remained unchanged for *Healthcare*, *Social Science*, *Business*, *Law and Arts*.

Figure 3.1 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study 2012/13 vs 2013/14



3.3 Non-Progression among 2013/14 Undergraduate New Entrants by Field of Study, NFQ Level and Institute Type

Differences in non-progression rates also vary across institute type. Looking firstly at the institutes of technology, Table 3.1 provides further detail of the non-progression rates of new entrants in 2013/14 by field of study and NFQ level for this sector.

Table 3.1 *Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study and NFQ Level in Institutes of Technology*

SECTOR	LEVEL	EDUCATION	HEALTH CARE	SOCIAL SCIENCE BUSINESS & LAW & ARTS	SCIENCE & AGRI & VET	ENGINEERING (EXCL CIVIL)	CONSTRUCTION & RELATED	SERVICES	COMPUTER SCIENCE	ALL
Institutes of Technology	Level 6	n/a	10%	27%	16%	26%	48%	26%	34%	26%
	Level 7	n/a	14%	30%	17%	33%	37%	23%	31%	27%
	Level 8	5%	10%	16%	16%	21%	24%	17%	20%	16%
All IoTs		5%	11%	21%	17%	30%	32%	22%	26%	21%

As observed above, there are three disciplines above the level 6 national average of 26%, with the *Construction and Related* discipline having the highest rate of non-progression at 48%. The same discipline had the highest rate of non-progression at level 7 (37%) which was above the sectoral average of 27%. At level 8 in institutes of technology, there were four fields of study that were above the average non-progression rate of 16% (*Construction and Related*, *Engineering*, *Computer Science* and *Services*) with *Construction and Related* having the highest rate, at 24%. Across all institutes of technology, the rate of non-progression is 21%, 6 percentage points above the overall national average of 15%.

Table 3.2 outlines non-progression rates by field of study and NFQ level in universities and colleges. In the university sector at level 8, higher than average non-progression rates are evident in three fields of study: *Construction and Related*, *Computer Science* and *Social Science, Business, Law and Arts*. Furthermore, in the college sector, three fields of study have higher than average (6%) non-progression rates: *Healthcare*, *Science, Agriculture and Veterinary* and *Social Science, Business, Law and Arts*. It is important, however, to interpret such findings with caution and consider the number of students enrolled in each discipline and the number of students who did not progress (details are provided in Appendix C).

Table 3.2 *Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study and NFQ Level in Universities and Colleges*

SECTOR	LEVEL	EDUCATION	HEALTH CARE	SOCIAL SCIENCE BUSINESS & LAW & ARTS	SCIENCE & AGRI & VET	ENGINEERING (EXCL CIVIL)	CONSTRUCTION & RELATED	SERVICES	COMPUTER SCIENCE	ALL
Universities	Level 8	5%	7%	12%	10%	11%	13%	0%	12%	11%
Colleges	Level 8	3%	16%	9%	10%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	6%

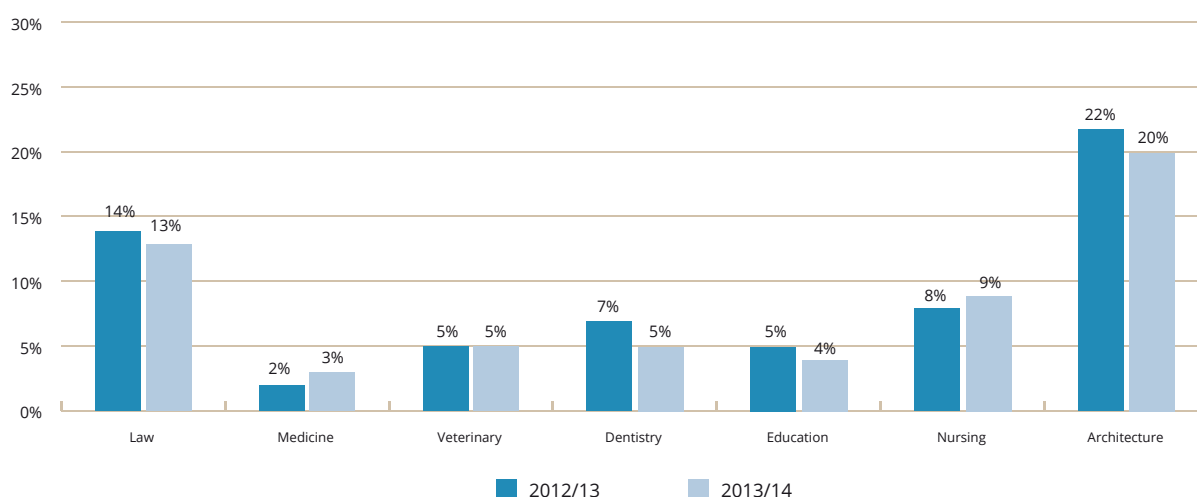
Non-progression rates at level 8 across all three sector types by field of study and NFQ level are reported on in Table 3.3. Interestingly, only three fields of study (*Science, Agriculture and Veterinary*, *Healthcare* and *Education*) have below average non-progression rates, at 11%, 8% and 4%.

Table 3.3 *Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study for Level 8 in all Sectors*

SECTOR	LEVEL	EDUCATION	HEALTH CARE	SOCIAL SCIENCE BUSINESS & LAW & ARTS	SCIENCE & AGRI & VET	ENGINEERING (EXCL CIVIL)	CONSTRUCTION & RELATED	SERVICES	COMPUTER SCIENCE	ALL
All Sectors	All Level 8	4%	8%	13%	11%	13%	20%	16%	16%	12%

3.4 Profession-Oriented Courses

This section examines selected courses that lead to qualifications in a particular career, such as *Medicine* or *Law*. As Figure 3.2 shows, in general, students enrolled in this type of profession-oriented course are likely to progress to their second year of study. Interestingly, it is only those studying *Architecture* that experience higher levels of non-progression than the national average (15%). While the non-progression rate in 2013/14 for students enrolled in *Architecture* courses is 20%, it is two percentage points lower than 2012/13. The non-progression rates for *Law*, *Dentistry* and *Education* students have also decreased slightly from the previous year. Non-progression rates for *Veterinary* students have remained the same over the time period, while *Nursing* and *Medicine* students have experienced a slight increase (of one percentage point) between these years (from 8% and 2% in 2012/13 to 9% and 3% in 2013/14).

Figure 3.2 *Non-Progression Rates in Profession-Oriented Courses, 2012/13 vs 2013/14*

3.5 Key Points

- ▶ Rates of non-progression vary across fields of study. *Construction and Related* disciplines have the highest non-progression rate at 28%, while *Education* disciplines have the lowest rate at 4%.
- ▶ All students entering the *Education* field of study did so at level 8, while 43% of new entrants to the field of *Construction and Related*, entered at level 6 or level 7.
- ▶ Across all NFQ levels in the institutes of technology, *Construction and Related* Disciplines had the highest rate of non-progression. The same is also true for level 8 in the universities.
- ▶ At level 8 for all sectors, students in the disciplines of *Construction and Related Disciplines* have the highest non-progression rate (20%), followed by Computer Science (16%) and Services (16%).
- ▶ *Medicine* has the lowest non-progression rate of all 2013/14 new entrants in profession-oriented courses, at 3%, while *Architecture* has the highest rate at 20%.

CHAPTER 4

Non-progression Rates by Student Characteristics



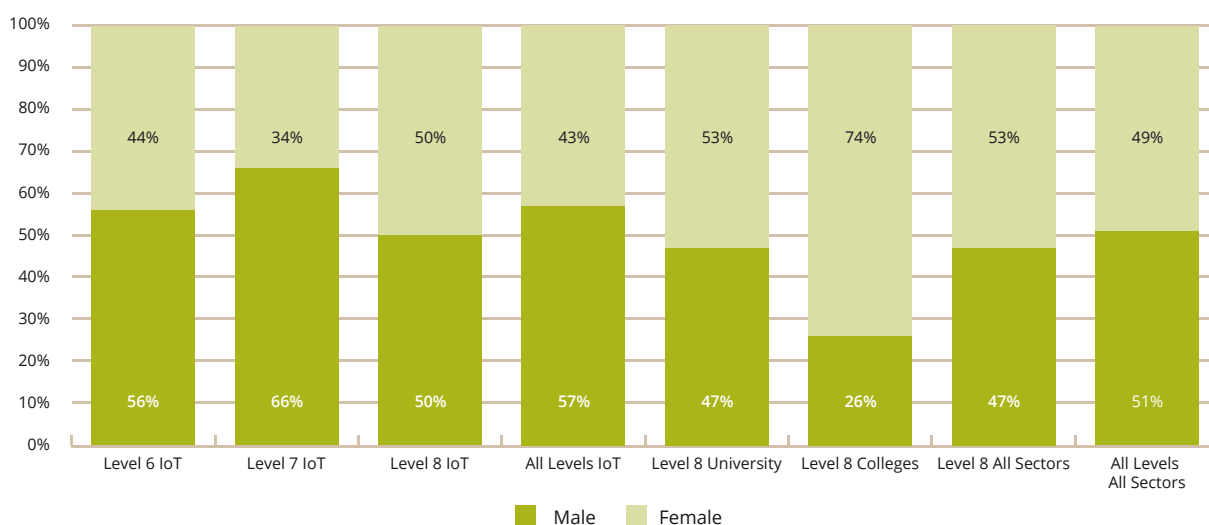
4.1 Introduction

This chapter examines non-progression across a range of student characteristics such as gender, age, nationality and socio-economic background.

4.2 Non-Progression and Gender

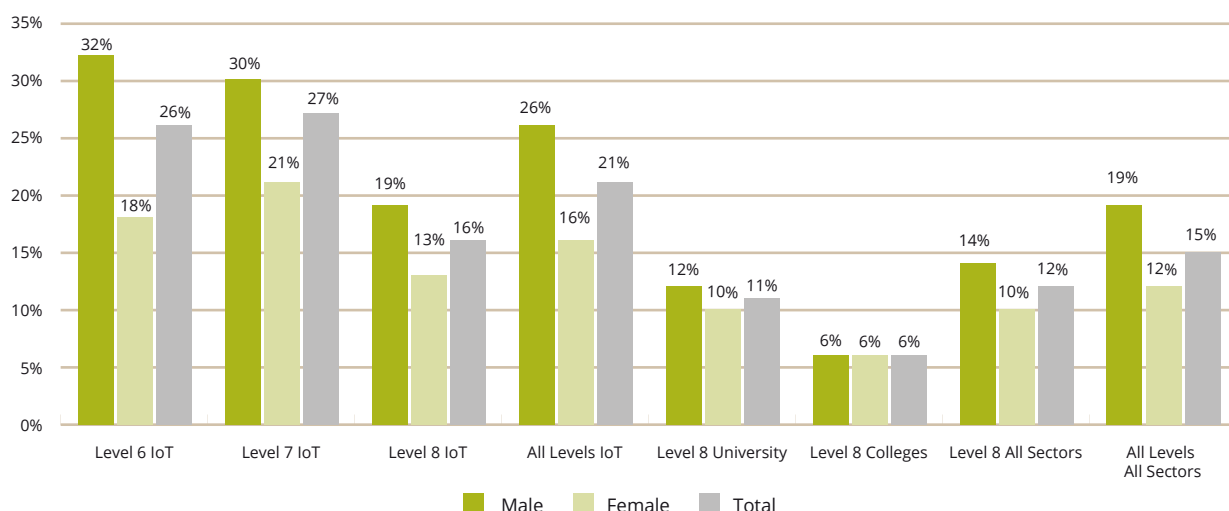
The gender balance of new entrants varies according to level and sector, as outlined in Figure 4.1. The most notable gender difference is at level 8 in the colleges, with females representing 74% of all students. Another interesting gender difference emerges in the institutes of technology, at level 7, whereby males account for 66% of the student intake. In total, 51% of 2013/14 new entrants are male and 49% are female.

Figure 4.1 *Gender Balance of New Entrants by Sector and NFQ Level*



Non-progression rates of new entrants by gender, sector and NFQ level are detailed in Figure 4.2. Across all NFQ levels and sectors, 19% of males and 12% of females are not progressing. At level 8 for all sectors, this changes to approximately one in seven males and one in ten females. The largest discrepancy between males and females appears to be at level 6 in the institutes of technology, whereby 32% of males are not progressing in comparison to 18% of females.

Figure 4.2 *Non-Progression by Gender, Sector and NFQ Level*



Figures 4.3 - 4.5 highlight non-progression by gender at level 8 in each sector. It is evident that gender differences vary considerably across sector, level and prior educational attainment (see Appendix D for further details). The reader must also be aware of low new entrant numbers across both low and high points categories, to avoid reaching misleading conclusions about non-progression rates.

At level 8, in the institute of technology sector, the largest gender discrepancy appears to be amongst those who attained 205-250 Leaving Certificate points (see Figure 4.3). At level 8, in the university sector, the greatest difference in male and female non-progression rates is among those students who attained between 305 and 350 Leaving Certificate points (see Figure 4.4). For the college sector, while females make up the majority of new entrants (at 74%), Figure 4.5 shows the largest gender disparity is among those attaining between 255 and 300 in their exams.

Further analysis (detailed in Appendix H) supports the finding that gender significantly influences the likelihood of non-progression, with males being 1.3 times more likely than females not to progress when controlling for individual (e.g. age, leaving cert points) and institution-related (e.g. institute, NFQ level) variables.

Figure 4.3 *Non-Progression by Gender at Level 8 in Institutes of Technology*

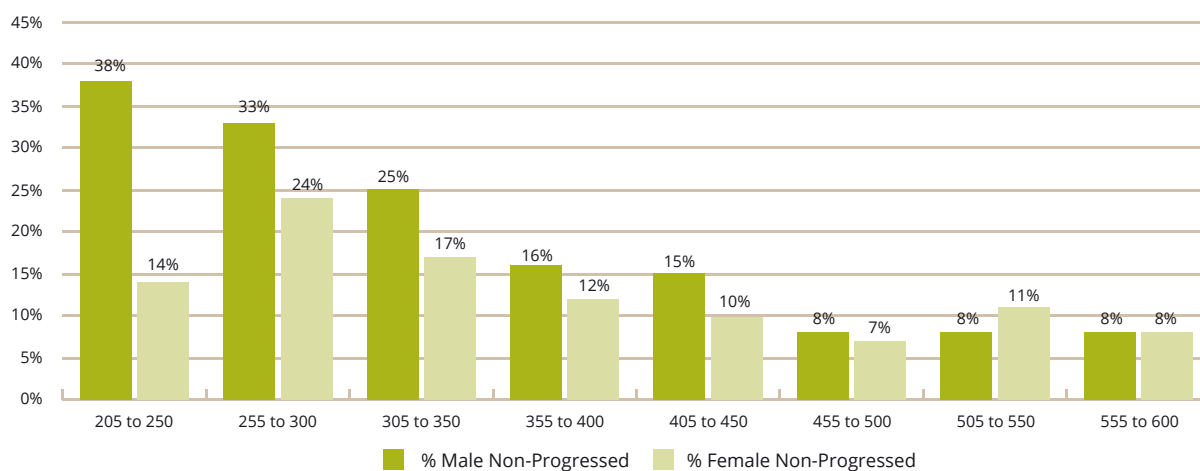


Figure 4.4 *Non-Progression by Gender at Level 8 in Universities*

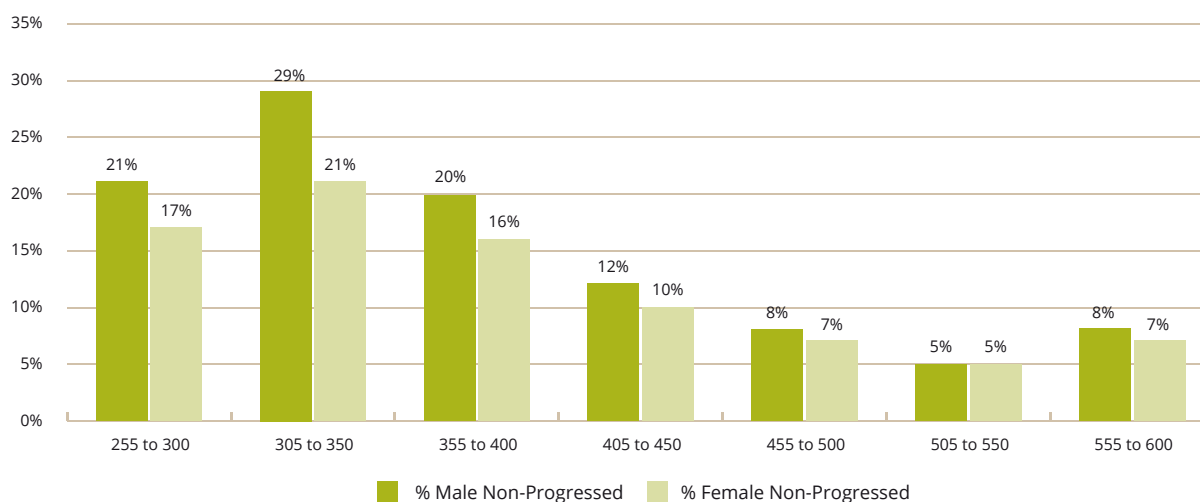
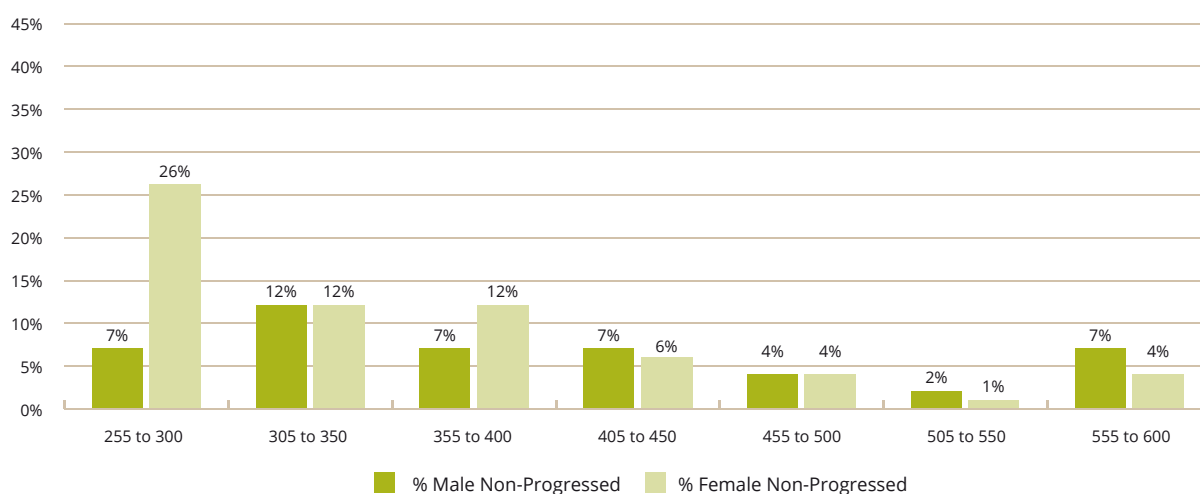


Figure 4.5 *Non-Progression by Gender at Level 8 in Colleges**



* Please note that due to low numbers, results are not presented for those students who attained less than 255 points.

4.3 Non-Progression and Age

In 2013/14, 12.4% of all new entrants (n= 40,126) are mature¹⁰ students (n= 4,962). The proportion of new entrants who are mature varied across sectors, as shown in Table 4.1.

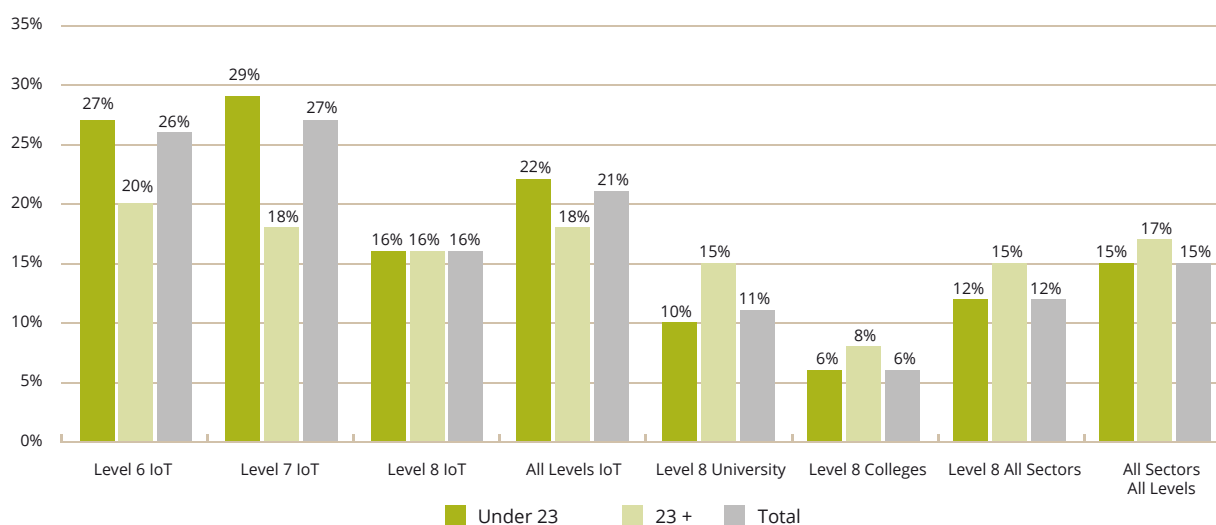
Table 4.1 Breakdown of Mature New Entrants by Sector 2013/14

SECTOR	MATURE STUDENTS AS A % OF ALL NEW ENTRANTS
Institutes of Technology	8.2%
Universities	3.9%
Colleges	0.2%
Total	12.4%

It should be noted that the above mature proportions of new entrants are based only on NFQ levels 6-8 for new entrants and will therefore differ from national proportions previously reported by the HEA.

Figure 4.6 outlines non-progression rates of students under 23 versus mature students. Across all sectors and levels, mature students have a 17% non-progression rate while there is a 15% non-progression rate among traditional students under the age of 23.

Figure 4.6 Non-Progression by Age Category



There is evidence of some variation in non-progression rates by age across most sectors and levels. One exception to this is at level 8, in the institute of technology sector, where there is a 16% non-progression rate for both students under 23 and for mature students. Also, in the institute of technology sector, it appears that at level 6 and level 7, mature students are more likely to progress to the following year than a new entrant who is under the age of 23. At level 8 in the university and college sectors, there is evidence to suggest the contrary, whereby mature students are less likely (than students under the age of 23) to progress to their second year of study.

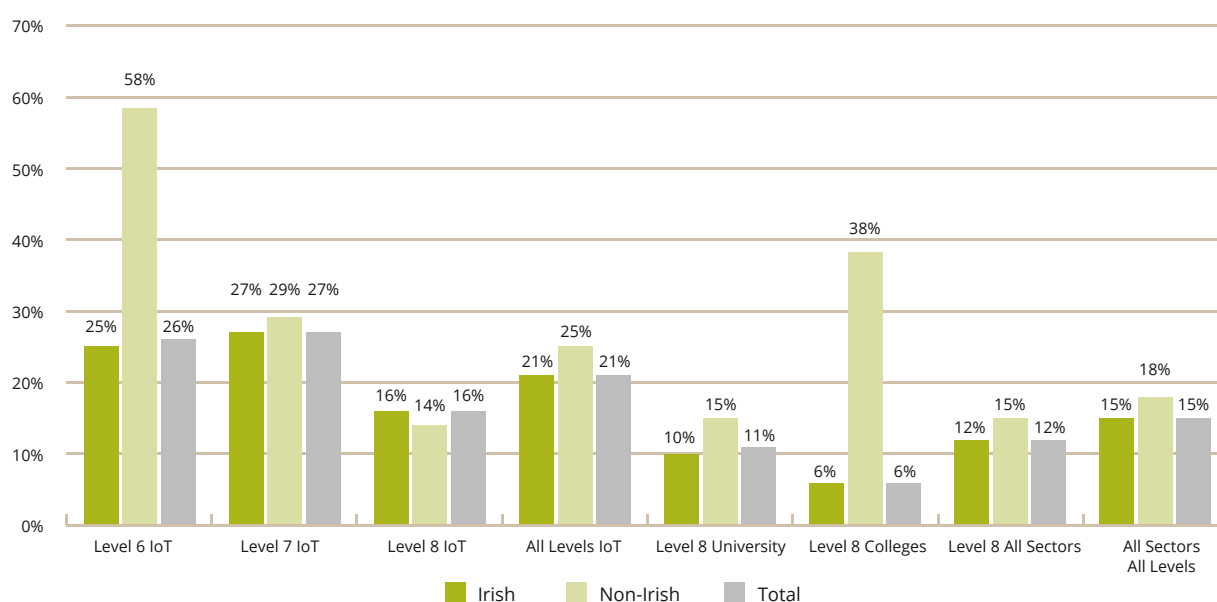
¹⁰ Mature students are defined as students aged 23 or over on 1st January 2013.

4.4 Non-Progression and Nationality

Figure 4.7 outlines non-progression rates by nationality¹¹. Across all sectors and all levels, Irish students have a 15% non-progression rate in comparison to 18% for non-Irish students.

At level 6 in the institute of technology sector, non-Irish students appear less likely to progress to the following year than Irish students. However, it must be noted that non-Irish numbers at this level and sector are very low and can therefore be misleading. Another notable disparity appears at level 8 in the colleges sector, with a non-progression of 38% among non-Irish students in 2013/14, compared to 6% among Irish students. Again, it is important to bear in mind that the number of non-Irish students is low. At level 8 in the university sector, non-Irish students had a 15% non-progression rate compared to 10% among Irish students.

Figure 4.7 *Non-Progression Rates by Nationality*



4.5 Non-Progression and Socio-Economic Group

This section examines the non-progression rates of students according to their socio-economic group. It should be noted that 66% of new entrants responded to the socio-economic group questions in the Equal Access Survey, 2013/14.

As shown in Figure 4.8, the lowest level of non-progression is found among *Farmers* at 9%, followed by *Higher Professionals* at 10%. This is perhaps not surprising given that these are the two groups with the highest level of access to higher education in Ireland¹². The highest level of non-progression is among the *Manual Skilled* and *All others gainfully employed and Unknown* groups, at 16%. Appendix E (Table E1) provides a breakdown of new entrant numbers and the number of students who did not progress from the academic year 2013/14 to 2014/15 for each socio-economic group.

¹¹ Please note that nationality is based on a student's domiciliary of origin.

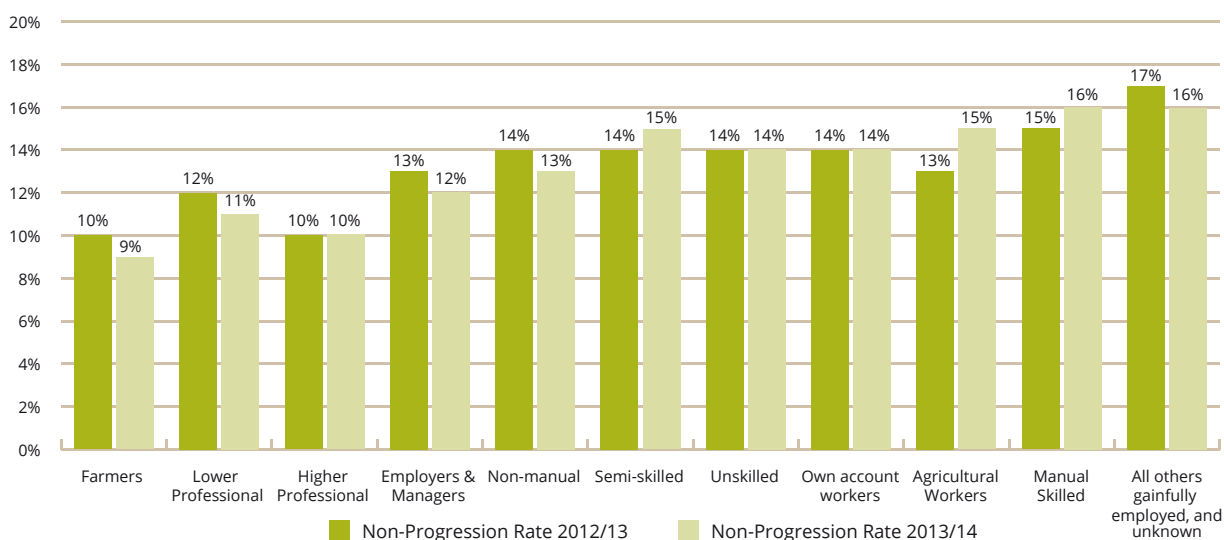
¹² See Philip O'Connell, David Clancy and Selina McCoy, *Who Went to College in 2004? A National Survey of New Entrants to Higher Education* (Dublin: Higher Education Authority, 2006).

Figure 4.8 *Non-Progression Rates by Socio-Economic Group*



When comparing 2013/14-2014/15 progression rates to progression rates from 2012/13-2013/14, some differences are observed. As shown in Figure 4.9, five of the eleven groups (*Farmers*, *Lower Professionals*, *Employers and Managers*, *Non-Manual* and *All others gainfully employed and Unknown*) show a one percentage point decrease in non-progression rates in 2013/14. Three groups (*Higher Professional*, *Unskilled* and *Own account workers*) have remained at the same non-progression rate, while there has been between a one and two percentage increase in non-progression rates for the remaining groups (*Semi-skilled*, *Agricultural Workers* and *Manual Skilled*) over these two periods.

Figure 4.9 *A Comparison of Non-Progression Rates by Socio-Economic Groups 2012/13 vs 2013/14*



4.6 Key Points

- ▶ Females are more likely than males to progress to the following year, across all NFQ levels and sectors, with the exception of level 8 in the college sector (where both male and female non-progression rates are 6%). This relationship holds true across the majority of prior educational attainment categories in the institutes of technology and universities. Additional multivariate regression analysis (see Appendix H) supports the finding that males are less likely than females to progress, while controlling for other individual and institution-related variables.
- ▶ In the institute of technology sector at level 6 and level 7, mature students are more likely to progress to the following year of study than a new entrant who is under the age of 23. The opposite is true at level 8 in the university sector, where traditional students are more likely to progress than mature students.
- ▶ Across all levels and sectors, Irish students had a non-progression rate of 15% compared to 18% among non-Irish students.
- ▶ In relation to socio-economic groups, the lowest level of non-progression is found among *Farmers* at 9%. The highest level of non-progression is among the *Manual Skilled and All others gainfully employed and Unknown* groups, at 16%.

CHAPTER 5

Trend in Non-Progression Rates



5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of non-progression rates by sector, NFQ level and fields of study from 2007/08 to 2013/14. Such analysis was not carried out in 2008/09 to 2009/10 and 2009/10 to 2010/11.

5.2 Trend in Non-Progression Rates by Sector and NFQ Level from 2007/08 to 2013/14

Table 5.1 shows trends in non-progression rates by sector and NFQ level. The overall new entrant non-progression rate was 15% in 2007/08 and remained constant at 16% from 2010/11 to 2012/13, with a one percentage point reduction (to 15%) in 2013/14. Of note, the rate of non-progression at level 6 in the institute of technology sector shows an incline from 2007/08 of 25% to 30% in 2010/11 and 2011/12. This declined to 26% in 2012/13 and 2013/14. In the colleges sector (level 8), the non-progression rate increased from 4% in 2011/12 to 6% in 2012/13 and remains the same in 2013/14.

Table 5.1 Trends in Non-Progression Rates by Sector and NFQ Level from 2007/08 to 2013/14

SECTOR	LEVEL	2007/08-2008/09	2010/11-2011/12	2011/12-2012/13	2012/13-2013/14	2013/14-2014/15
Institutes of Technology	Level 6	25%	30%	30%	26%	26%
	Level 7	26%	28%	29%	28%	27%
	Level 8	16%	17%	17%	17%	16%
	All New Entrants	22%	24%	24%	23%	21%
Universities	Level 8	9%	9%	10%	11%	11%
Colleges	Level 8	4%	4%	4%	6%	6%
All institutions	Level 8	11%	11%	11%	12%	12%
All institutions	All New Entrants	15%	16%	16%	16%	15%

5.3 Trend in Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study, Sector and NFQ Level from 2007/08 to 2013/14

The trend in non-progression rates by field of study for level 8 across all sectors is outlined in Table 5.2. Across *All Fields of Study*, the rates of non-progression have remained relatively consistent at level 8, across all sectors, with an increase of one percentage point between 2011/12 and 2012/13.

There has been some fluctuation over time in several fields of study. While non-progression reduced for *Education* students between 2010/11 and 2011/12, the rate increased to 5% in 2012/13 before reducing to 4% in 2014/15. Non-progression rates in the field of *Healthcare* have remained constant since 2011/12, at 8%. Furthermore, there has been an increase in the proportion of non-progression among *Social Science, Business and Law and Arts and Humanities* students, from 10% in 2007/08 to 13% since 2012/13. Interestingly, there has been a recent reduction (of four percentage points) in non-progression rates in the field of *Computer Science* (from 20% in 2012/13 to 16% in 2013/14).

It is important to bear in mind that the numbers of new entrants to certain fields of study, as well as the numbers who do not progress, have fluctuated over time and this analysis does not account for such changes.

Table 5.2 *Trend in Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study for Level 8 across All Sectors*

FIELD OF STUDY	2007/08-2008/09	2010/11-2011/12	2011/12-2012/13	2012/13-2013/14	2013/14-2014/15
Education	5%	3%	3%	5%	4%
Healthcare	10%	7%	8%	8%	8%
Combined & Other Disciplines	12%	12%	11%	–	–
Social Science, Business and Law & Arts and Humanities	10%	11%	12%	13%	13%
Science, Agriculture & Veterinary	12%	10%	11%	11%	11%
Engineering (excl Civil)	9%	12%	12%	13%	13%
Construction and Related	16%	17%	19%	19%	20%
Services	15%	22%	19%	20%	16%
Computer Science	20%	19%	18%	20%	16%
All Fields of Study	11%	11%	11%	12%	12%

Due to low numbers in the colleges sector, the subsequent analysis focuses specifically on the institutes of technology and universities, at level 8. The non-progression rates, in each field of study, at level 8 in the institute of technology sector are presented in Table 5.3.

Across all fields of study at level 8 in the institutes of technology sector, there was a slight decrease in the most recent proportion of students who did not progress to the following year of study – from 17% in 2012/13 to 16% in 2013/14. There is evidence of fluctuation in non-progression rates over time, across various disciplines. For example, in the field of *Education*, the non-progression rate reduced from 11% in 2007/08 to 4% in 2011/12 and increased again (to 11%) in 2012/13. It was seen to reduce once again (to 5%) in 2013/14. Likewise, in the field of *Healthcare*, there has been a decline (of four percentage points) in non-progression rates over time (from 14% in 2007/08 to 10% in 2012/13 and 2013/14). Furthermore, there has been a recent decrease in the proportion of *Computer Science* students who did not progress, from 26% in 2012/13 to 20% in 2013/14. Once again, it is important to note that this analysis does not account for fluctuations in student numbers over time.

Table 5.3 *Trend in Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study for Level 8 in Institutes of Technology from 2007/08 to 2013/14*

FIELD OF STUDY	2007/08-2008/09	2010/11-2011/12	2011/12-2012/13	2012/13-2013/14	2013/14-2014/15
Education	11%	8%	4%	11%	5%
Healthcare	14%	11%	11%	10%	10%
Combined & Other Disciplines	20%	17%	–	–	–
Social Science, Business and Law & Arts and Humanities	15%	18%	17%	17%	16%
Science, Agriculture & Veterinary	22%	16%	19%	18%	16%
Engineering (excl Civil)	11%	22%	21%	20%	21%
Construction and Related	22%	21%	24%	21%	24%
Services	15%	21%	19%	20%	17%
Computer Science	25%	23%	23%	26%	20%
All Fields of Study	16%	17%	17%	17%	16%

Table 5.4 presents the non-progression rates in each field of study at level 8 in the university sector.

The non-progression rate for *All Fields of Study* was 9% in 2007/08 and 11% in 2013/14. It should be noted that the large variance observed in the *Service* discipline is most likely due to very low numbers, in this field of study.

The *Computer Science* discipline had a 16% non-progression rate in 2007/08 at level 8 in the university sector and a 12% non-progression rate in 2013/14. The *Construction and Related* field of study had a 5% non-progression rate in 2007/08. This compares with a 13% non-progression rate in 2013/14.

Table 5.4 *Trend in Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study for Level 8 in Universities from 2007/08 to 2013/14*

FIELD OF STUDY	2007/08-2008/09	2010/11-2011/12	2011/12-2012/13	2012/13-2013/14	2013/14-2014/15
Education	8%	5%	5%	8%	5%
Healthcare	6%	5%	6%	6%	7%
Combined & Other Disciplines	11%	11%	11%	–	–
Social Science, Business and Law & Arts and Humanities	9%	8%	11%	12%	12%
Science, Agri & Vet	11%	9%	9%	10%	10%
Engineering (excl Civil)	8%	9%	10%	11%	11%
Construction and Related	5%	9%	9%	16%	13%
Services	7%	23%	20%	23%	0%
Computer Science	16%	16%	12%	15%	12%
All Fields of Study	9%	9%	10%	11%	11%

5.4 Key Points

- ▶ The overall new entrant non-progression rate has reduced by one percentage point between 2012/13-2013/14 and 2013/14-2014/15, from 16% to 15%.
- ▶ At level 8, for all sectors, the non-progression rate across *All Fields of Study* was 11% in 2007/08, 2010/11 and 2011/12. It was at 12% in 2012/13 and 2013/14.
- ▶ At level 8 in the institutes of technology sector, there was a slight decrease in the most recent proportion of students who did not progress to the following year of study – from 17% in 2012/13 to 16% in 2013/14.
- ▶ At level 8 in the university sector, the non-progression rate for *All Fields of Study* was 9% in 2007/08 and 11% in 2013/14. The *Construction and Related* field of study had a 5% non-progression rate in 2007/08, compared to a 13% non-progression rate in 2013/14.
- ▶ It is important to note that this analysis does not account for fluctuations in student numbers over time.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion



This HEA report provides a quantitative overview of the non-progression of students between 2013/14 and 2014/15. The findings of this report show that non-progression rates have reduced slightly over the last few years (from 16% in 2010/11, 2011/12 and 2012/13 to 15% in 2013/14). However, while the data has shown that the majority of new entrants (85%) progress to the following academic year, there remains 6,203 students who do not progress in their institutions. In line with international attention on how students fare after entry to high education and as argued extensively in the literature¹³, it is important to analyse the characteristics of students who are not advancing in their studies, in order to identify those most 'at-risk' of non-progression. Early intervention in the undergraduate cycle is vital to ensure that students have the academic, social supports and guidance that they need to enhance their motivation, engagement and performance¹⁴.

Not surprisingly, a student's level of prior educational achievement in their Leaving Certificate plays a significant role in shaping later pathways. This research finds that students with higher prior educational attainment in their Leaving Certificate are more likely (than those with lower educational attainment) to progress into the subsequent year. While the overall non-progression rate is 15%, this rises to 32% for students who attained between 255 and 300 points in their Leaving Certificate. Only 7% of students who attained 555 to 600 points do not progress to the following year of study. Further evidence of this relationship is demonstrated in the multivariate regression models presented in Appendix H. These results highlight the importance of academic preparedness prior to admission as well as adequate learning supports on entry to higher education. Recent policy developments have been formulated to address such concerns. In line with the Government's agenda to support a better transition from second level to higher education, the recent launch of the report *Supporting a Better Transition from Second to Higher Education* (2015) outlines the proposal for a new progressive points system which aims to reward students for taking higher level papers and reduce the risk of random selection becoming a feature of college entry. This coincides with moves by higher education institutions towards broader entry, thus preventing students from having to decide, at an early stage, what specialism might suit them later in life. Minister Jan O'Sullivan (2015)¹⁵ contends that 'by allowing students to enter broad-based courses, and to specialise further into their degree, we should reduce the number of people dropping out of college, and further ease the unnecessary pressure on sixth-year students'.

Interesting gender differences also emerged from this research. Females are more likely than males to progress the following year of study, for the majority of NFQ levels across all sectors. Findings from a multivariate regression model (see Appendix H) supports this finding in that males are 1.3 times more likely (than females) to not progress, controlling for age, nationality, socio-economic group, grant receipt, Leaving Certificate points, NFQ level, institute type and field of study. This report has shown that non-progression is highest at level 8 in the fields of *Construction and Related*, *Computer Science* and *Service* disciplines. In examining the total new entrant cohort for 2013/14, it is clear that males make up the majority of *Construction and Related* (77%) and *Computer Science* (85%) courses.

In terms of age, across all sectors and levels, mature students have a 17% non-progression rate while there is a 15% non-progression rate among traditional students under the age of 23. In the institute of technology sector, it appears that at level 6 and level 7, mature students (those aged 23 and over) are more likely to progress to the following year than a new entrant who is under the age of 23. At level 8 in the university and college sectors, there is evidence to suggest the contrary, whereby mature students are less likely to progress to their second year of study in comparison to students under the age of 23. With regard to nationality, this research shows that across all sectors and NFQ levels, Irish students have a 15% non-progression rate in comparison to 18% for non-Irish students. At level 6 in the institute of technology sector, non-Irish students appear less likely (than Irish students) to progress to the following year of study. Another notable disparity appears at level 8 in the colleges sector, with Irish students experiencing a 38% non-progression rate in 2013/14, compared to 6% of non-Irish students in the same year. At level 8 in the university sector, non-Irish students had a non-progression rate of 15% compared to 10% among Irish students.

13 For example, see Gérard Lassibille and Lucía Gomez.

14 Seamus McGuinness, Adele Bergin, Eilish Kelly, Selina McCoy, Emer Smyth and Kevin Timoney.

15 DES, *Supporting a Better Transition from Second Level to Higher Education: Implementation and Next Steps* (Dublin: DES, 2015), 3.

In summary, this report highlights that while the majority of students are successfully transitioning to the following year of study, 15% of students are not, with strong variation across sector and NFQ level. Non-progression in higher education has consequences not only for the individuals involved, but for the society which finances the cost of service delivery. This report recognises the importance of qualitative data to further understand the processes around why students choose to leave their course. Gaining a better understanding of which students are more likely to withdraw is therefore important in order to maximise the use of resources and to better support those students most 'at-risk'. The HEA in partnership with the *National Forum for Teaching and Learning* and the higher education institutions is committed to the further exploration and deepening of the evidence-base for progression in higher education. Following recommendations in the *National Access Plan*, the HEA has recently established a Working Group to consider the area of student success, with a particular emphasis on students from under-represented target groups. This Working Group draws on a wide membership from across the higher education sector and is working closely with the *National Forum for Teaching and Learning*. Such developments aim to reduce the number of students who do not successfully progress into their second year of study, which as this report has highlighted, currently affects over 6,000 students.

Bibliography



Crosling, Glenda and Margaret Heaney. "Improving Student Retention in Higher Education: Improving Teaching and Learning." *Australian Universities Review*, 51, no. 2 (2009): 9-18.

Department of Education and Skills. *National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030 – Report of the Strategy Group*. Dublin: DES, 2011.

Department of Education and Skills. *Supporting a Better Transition from Second Level to Higher Education: Implementation and Next Steps*. Dublin: DES, 2005.

Higher Education Authority. *A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education*. Dublin: HEA, 2010. Available at: http://www.heai.ie/sites/default/files/study_of_progression_in_irish_higher_education_2010.pdf

Higher Education Authority. *Achieving Equity of Access to Higher Education in Ireland: Action Plan 2005-2007*. Dublin: HEA, 2004.

Higher Education Authority. *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013*. Dublin: HEA, 2008.

Lassibille, Gérard and Lucía Gomez. "Why do higher education students drop out? Evidence from Spain." *Education Economics* 16, no. 1 (2008): 89-105.

McCoy, Selina and Delma Byrne. "Non-Progression among Higher Education New Entrants" in *A Study of Progression in Higher Education*. Higher Education Authority: Dublin, 2010.

McGuinness, Seamus, Bergin, Adele, Kelly, Eilish, McCoy, Selina, Smyth, Emer and Kevin Timoney. *A Study of Future Demand for Higher Education in Ireland. Research Series Number 30*. Dublin: ESRI, 2012.

National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education. *Transition from second level and further education to higher education. Focused Research Report No. 6*, 2015. Available at <http://www.teachingandlearning.ie/focused-research-report-no-6-transition-from-second-level-and-further-education-to-higher-education/>.

O'Connell, Philip, Clancy, David and Selina McCoy. *Who Went to College in 2004? A National Survey of New Entrants to Higher Education*. Dublin: Higher Education Authority, 2006.

Appendices



Appendix A

List of Higher Education Institutions

Table A1 *Higher Education Sector and Institutions involved Non-Progression Study 2013/14 to 2014/15*

HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR/INSTITUTION
Universities
University College Dublin
University College Cork
National University of Ireland, Galway
Trinity College Dublin
University of Limerick
Dublin City University
Maynooth University
Institutes of Technology
Dublin Institute of Technology
Cork Institute of Technology
Waterford Institute of Technology
Institute of Technology Carlow
Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
Limerick Institute of Technology
Institute of Technology Sligo
Athlone Institute of Technology
Institute of Technology Tallaght
Dundalk Institute of Technology
Institute of Technology Blanchardstown
Letterkenny Institute of Technology
Institute of Technology Tralee
Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology
Colleges
Mary Immaculate College
St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra
National College of Art and Design
St. Angela's College, Sligo
Mater Dei Institute of Education

Appendix B ISCED Codes

DISCIPLINE	ISCED CODES INCLUDED IN DISCIPLINE
Education	142, 143, 144, 145, 146
Healthcare	720, 721, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 760, 761, 762, 700
Science, Agriculture & Veterinary	400, 420, 421, 422, 440, 441, 442, 443, 460, 461, 462, 600, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 641
Social Science, Business, Law, Arts & Humanities	200, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 220, 221, 222, 223, 225, 226, 300, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 320, 321, 322, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 380
Engineering excl Civil	500, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544
Construction and Related	580, 581, 582
Services	800, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 840, 850, 851, 852, 853, 860, 861, 862, 863,
Computer Science	481, 482
Combined and Other Disciplines	900, 910

Appendix C Details of Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study, Sector and NFQ Level (2013/14 to 2014/15)

Table C1 Number of 'Students who did not progress in the academic year 2014/15' and the Number of 'New Entrants' by Field of Study, Sector and NFQ Level*

SECTOR	LEVEL	EDUCATION	HEALTHCARE	SOCIAL SCIENCE BUSINESS AND LAW AND ARTS AND HUMANITIES	SCIENCE AND AGRI AND VET	ENGINEERING (EXCL CIVIL)	CONSTRUCTION AND RELATED	SERVICES	COMPUTER SCIENCE	ALL DISCIPLINES
Institutes of Technology	Level 6	n/a	22 (231)	231 (860)	28 (170)	75 (292)	43 (89)	167 (634)	65 (189)	631 (2,465)
	Level 7	n/a	84 (583)	491 (1,651)	151 (896)	488 (1,462)	121 (327)	284 (1,233)	306 (996)	1,925 (7,148)
	Level 8	^	192 (1,839)	587 (3,729)	123 (751)	97 (455)	87 (361)	110 (662)	195 (958)	1,393 (8,795)
All IoT		^	298 (2,653)	1,309 (6,240)	302 (1,817)	660 (2,209)	251 (777)	561 (2,529)	566 (2,143)	3,949 (18,408)
Universities	Level 8	18 (356)	190 (2,819)	1,291 (10,621)	340 (3,436)	157 (1,464)	26 (200)	0 (11)	119 (957)	2,141 (19,864)
Colleges	Level 8	34 (1,072)	11 (70)	65 (698)	^	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	113 (1,870)
All Level 8		54 (1,468)	393 (4,728)	1,943 (15,048)	466 (4,217)	254 (1,919)	113 (561)	110 (673)	314 (1,915)	3,647 (30,529)
Grand Total		54 (1,468)	499 (5,542)	2,665 (17,559)	645 (5,283)	817 (3,673)	277 (977)	561 (2,540)	685 (3,100)	6,203 (40,142)

* Note: The number of students who did not progress in the academic year 2014/15 is provided with the number of new entrants given in brackets.

^ indicates a cell count too low to report.

Appendix D Non-Progression by Gender and Prior Educational Attainment

Table D1 *Non-Progression by Gender and Prior Educational Attainment at Level 6 and 7 in Institutes of Technology*

SECTOR LEVEL	INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY LEVEL 6			INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY LEVEL 7		
POINTS RANGE	% MALES IN EACH CATEGORY	% MALE NON-PROGRESSION	% FEMALE NON-PROGRESSION	% OF MALES IN EACH CATEGORY	% MALE NON-PROGRESSION	% FEMALE NON-PROGRESSION
155 to 200	60%	51%	34%	71%	56%	41%
205 to 250	61%	41%	37%	72%	46%	34%
255 to 300	56%	33%	20%	67%	38%	28%
305 to 350	52%	17%	13%	67%	28%	17%
355 to 400	59%	16%	8%	61%	17%	13%
405 to 450	44%	13%	3%	55%	7%	8%
455 to 500	35%	11%	0%	39%	9%	11%
505 to 550	60%	0%	0%	53%	11%	13%
555 to 600	n/a	n/a	n/a	67%	0%	0%
Other	56%	36%	16%	67%	25%	19%
Total	56%	32%	18%	66%	30%	21%

Table D2 *Non-Progression by Gender and Prior Educational Attainment at Level 8 and All Levels in Institutes of Technology*

SECTOR LEVEL	INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY LEVEL 8			INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY ALL LEVELS		
POINTS RANGE	% OF MALES IN EACH CATEGORY	% MALE NON-PROGRESSION	% FEMALE NON-PROGRESSION	% OF MALES IN EACH CATEGORY	% MALE NON-PROGRESSION	% FEMALE NON-PROGRESSION
155 to 200	n/a	n/a	n/a	67%	54%	38%
205 to 250	74%	38%	14%	70%	45%	34%
255 to 300	64%	33%	24%	65%	36%	25%
305 to 350	55%	25%	17%	59%	26%	16%
355 to 400	51%	16%	12%	55%	16%	12%
405 to 450	46%	15%	10%	48%	13%	9%
455 to 500	41%	8%	7%	40%	9%	7%
505 to 550	44%	8%	11%	46%	8%	11%
555 to 600	33%	8%	8%	34%	8%	8%
Other	49%	18%	12%	56%	24%	14%
Total	50%	19%	13%	57%	26%	16%

Table D3 *Non-Progression by Gender and Prior Educational Attainment at Level 8 in Universities and Colleges*

SECTOR LEVEL		UNIVERSITIES LEVEL 8		SECTOR LEVEL		COLLEGES LEVEL 8	
POINTS RANGE	% OF MALES IN EACH CATEGORY	MALE % NON-PROGRESSION	FEMALE % NON-PROGRESSION	POINTS RANGE	% OF MALES IN EACH CATEGORY	% MALE NON-PROGRESSION	% FEMALE NON-PROGRESSION
155 to 200	n/a	n/a	n/a	155 to 200	44%	25%	0%
205 to 250	50%	0%	0%	205 to 250	54%	0%	17%
255 to 300	51%	21%	17%	255 to 300	34%	7%	26%
305 to 350	52%	29%	21%	305 to 350	32%	12%	12%
355 to 400	53%	20%	16%	355 to 400	31%	7%	12%
405 to 450	48%	12%	10%	405 to 450	27%	7%	6%
455 to 500	48%	8%	7%	455 to 500	24%	4%	4%
505 to 550	47%	5%	5%	505 to 550	25%	2%	1%
555 to 600	49%	8%	7%	555 to 600	21%	7%	4%
Other	44%	11%	11%	Other	20%	9%	7%
Total	47%	12%	10%	Total	26%	6%	6%

Table D4 *Non-Progression by Gender and Prior Educational Attainment at Level 8 in all Sectors and for all New Entrants*

SECTOR LEVEL		ALL LEVEL 8		SECTOR LEVEL		ALL NEW ENTRANTS	
POINTS RANGE	% OF MALES	% MALE NON PROGRESSION	% FEMALE NON PROGRESSION	POINTS RANGE	% OF MALES	% MALE NON PROGRESSION	% FEMALE NON PROGRESSION
Total	47%	14%	10%	Total	51%	19%	12%

Appendix E Details of Non-Progression Rates by Socio-Economic Group (2013/14 to 2014/15)

Table E1 *Number 'Students who did not progress from the academic year 2013/14 to 2014/15' and the Number of 'New Entrants' by Socio-Economic Group**

SOCIO-ECONOMIC GROUP	% NON-PROGRESSION	NUMBER OF STUDENTS WHO DID NOT PROGRESS 2013/14 TO 2014/15	NEW ENTRANTS
Farmers	9%	172	1,815
Lower Professional	11%	245	2,257
Higher Professional	10%	262	2,751
Employers and Managers	12%	536	4,571
Non-manual	13%	338	2,563
Semi-skilled	15%	209	1,430
Unskilled	14%	169	1,198
Own account workers	14%	281	1,948
Agricultural workers	15%	14	96
Manual skilled	16%	416	2,675
All others gainfully occupied, and unknown	16%	864	5,294
Grand Total	13%	3,506	26,598

* It should be noted that 66% of new entrants responded to the socio-economic group questions in the Equal Access Survey, 2013/14.

Appendix F Overall Non-Progression Rates by Institution and NFQ Level

Table F1 2013/14 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrant Non-Progression Rates by Institute of Technology & NFQ Level

INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY	LEVEL 6 NON-PROGRESSION	LEVEL 7 NON-PROGRESSION	LEVEL 8 NON-PROGRESSION	ALL LEVELS NON-PROGRESSION
Athlone IT	21%	27%	16%	21%
IT Blanchardstown	47%	35%	20%	29%
Cork IT	30%	26%	16%	22%
IT Carlow	19%	21%	14%	17%
Dundalk IT	11%	23%	14%	18%
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology	n/a	28%	15%	17%
Dublin Institute of Technology	21%	23%	14%	17%
Galway-Mayo IT	24%	27%	20%	25%
Limerick IT	32%	32%	22%	27%
Letterkenny IT	24%	32%	13%	25%
IT Sligo	40%	31%	10%	25%
IT Tallaght	37%	32%	16%	24%
IT Tralee	32%	26%	15%	22%
Waterford IT	25%	22%	17%	19%
All Institutes of Technology	26%	27%	16%	21%
National Average	26%	27%	12%	15%

Table F2 2013/14 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrant Non-Progression Rates by University & NFQ Level

UNIVERSITY	LEVEL 8 NON-PROGRESSION
Dublin City University	13%
University College Dublin	10%
University College Cork	10%
National University of Ireland, Galway	12%
University of Limerick	12%
Maynooth University	9%
Trinity College Dublin	9%
All Universities	11%
National Average	12%

Table F3 2013/14 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrant Non-Progression Rates by Colleges & NFQ Level

COLLEGES	LEVEL 8 NON-PROGRESSION RATE
St. Patrick's College Drumcondra	4%
Mary Immaculate College Limerick	4%
Mater Dei Institute of Education	9%
National College of Art and Design	10%
St. Angela's College, Sligo	13%
All Colleges	6%
National Average	12%

Appendix G Overall Non-Progression Rates by Institution and NFQ Level and Field of Study

Table G1 2013/14 Institute of Technology Level 6 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study

FIELD OF STUDY	AIT	ITB	CIT	ITC	DKIT	DIT	GMIT	LIT	LYIT	ITS	ITTA	ITTRA	WIT	ALL INSTITUTES
Healthcare	10%	n/a	n/a	9%	n/a	7%	n/a	n/a	10%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	10%
Social Science, Business, Law, Arts and Humanities	22%	44%	25%	18%	n/a	17%	n/a	39%	44%	49%	31%	21%	25%	27%
Science, Agriculture and Veterinary	37%	n/a	n/a	7%	3%	n/a	n/a	10%	14%	28%	n/a	0%	n/a	16%
Engineering (excl Civil)	24%	50%	100%	n/a	n/a	23%	n/a	22%	n/a	n/a	44%	n/a	20%	26%
Construction and Related	33%	n/a	n/a	58%	n/a	59%	50%	40%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	33%	48%
Services	26%	n/a	30%	n/a	16%	26%	20%	22%	23%	n/a	32%	42%	37%	26%
Computer Science	57%	48%	n/a	40%	n/a	n/a	24%	44%	15%	n/a	40%	29%	n/a	34%
All Fields of Study	21%	47%	30%	19%	11%	21%	24%	32%	24%	40%	37%	32%	25%	26%

AIT Athlone Institute of Technology
 ITB Institute of Technology Blanchardstown
 CIT Cork Institute of Technology
 ITC Institute of Technology Carlow
 DKIT Dundalk Institute of Technology
 IADT Institute of Art, Design and Technology
 DIT Dublin Institute of Technology
 GMIT Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
 LIT Limerick Institute of Technology
 LYIT Letterkenny Institute of Technology
 ITS Institute of Technology Sligo
 ITTA Institute of Technology Tallaght
 ITTR Institute of Technology Tralee

WIT Waterford Institute of Technology
 DCU Dublin City University
 UCD University College Dublin
 UCC University College Cork
 NUIG National University of Ireland, Galway
 UL University of Limerick
 MU Maynooth University
 TCD Trinity College Dublin
 NCAD National College of Art and Design
 MDEI Mater Dei Institute of Education
 MIC Mary Immaculate College
 SPD St. Patrick's College, Drumcondra
 St. Angela's St. Angela's College, Sligo

Table G2 2013/14 Institute of Technology Level 7 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study

FIELD OF STUDY	AIT	ITB	CIT	ITC	DKIT	IADT	DIT	GMIT	LIT	LYIT	ITS	ITTA	ITTRA	WIT	ALL INSTITUTES
Education	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Healthcare	n/a	11%	9%	13%	19%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	8%	24%	13%	24%	14%	14%
Social Science, Business and Law and Arts and Humanities	8%	47%	30%	20%	21%	29%	14%	27%	29%	37%	40%	39%	39%	18%	30%
Science and Agri and Vet	21%	33%	14%	26%	16%	n/a	15%	14%	22%	23%	11%	16%	21%	12%	17%
Engineering (excl Civil)	34%	46%	32%	30%	29%	n/a	25%	40%	36%	37%	35%	37%	38%	37%	33%
Construction and Related	44%	n/a	44%	24%	27%	n/a	27%	37%	42%	32%	47%	n/a	29%	50%	37%
Services	29%	29%	26%	16%	24%	n/a	24%	23%	18%	n/a	24%	17%	18%	18%	23%
Computer Science	25%	40%	37%	30%	28%	26%	n/a	22%	46%	30%	26%	29%	41%	32%	31%
All Fields of Study	27%	35%	26%	21%	23%	28%	23%	27%	32%	32%	31%	32%	26%	22%	27%

Table G3 2013/14 Institute of Technology Level 8 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study

FIELD OF STUDY	AIT	ITB	CIT	ITC	DKIT	IADT	DIT	GMIT	LIT	LYIT	ITS	ITTA	ITTRA	WIT	ALL INSTITUTES
Education	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5%
Healthcare	12%	13%	12%	8%	11%	n/a	7%	16%	17%	7%	8%	7%	9%	10%	10%
Social Science, Business, Law, Arts and Humanities	16%	27%	11%	15%	17%	15%	15%	18%	17%	17%	14%	15%	22%	18%	16%
Science, Agriculture and Veterinary	18%	17%	16%	20%	n/a	n/a	12%	20%	14%	n/a	15%	26%	13%	21%	16%
Engineering (excl Civil)	n/a	31%	25%	26%	n/a	n/a	13%	25%	n/a	0%	n/a	19%	n/a	30%	21%
Construction and Related	n/a	n/a	25%	42%	n/a	n/a	21%	25%	39%	n/a	10%	n/a	n/a	16%	24%
Services	12%	23%	22%	7%	n/a	n/a	16%	29%	23%	n/a	0%	14%	15%	18%	17%
Computer Science	24%	22%	23%	12%	13%	13%	11%	14%	33%	14%	n/a	16%	28%	38%	20%
All Fields of Study	16%	20%	16%	14%	14%	15%	14%	20%	22%	13%	10%	16%	15%	17%	16%

Table G4 2013/14 Institute of Technology All Levels Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study

FIELD OF STUDY	AIT	ITB	CIT	ITC	DKIT	IADT	DIT	GMIT	LIT	LYIT	ITS	ITTA	ITTRA	WIT	ALL INSTITUTES
Education	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	5%
Healthcare	11%	12%	10%	10%	12%	n/a	13%	16%	17%	8%	10%	9%	16%	11%	11%
Social Science, Business, Law, Arts and Humanities	20%	41%	18%	17%	19%	17%	7%	25%	25%	31%	32%	24%	24%	19%	21%
Science, Agriculture and Veterinary	24%	25%	15%	16%	13%	n/a	15%	17%	18%	21%	20%	21%	18%	14%	17%
Engineering (excl Civil)	31%	43%	30%	28%	29%	n/a	22%	36%	32%	36%	35%	33%	38%	24%	30%
Construction and Related	39%	n/a	32%	39%	27%	n/a	27%	35%	40%	32%	42%	n/a	29%	29%	32%
Services	25%	25%	28%	12%	21%	n/a	20%	22%	21%	23%	23%	23%	23%	23%	22%
Computer Science	26%	32%	29%	21%	21%	18%	11%	21%	37%	22%	26%	22%	37%	33%	26%
All Fields of Study	21%	29%	22%	17%	18%	17%	17%	25%	27%	25%	25%	24%	22%	19%	21%

Table G5 2013/14 University Level 8 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study

FIELD OF STUDY	DCU	UCD	UCC	NUIG	UL	MU	TCD	ALL UNIVERSITIES
Education	9%	n/a	2%	0%	3%	3%	8%	5%
Healthcare	6%	6%	9%	3%	7%	0%	8%	7%
Social Science, Business, Law, Arts and Humanities	14%	12%	12%	15%	13%	10%	8%	12%
Science, Agriculture and Veterinary	14%	7%	8%	13%	15%	8%	9%	10%
Engineering (excl Civil)	19%	10%	12%	5%	11%	16%	10%	11%
Construction and Related	n/a	14%	15%	8%	7%	n/a	n/a	13%
Services	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	0%
Computer Science	12%	15%	7%	14%	18%	7%	16%	12%
All Fields of Study	13%	10%	10%	12%	12%	9%	9%	11%

Table G6 2013/14 Colleges Level 8 Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study

FIELD OF STUDY	NCAD	MDEI	MIC	SPD	ST. ANGELA'S	ALL COLLEGES
Education	6%	8%	2%	2%	10%	3%
Healthcare	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	16%	16%
Science, Agriculture and Veterinary	n/a	n/a	10%	n/a	n/a	10%
Social Science, Business, Law, Arts and Humanities	11%	15%	8%	8%	17%	9%
All Fields of Study	10%	9%	4%	4%	13%	6%

Appendix H Multivariate Logistic Regression Models – Factors Influencing Non-Progression from 2013/14 to 2014/15

Notes for interpretation:

The following analysis uses multivariate logistic regression to analyse the probability of not progressing from year 1 into year 2 across HEIs between academic year 2013/14 and academic year 2014/15 based on a specific set of explanatory variables.¹⁶ The outcome variable is binary – 1 for not progressed and 0 for progressed. Therefore, the estimates for each of the explanatory variables (since they are expressed as odds ratios) are the odds of not progressing versus a reference category in each instance. For example, if an odds ratio of 1.5 is estimated for ‘male’ in any model, and the estimate is statistically significant¹⁷, that means males are 1.5 times more likely to not progress than females, since female is the reference category for the gender variable. Different combinations of the explanatory variables are used in the various models to control for student characteristics, previous educational attainment, course level/field and institute. Clustering¹⁸ is used in the models that do not contain the institute itself as an explanatory variable to allow for similarity between students within institutions. The following explanatory variables have been used and/or tested in various models, including interactions in some instances¹⁹:

- ▶ Age Group
- ▶ Gender
- ▶ Nationality
- ▶ Socio-economic Group
- ▶ Grant Recipient
- ▶ Leaving Certificate Points
- ▶ NFQ Level
- ▶ ISCED Field of Study
- ▶ Institute Type
- ▶ Institute

16 The methodology is similar to that adopted by McCoy and Byrne in the 2010 HEA Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education – that analysis looked at progression from academic year 2007/08 into academic year 2008/09.

17 Statistical significance reported in this analysis is based on $p < 0.05$.

18 Standard errors are clustered by institution. Stata was used for the modelling presented here.

19 Interactions are not reported here for ease of interpretation. Interactions show the odds ratios for an explanatory variable conditional on one or more other explanatory variables. For example, the odds of males not in receipt of a grant not progressing compared to males in receipt of a grant, females in receipt of a grant and females not in receipt of a grant.

Table H1 *A Multivariate Clustered Analysis – Factors Influencing Non-Progression (2013/14-2014/15)* ²⁰

	MODEL 1			MODEL 2			MODEL 3			MODEL 4		
	CLUSTERED MODEL			CLUSTERED MODEL			CLUSTERED MODEL			CLUSTERED MODEL		
	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE
Age Group												
16 - 18 yrs	1.027	0.094	0.768	0.880	0.117	0.334	0.926	0.120	0.553	0.918	0.122	0.522
19 - 20 yrs	1.043	0.083	0.596	0.915	0.104	0.435	0.957	0.108	0.694	0.962	0.114	0.742
21 - 24 yrs	1.264	0.083	0.000	1.047	0.081	0.551	1.056	0.077	0.455	1.057	0.079	0.458
30 yrs +	0.907	0.118	0.454	0.942	0.123	0.647	0.946	0.125	0.674	0.935	0.122	0.604
<i>Ref: 25 - 29 yrs</i>												
Gender												
Male	1.654	0.108	0.000	1.463	0.081	0.000	1.430	0.078	0.000	1.257	0.062	0.000
<i>Ref: Female</i>												
Nationality												
Irish	0.865	0.172	0.466	0.801	0.134	0.184	0.785	0.133	0.151	0.798	0.127	0.157
<i>Ref: Non-Irish</i>												
Socio-economic Group												
Agricultural Workers	1.044	0.246	0.855	0.980	0.262	0.941	0.984	0.269	0.952	0.964	0.273	0.896
All others gainfully occupied and unknown	1.143	0.103	0.137	1.144	0.092	0.092	1.142	0.091	0.096	1.133	0.095	0.134
Employers and Managers	0.781	0.074	0.009	0.925	0.088	0.410	0.940	0.084	0.493	0.929	0.086	0.427
Farmers	0.633	0.086	0.001	0.776	0.090	0.029	0.781	0.090	0.033	0.797	0.090	0.045
Higher Professional	0.609	0.058	0.000	0.816	0.079	0.036	0.838	0.073	0.043	0.829	0.073	0.034
Lower Professional	0.707	0.081	0.003	0.881	0.099	0.256	0.898	0.099	0.328	0.894	0.099	0.311
Manual Skilled	1.090	0.110	0.395	1.112	0.116	0.306	1.112	0.116	0.310	1.106	0.114	0.329
N/A	1.414	0.167	0.003	1.367	0.128	0.001	1.338	0.123	0.002	1.314	0.122	0.003
Non-manual	0.890	0.082	0.205	0.979	0.090	0.814	0.986	0.091	0.881	0.978	0.091	0.812
Own Account Workers	0.992	0.108	0.944	1.073	0.119	0.527	1.080	0.121	0.493	1.070	0.120	0.549
Unskilled	0.965	0.106	0.745	0.955	0.100	0.659	0.941	0.098	0.560	0.938	0.099	0.546
<i>Ref: Semi-skilled</i>												
Grant Recipient												
Yes				0.931	0.054	0.217	0.914	0.052	0.115	0.917	0.052	0.125
<i>Ref: No</i>												
LC Points												
155 to 200				3.048	0.379	0.000	2.978	0.366	0.000	2.561	0.288	0.000
205 to 250				2.273	0.221	0.000	2.201	0.219	0.000	1.910	0.195	0.000
255 to 300				1.579	0.122	0.000	1.535	0.123	0.000	1.392	0.115	0.000
355 to 400				0.665	0.046	0.000	0.696	0.049	0.000	0.709	0.049	0.000
405 to 450				0.454	0.042	0.000	0.499	0.049	0.000	0.516	0.056	0.000
455 to 500				0.299	0.035	0.000	0.352	0.046	0.000	0.373	0.053	0.000
505 to 550				0.214	0.022	0.000	0.249	0.035	0.000	0.267	0.041	0.000
555 to 600				0.322	0.043	0.000	0.368	0.056	0.000	0.407	0.064	0.000
Other				0.583	0.094	0.001	0.627	0.101	0.004	0.655	0.103	0.007
<i>Ref: 305 to 350</i>												
NFQ Level												
Level 6										1.221	0.106	0.021
Level 7										1.240	0.095	0.005
<i>Ref: Level 8</i>												

²⁰ Estimates not statistically significant are presented in red (p>0.05).

Table H1 A Multivariate Clustered Analysis – Factors Influencing Non-Progression (2013/14-2014/15) cont.

	MODEL 1			MODEL 2			MODEL 3			MODEL 4		
	CLUSTERED MODEL			CLUSTERED MODEL			CLUSTERED MODEL			CLUSTERED MODEL		
	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE
Institute Type												
Colleges							0.594	0.093	0.001	0.759	0.116	0.071
Institutes of Technology							1.215	0.105	0.024	1.102	0.093	0.249
<i>Ref: Universities</i>												
ISCED												
Computer Science										1.114	0.089	0.176
Construction and Related										1.440	0.076	0.000
Education										0.464	0.047	0.000
Engineering (excl Civil)										1.159	0.093	0.068
Healthcare										0.625	0.051	0.000
Science and Agri and Vet										0.921	0.059	0.200
Services										0.928	0.073	0.339
<i>Ref: Social Science Business and Law and Arts and Humanities</i>												
Students	40,142			40,142			40,142			40,142		
HE Institutions	26			26			26			26		
Log Likelihood	-16882.718			-16109.651			-16074.095			-15978.459		
Pseudo R Squared	0.0230			0.0677			0.0698			0.0753		

Table H2 *A Multivariate Unclustered Analysis – Factors Influencing Non-Progression (2013/14-2014/15)*

	MODEL 5			MODEL 6			MODEL 7			MODEL 8		
	UNCLUSTERED MODEL			UNCLUSTERED MODEL			UNCLUSTERED MODEL			UNCLUSTERED MODEL		
	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE
Age Group												
16 - 18 yrs				1.202	0.086	0.010	0.978	0.075	0.773	0.964	0.074	0.634
19 - 20 yrs				1.210	0.086	0.007	1.001	0.075	0.990	1.001	0.075	0.986
21 - 24 yrs				1.250	0.101	0.006	1.085	0.089	0.321	1.084	0.090	0.330
30 yrs +				0.911	0.079	0.282	0.941	0.081	0.481	0.930	0.080	0.400
<i>Ref: 25 - 29 yrs</i>												
Gender												
Male				1.529	0.044	0.000	1.421	0.042	0.000	1.257	0.040	0.000
<i>Ref: Female</i>												
Nationality												
Irish				0.722	0.049	0.000	0.775	0.054	0.000	0.788	0.055	0.001
<i>Ref: Non-Irish</i>												
Socio-economic Group												
Agricultural Workers				1.012	0.308	0.969	0.982	0.303	0.954	0.962	0.297	0.900
All others gainfully occupied and unknown				1.159	0.099	0.084	1.156	0.100	0.094	1.148	0.100	0.111
Employers and Managers				0.906	0.081	0.272	0.961	0.088	0.661	0.950	0.087	0.573
Farmers				0.681	0.076	0.001	0.776	0.088	0.025	0.784	0.089	0.033
Higher Professional				0.780	0.079	0.014	0.865	0.090	0.162	0.856	0.089	0.134
Lower Professional				0.837	0.086	0.083	0.913	0.096	0.387	0.910	0.095	0.367
Manual Skilled				1.074	0.100	0.442	1.107	0.105	0.283	1.100	0.105	0.320
N/A				1.279	0.103	0.002	1.304	0.107	0.001	1.286	0.106	0.002
Non-manual				0.948	0.092	0.583	0.992	0.097	0.936	0.985	0.097	0.882
Own Account Workers				1.022	0.103	0.831	1.083	0.111	0.433	1.075	0.110	0.483
Unskilled				0.909	0.103	0.399	0.933	0.108	0.550	0.926	0.107	0.504
<i>Ref: Semi-skilled</i>												
Grant Recipient												
Yes							0.913	0.028	0.003	0.914	0.028	0.004
<i>Ref: No</i>												
LC Points												
155 to 200							2.886	0.319	0.000	2.473	0.279	0.000
205 to 250							2.203	0.157	0.000	1.900	0.140	0.000
255 to 300							1.540	0.093	0.000	1.395	0.086	0.000
355 to 400							0.691	0.038	0.000	0.706	0.039	0.000
405 to 450							0.487	0.031	0.000	0.503	0.032	0.000
455 to 500							0.335	0.025	0.000	0.354	0.027	0.000
505 to 550							0.231	0.023	0.000	0.248	0.025	0.000
555 to 600							0.343	0.041	0.000	0.381	0.047	0.000
Other							0.671	0.035	0.000	0.693	0.037	0.000
<i>Ref: 305 to 350</i>												
NFQ Level												
Level 6										1.196	0.074	0.004
Level 7										1.232	0.058	0.000
<i>Ref: Level 8</i>												

Table H2 A Multivariate Unclustered Analysis – Factors Influencing Non-Progression (2013/14-2014/15) cont.

	MODEL 5			MODEL 6			MODEL 7			MODEL 8		
	UNCLUSTERED MODEL			UNCLUSTERED MODEL			UNCLUSTERED MODEL			UNCLUSTERED MODEL		
	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE	ODDS RATIO	STANDARD ERROR	P VALUE
ISCED												
<i>Computer Science</i>										1.069	0.057	0.206
<i>Construction and Related</i>										1.410	0.113	0.000
<i>Education</i>										0.456	0.074	0.000
<i>Engineering (excl Civil)</i>										1.136	0.058	0.013
<i>Healthcare</i>										0.605	0.033	0.000
<i>Science and Agri and Vet</i>										0.925	0.046	0.118
<i>Services</i>										0.911	0.053	0.110
<i>Ref: Social Science Business and Law and Arts and Humanities</i>												
Institute												
AIT	2.274	0.216	0.000	2.016	0.194	0.000	1.025	0.103	0.804	0.966	0.102	0.742
CIT	2.402	0.197	0.000	2.134	0.177	0.000	1.209	0.105	0.029	1.067	0.096	0.473
DCU	1.274	0.108	0.004	1.081	0.093	0.364	1.052	0.091	0.556	1.058	0.092	0.521
DIT	1.781	0.131	0.000	1.567	0.116	0.000	1.086	0.083	0.277	0.950	0.075	0.519
DIADT	1.819	0.234	0.000	1.382	0.182	0.014	0.814	0.110	0.127	0.748	0.101	0.032
DKIT	1.961	0.186	0.000	1.734	0.166	0.000	0.945	0.094	0.572	0.848	0.088	0.110
GMIT	2.854	0.233	0.000	2.109	0.180	0.000	1.098	0.099	0.297	0.933	0.088	0.465
ITB	3.602	0.340	0.000	2.965	0.286	0.000	1.375	0.140	0.002	1.323	0.139	0.008
ITC	1.734	0.172	0.000	1.489	0.150	0.000	0.874	0.091	0.195	0.822	0.087	0.066
ITS	2.897	0.261	0.000	2.274	0.212	0.000	1.160	0.114	0.130	1.054	0.108	0.609
IT Tallaght	2.786	0.279	0.000	2.489	0.252	0.000	1.100	0.118	0.372	0.997	0.108	0.978
IT Tralee	2.498	0.270	0.000	2.480	0.272	0.000	1.329	0.151	0.012	1.278	0.150	0.037
Letterkenny IT	2.805	0.275	0.000	2.570	0.256	0.000	1.169	0.123	0.138	1.056	0.114	0.614
Limerick IT	3.193	0.263	0.000	2.518	0.215	0.000	1.419	0.126	0.000	1.254	0.115	0.013
MIC	0.386	0.074	0.000	0.429	0.083	0.000	0.454	0.088	0.000	0.585	0.120	0.009
Mater Dei	0.889	0.357	0.770	0.911	0.366	0.816	0.689	0.280	0.359	1.092	0.465	0.837
NCAD	0.979	0.203	0.920	1.055	0.220	0.796	0.584	0.125	0.012	0.607	0.130	0.019
NUIG	1.197	0.096	0.026	0.984	0.081	0.849	0.890	0.074	0.163	0.876	0.073	0.114
NUIM	0.900	0.085	0.265	0.892	0.085	0.227	0.773	0.074	0.007	0.733	0.070	0.001
St Angela's College	1.320	0.312	0.240	1.365	0.325	0.192	1.131	0.273	0.611	1.641	0.407	0.046
St Patrick's College	0.357	0.076	0.000	0.376	0.080	0.000	0.431	0.092	0.000	0.563	0.126	0.010
TCD	0.805	0.071	0.015	0.804	0.072	0.015	0.598	0.056	0.000	0.620	0.058	0.000
UCD	1.006	0.078	0.937	1.014	0.079	0.856	1.075	0.084	0.360	1.027	0.081	0.737
UL	1.186	0.103	0.049	1.057	0.093	0.531	1.039	0.092	0.667	1.001	0.089	0.988
WIT	2.058	0.169	0.000	1.924	0.160	0.000	1.054	0.092	0.550	0.998	0.090	0.984
<i>Ref: UCC</i>												
Students	40,142			40,142			40,142			40,142		
HE Institutions	26			26			26			26		
Chi Square	1214.65***			1608.36***			2537.54***			2724.32***		
Pseudo R Squared	0.0351			0.0465			0.0734			0.0788		

The main findings from this analysis, which are largely in line with the 2010 analysis, are:

- ▶ The strongest predictors of non-progression are prior educational attainment and gender. Across all models, it is shown that those with higher Leaving Certificate points are less likely to not progress from first year into second year at third level. Model 4 shows that those with 155 to 200 points are 2.6 times more likely to not progress than those with 305 to 350 points, controlling for age, gender, nationality, socio-economic group, grant receipt, NFQ level, institute type and field of study. Those with 505 to 550 points are only 0.3 times as likely to not progress as those with 305 to 350 points. Also in model 4, males are 1.3 times more likely to not progress as females, controlling for age, nationality, socio-economic group, grant receipt, Leaving Certificate points, NFQ level, institute type and field of study.
- ▶ Other results of interest include:
 - i. Farmers and higher professionals are less likely to not progress than those in the semi-skilled socio-economic group.
 - ii. Grant recipients are less likely to not progress, but only marginally over grant non-recipients.
 - iii. Level 6 & 7 students are more likely to not progress than level 8 students. For instance, in model 4, which controls for age, gender, nationality, socio-economic group, grant receipt, Leaving Certificate points, institute type and field of study, both level 6 and level 7 students are 1.2 times more likely to not progress than level 8 students.
 - iv. Across the fields of study, *Construction* and *Engineering* students are more likely not to progress than *Social Science, Business, Law and Arts & Humanities* students. *Education* and *Healthcare* students are less likely to not progress than *Social Science, Business, Law and Arts & Humanities* students.
 - v. Model 3, which controls for age, gender, nationality, socio-economic group, grant receipt and Leaving Certificate points shows that institute of technology students are 1.2 times more likely to not progress than university students. Students from colleges of education are only 0.6 times as likely to not progress as university students.
 - vi. Across the institutes, compared to UCC students, IT Blanchardstown, IT Tralee and Limerick IT students are more likely to not progress. However, the odds diminish substantially once controls for Leaving Certificate points, NFQ level and field of study and introduced into the model. Mary Immaculate College, St Patrick's College and TCD students are less likely to not progress.



Contact Us

3 Shelbourne Buildings, Crampton Avenue
Shelbourne Road, Ballsbridge, Dublin 4
DO4 C2Y6, Ireland

Email: info@hea.ie

Phone: +353 1 231 7100

Lo-Call Number: 1890 200 637

Fax: +353 1 231 7172