

**A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education Institutions
2010/11 to 2011/12**

A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education Institutions, 2010/11 to 2011/12

A report by the Higher Education Authority

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Foreword

Students enrol in higher education institutions across Ireland to begin the journey of attaining a third level qualification to avail of the countless opportunities this education affords. For some students, this goal is not achieved. The perennial issue of persistence in higher education is critically important, not just for the success of students, but for the higher education institutions whose mission is to serve and support the learning and growth of students. The costs of non-progression to both students and institutions are undeniable, but to address these challenges, we must first identify the influences, motivations, and pressures that cause students to leave higher education.

This report is the second in a series of studies on the progression of first year full-time undergraduate new entrants in higher education institutions in Ireland and follows on from the 2007/2008 report. This new data will help identify trends and facilitate the development of policy to tackle the issue of non-progression. With this report the HEA provides a further evidence base to underpin policy development.

The HEA continues to focus attention on the quality of the first year experience of Irish students. This information in conjunction with the results of the first Irish Student Engagement Survey strengthen the evidence base available for continued research. The data from this report will also be used to populate the annual institutional profiles and serve as a valuable tool for performance evaluation as we continue the Strategic Dialogue with higher education institutions.

In order to improve our higher education system and our ability to best serve students, we must seek out opportunities that reveal challenges, deepen our understanding, and underpin practice and policy. This report provides the basis for this analysis and highlights the continued need to address issues that affect the progression of students through successful completion of a higher education.

Tom Boland
Chief Executive Officer
Higher Education Authority

Executive Summary

“A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education Institutions, 2010/11 to 2011/12”, is a report by the Higher Education Authority which delivers numerical evidence relating to the issue of progression through higher education in Ireland. The report updates data released in the 2010 report which looked at the 2007/08 new entrant cohort and aims to develop some trend data in the area of progression in undergraduate higher education. The report again hopes to be a reference document to inform policy and the development of interventions to improve rates of retention and completion. The trend data will allow institutions to observe changes in progression rates both nationally, by sector and by individual institutions. The publication of this second report will continue to provide an evidence base for dialogue between providers of higher education to understand which interventions are working to improve retention.

The analysis is based on the methodology used in the 2007/08 analysis where data is drawn from the Student Record System (SRS) in the HEA. The Leaving Certificate attainment data is now drawn from available data returned by the institutions to the SRS rather than using on data from the CAO database, as was the case in 2010. The analysis presented focuses on the developments in the academic years 2010/11 and 2011/12 between the two census dates March 1st 2011 and March 1st 2012.

The report examines the issue of progression across a range of fields of study, NFQ levels and institutions. Significant attention is paid to the extent to which individual students’ characteristics, such as gender, age, socio-economic background and prior educational attainment, have an impact on progression. The main focus of the report is on new entrants. The key findings of the report are summarised below:

Chapter 2: Non-Progression of 2010/11 Full-Time Undergraduate New Entrants

- The proportion of new entrants in 2010/11 who did not progress one year later was 16%, a decline from 15% in 2007/08 across all sectors and NFQ levels.
- The rates of non-progression vary strongly according to the NFQ level, ranging from 31%/28% at levels 6/7 compared to 25%/26% in 2007/08 to between 4% and 17% at level 8 compared to 4% and 16% in 2007/08.
- Rates also differ considerably according to the sector, ranging from 24% in an institute of technology compared to 22% in 2007/08 to 9% in a university and 4% in other colleges, consistent with the last study.
- The strong link between prior educational attainment and successful progression is again evident in this study. Educational attainment is a very strong factor influencing whether or not a new entrant progresses beyond the first year of their course of study.
- Regardless of the sector or level that a student enters, students with lower Leaving Certificate points are less likely to progress to the following academic year.

Chapter 3: Field of Study

- As with the 2010 study non-progression rates vary greatly across the different fields of study.
- The highest rates of progression are amongst the profession-orientated courses such as Medicine and Veterinary.
- In 2007/08 the lowest rates of progression were found amongst Computer Science, Services and Engineering and Construction Related courses. In 2010/11 the fields of study remain the same but the order has changed with Construction and Related, Services, Computing and Engineering displaying the lowest rates.
- Improvements in progression rates are seen in Science, Agriculture and Vet and Computer Science across all sectors and NFQ levels.
- At level 6 Engineering and Construction and Related have the highest non-progression rate at 39%, at level 7 Construction and Related has the highest rate at 40% and at Level 8, Services has the highest non-progression rate at 22%.
- Significant improvements in Computing non-progression rates are seen across all levels from 2007/08. Improving from 35% to 31% at level 6, 36% to 34% at level 7 and 25% to 23% at level 8.
- Science, Agriculture and Veterinary also show significant improvements in the institute of technology sector with non-progression rates improving from 22% to 16% at level 8 and 24% to 22% at level 7.

Chapter 4: Student Characteristics

- As was the case in the 2007/08 study, at aggregate level females continue to display higher rates of progression than males. The overall male non-progression rate is 19% compared to 13% for females. This compares to 17% and 13% in 2007/08. This shows a dis-improvement in male progression.
- Matures students (23+) display much lower non-progression rates at levels 6 and 7 in the institutes of technology. They display slightly lower non-progression rates at level 8 in the institutes of technology. However, the non-progression rate at level 8 in universities is 13% for mature students, compared to 8% for those under 23. In 2007/08 mature students displayed higher non-progression rates at level 8 across all sectors.
- Non-Irish students display lower non-progression rates at level 7 in the institutes of technology but slightly higher non-progression rates at level 8 in the universities.

- As was the case in 2007/08 socio-economic groups with the highest entry rates display the highest rates of progression.
- A number of lower socio economic groups have seen increases in non-progression rates since 2007/08 such as Agricultural workers increasing from 11%-14%. Semi and Unskilled groups improved from 2007/08 to 2010/11 from 17%-15% and 19% to 17% respectively. It should also be noted that the Unknown group non-progression rate increased from 16% to 20% over the timeframe. It is widely considered that there are large numbers of the students from the under-represented groups present in this Unknown category.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

In 2010 the HEA published a report entitled “*A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education*”¹. The report examined the non-progression rate of full-time undergraduate new entrants to Irish higher education institutions in 2007/08 in the following academic year 2008/09. This report is an update of those figures for the 2010/11 new entrant cohort. The paper aims to report any changes in non-progression rates examining a range of characteristics. Participation in Irish higher education has continued to increase over the period between studies. The number of new entrants has increased by 13% in the three year period between 2007/08 and 2010/11. Increased demand for higher education places has resulted in increases to CAO² points for many courses in particular STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) over the last few years. The main finding of the 2010 progression report was that prior educational attainment is the greatest influence on successful progression. The higher a student’s Leaving Certificate points the more likely a student is to progress particularly if their Mathematics and English scores are high.

This paper builds significantly on our evidence base for progression in higher education. It now not only provides significant important national data but also allows for trend data to develop. This will improve our knowledge of institutions’ ability to put in place incentives to improve progression. Trend data allows us to track any changes in progression across sectors, levels and disciplines over time.

1.2 Data sources and methodology

The student data used in this analysis was extracted from the HEA’s in-house database of information pertaining to students in all HEA-funded institutions—the Student Record System (SRS), which contains an individual record for each student in each academic year. The SRS was established in the university sector in 2004 and in the institutes of technology and the National College of Ireland in 2007. The data on which this analysis is based was extracted from the SRS by tracking student IDs of new entrants within institutions and across academic years.

The census dates used for this analysis—1st March 2011 and 1st March 2012—span the academic years 2010/11 and 2011/12. 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 have progressed. Although the SRS does not permit the tracking of students across institutions, the proportion of undergraduate students who transferred to a different institution during these years is estimated to be less than 2% of all undergraduate new entrants. These are included among those deemed not to have progressed.

For the purposes of this report, only student data pertaining to full-time undergraduates (NFQ³ 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 analysed.

¹ O. Mooney, V. Patterson, M’O’ Connor & A. Chantler. “A Study of Progression in Irish Higher Education”, October, 2010. (Dublin: Higher Education Authority)

² Central Applications Office is the main administration centre for the processing of applications to Ireland third level institutions

³ NFQ – National Framework of Qualifications, www.qqi.ie

The socio-economic data in the SRS was collected by surveying the student body during the registration process in 2010. The non-mandatory nature of this element of the data collection resulted in wide variations in response rates across institutions.

1.3 Categorisation of students

New Entrants

The majority of the analysis was carried out on 1st year full-time undergraduate new entrants to higher education. New entrants are defined as students entering higher education 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 students or transfer students.

Repeat Students

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 Students

Students transferring from a course of study in their institution to another institution are described as external transfer students. These students cannot be identified or tracked in the absence of full coverage of a national-level identifier covering all students such as a PPS number.

Not Present/Non-progression

In instances in which a new entrants student's ID does not appear in their institution's data return for the following academic year, the student is described as being 'not present'. It is not possible to distinguish external transfer students from those described as 'not present'.

In summary this study examines the progression of undergraduate new entrants in the academic year 2010/11 to the second year of their original course at a given NFQ level. The data for this cohort is examined by sector, NFQ level, grant eligibility status, field of study, gender, age, socio-economic background and nationality.

The reader should be aware of the limitations that the data-set poses for analysis. Since the census dates used are 1st March 2011 and 1st March 2012, this report does not take into account those students who left their institution prior to 1st March 2011. However, previous analysis of the data-set undertaken by the HEA showed that just 4% of new entrants dropped out of their original

course of study prior to 1st March of the academic year in which their course commenced⁴. In addition, as indicated above, the absence of full coverage of a national-level identifier covering all students and the incompleteness of the socio-economic data returned to the SRS are all factors that have militated against the presentation of a more comprehensive analysis.

⁴ Oliver Mooney and Vivienne Patterson, *An Initial Study of Progression Rates in Irish Higher Education Institutions* (Dublin: Higher Education Authority, 2009)

Chapter 2: Non-progression of 2010/11 full-time undergraduate new entrants

This section shows estimates of the levels of non-progression among full-time 2010/11 undergraduate new entrants to HEA funded institutions by sector, NFQ level and grant eligibility. New entrants are classified as 'not-present' if they do not appear in the statistical returns of the institution in the following academic year (2011/12).

2.1 Non-progression by sector and NFQ level

Table 1 illustrates the non-progression rates of new entrants in their second year of study by sector, NFQ level and duration of course. The table shows that non-progression rates vary significantly between sectors and levels. Overall, the national non-progression rate across all sectors and all levels is 16% in 2010/11, up from 15% in 2007/08. The rates remained the same in the university and other colleges sectors at 9% and 4% respectively, but changes have been recorded in the institute of technology sector.

The non-progression rate at level 6 in the institutes of technology has increased from 25% in 2007/08 to 31% in 2010/11, while the non-progression rate for level 7 has increased from 26% to 28% and at level 8 from 16% to 17%. Leaving Cert results data from the Student Record System was used to determine the most common points range for each NFQ level and sector. The data showed that at level 6/7 for the institute of technology sector the most common points attained in 2010/11 were 250-300 points consistent with 2007/08. Level 8 non-progression rates in the institute of technology sector increased from 16% in 2007/08 to 17% in 2010/11 even though the most common points attained for level 8 new entrants in the institute of technology increased from 300-350 in 2007/08 to 355-400 in 2010/11. Changes in point's attainment at discipline level may result in this increase in non-progression rate.

Overall the non-progression rate for all levels in the institute of technology sector has increased from 22% to 24% over the three year period.

Table 1: Non-progression rates by sector and NFQ level

Sector	Level	Most Common Points Attained	Non-progression Rate
Institutes of Technology	Level 6	255 to 300	31%
	Level 7	305 to 350	28%
	Level 8	355 to 400	17%
	Level 8 3 Yr Duration	305 to 350	16%
	Level 8 4 Yr Duration	355 to 400	18%
	Level 8 >4 Yr Duration	550+	14%
	All New Entrants	305 to 350	24%
Universities	Level 8	405 to 450	9%
	Level 8 3 Yr Duration	405 to 450	10%
	Level 8 4 Yr Duration	455 to 500	9%
	Level 8 >4 Yr Duration	550+	3%
Other Colleges	Level 8	455 to 500	4%
	Level 8 3 Yr Duration	455 to 500	2%
	Level 8 4 Yr Duration	355 to 400	9%
All Institutions	Level 8	405 to 450	11%
All Institutions	All Levels	355 to 400	16%

2.2 Non-progression by grant eligibility

The grant is the main source of financial assistance available from the Irish state for students in full-time higher education, eligibility for which is determined on the basis of family and/or personal income. Table 2 compares aggregate progression rates of new entrants in receipt of a grant with those not in receipt of a grant by sector and NFQ level. Table 3 outlines the proportions of new entrants in receipt of a grant by sector and NFQ level.

Table 2: Non-progression rates by grant eligibility

Sector	Level	2010/11			2007/08		
		No Grant	Grant	All	No Grant	Grant	All
IoTs	Level 6	30%	32%	31%	27%	22%	25%
	Level 7	28%	28%	28%	27%	23%	26%
	Level 8	18%	17%	17%	17%	14%	16%
	All New Entrants	24%	25%	24%	23%	20%	22%
Universities	Level 8	8%	10%	9%	9%	10%	9%
Other Colleges	Level 8	4%	4%	4%	4%	3%	4%
All Institutions	Level 8	10%	12%	11%	10%	11%	11%
All Institutions	All New Entrants	15%	18%	16%	14%	16%	15%

Table 3: Grant holders as a percentage of new entrants

Sector	Level	Grant Holders as a % of New Entrants	
		2010/11	2007/08
IoTs	Level 6	43%	43%
	Level 7	47%	44%
	Level 8	39%	34%
	All New Entrants	43%	40%
Universities	Level 8	31%	25%
Other Colleges	Level 8	33%	34%
All Institutions	Level 8	33%	27%
All Institutions	All New Entrants	37%	32%

The tables show that on average 37% of new entrants are in receipt of a grant nationally up from 32% in 2007/08. However, there is wide variation across levels and sectors. In 2010/11 43% of new entrants to institutes of technology were in receipt of a grant. This compares to 40% in 2007/08. There has been a significant increase in the proportion of new entrants to universities receiving a grant over the 3 years with 31% in receipt in 2010/11 compared to 25% in 2007/08.

Table 2 shows that in 2010/11 a student is more likely to progress if he/she is not in receipt of a grant (15% non-progression) than if he/she is in receipt of a grant (18% non-progression). In 2007/08 grant aid positively impacted progression at all levels for those in the institutes of technology sector. This is no longer the case in 2010/11 with more students not in receipt of a grant progressing than those in

receipt of grant. This result may suggest that student financial hardship is increasing and that for those in receipt of a grant this monetary benefit is not having the same impact as it did four years ago.

Chapter 3: Field of study

This section examines the progression rates of new entrants by field of study in Irish higher education. The classification system used is based primarily on the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) level 2 with some modification intended to distinguish fields of study highlighted in national skills studies.

3.1 Non-progression among 2010/11 new entrants by field of study across all sectors and NFQ levels

The significant variation in progression rates across fields of study is illustrated in Figure 1, which shows that across all levels and sectors, non-progression rates range from 5% in Education to 28% in Construction and related. In 2007/08, Computer Science had the highest non-progression rate at 27%. Disciplines such as Computer Science, Construction and Related, Engineering and Services have non-progression rates well above the national average of 16% in 2010/11. This is mirroring the results from 2007/08. However, Construction and Related, Services and Engineering have all increased their non-progression rates over the 3 years.

Construction and Related non-progression rates have increased from 20% in 2007/08 to 28% in 2010/11. During this time period new entrants to this discipline declined by 40% and demand for the courses resulted in lower points requirements on entry. This coupled with the lack of employment opportunities has had a detrimental effect on progression rates for this field of study.

Increased demand and better career opportunities have however resulted in improvements in the non-progression rates for Computer Science and Science, Agriculture and Veterinary in 2010/11.

Figure 1: Non-progression rates by field of study 2007/08 vs 2010/11

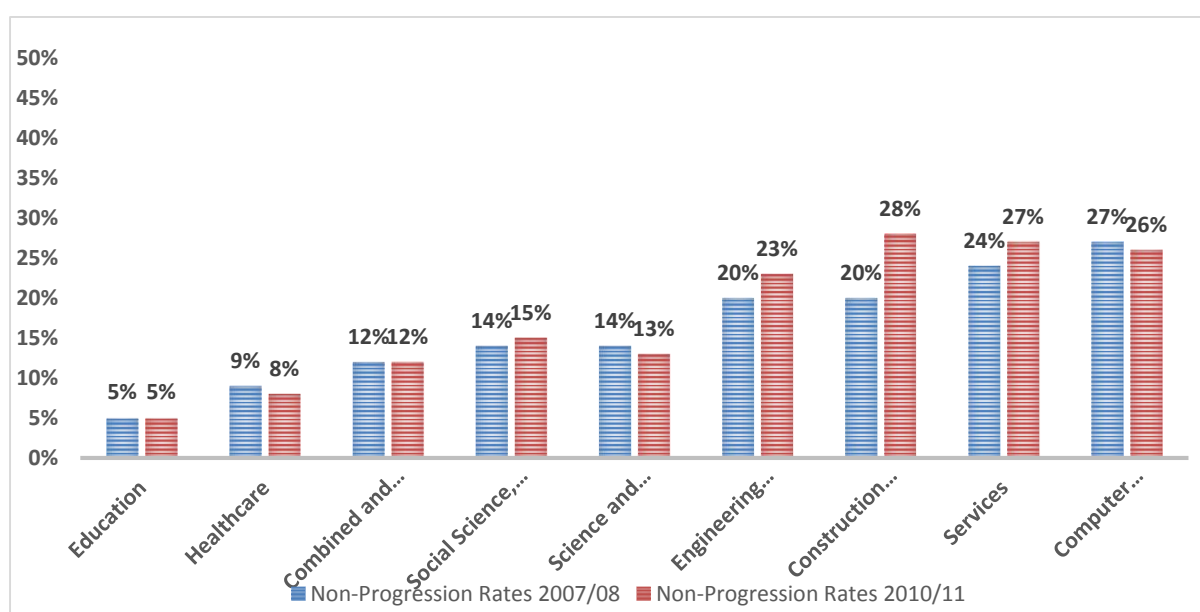


Table 4 outlines the non-progression rates by field of study, sector and level for 2010/11. The table gives an overview of the differences in progression rates across fields of study by sector and level. The variation across levels of study is very noticeable particularly for Technology heavy disciplines such as Science, Agriculture and Vet and Engineering and Computer Science.

Table 4: Non-progression rates by field of study, sector and NFQ level

Disciplines	Institutes of Technology				Universities	Colleges of Education	All Sectors	All Sectors
NFQ Level	L6	L7	L8	All Levels	L8	L8	L8	All Levels
Education	-	18%	8%	11%	5%	2%	3%	5%
Healthcare	13%	16%	11%	12%	5%	-	7%	8%
Combined and Other Disciplines	-	-	17%	17%	11%	-	12%	12%
Social Science Business and Law and Arts and Humanities	30%	29%	18%	24%	8%	8%	11%	15%
Science and Agri and Vet	27%	22%	16%	21%	9%	0%	10%	13%
Engineering (excl Civil)	39%	29%	22%	31%	9%	-	12%	23%
Construction and Related	39%	40%	21%	32%	9%	-	17%	28%
Services	33%	28%	21%	28%	23%	-	22%	27%
Computer Science	31%	34%	23%	30%	16%	-	19%	26%
All Disciplines	31%	28%	17%	24%	9%	4%	11%	16%

Note: Caution should be taken when comparing institutional non-progression tables by field of study and level with the 2007/08 data due to small class sizes in some cases indicating significant increase or decreases in non-progression rates.

3.2. Changes in non-progression by field of study, sector and NFQ level from 2007/08 to 2010/11

Table 5 gives a detailed outline of the changes in non-progression rates at level 6 in the institutes of technology by field of study over the study period.

Table 5: Level 6 non-progression rates by field of study

Disciplines	Institutes of Technology	
	L6 2010/11	L6 2007/08
Education		23%
Healthcare	13%	16%
Combined and Other Disciplines		10%
Social Science Business and Law and Arts and Humanities	30%	22%
Science and Agriculture and Veterinary	27%	26%
Engineering (excl Civil)	39%	35%
Construction and Related	39%	30%
Services	33%	19%
Computer Science	31%	35%
All Disciplines	31%	25%

The table shows increases in non-progression rates across all disciplines with the exception of Computer Science and Healthcare. Significant increases in non-progression rates are seen in Construction & Related and Services. The number of new entrants to Services courses at level 6 increased by over 200% in the time period with a significant number of new course offerings in the institute of technology sector.

Table 6 details changes in non-progression rates at level 7 in the institutes of technology by field of study over the study period.

Table 6: Level 7 non-progression rates by field of study

Disciplines	Institutes of Technology	
	L7 2010/11	L7 2007/08
Education	18%^	5%
Healthcare	16%	14%
Combined and Other Disciplines		
Social Science Business and Law and Arts and Humanities	29%	26%
Science and Agriculture and Veterinary	22%	24%
Engineering (excl Civil)	29%	27%
Construction and Related	40%	20%
Services	28%	30%
Computer Science	34%	36%
All Disciplines	28%	26%

Improvements in non-progression rates can be observed in Science, Agriculture and Veterinary and Computer Science and Services. Again significant increases in non-progression rates are recorded in Construction and Related which has doubled its non-progression rate at level 7 in the institutes of technology. Median points data, provided by the CAO, by course at level 6/7 shows that in 2007 the median points for Construction were 320. This had declined to 285 in 2010/11. Reduced points on entry and the collapse in the availability of employment in this sector may be a factor in the decline in progression rates.

Table 7 shows level 8 non-progression rates over the study period for the institutes of technology only.

Table 7: Level 8 non-progression rates by field of study, institutes of technology

Disciplines	Institutes of Technology	
	L8 2010/11	L8 2007/08
Education	8%	11%
Healthcare	11%	14%
Combined and Other Disciplines	17%	16%
Social Science Business and Law and Arts and Humanities	18%	15%
Science and Agriculture and Veterinary	16%	22%
Engineering (excl Civil)	22%	11%
Construction and Related	21%	22%
Services	21%	15%
Computer Science	23%	25%
All Disciplines	17%	16%

The table shows marked improvements in non-progression rates for Science, Agriculture and Veterinary (22% down to 16% in 2010/11), Education (11% down to 8% in 2010/11), and Healthcare (14% down to 11%). An improvement in Computer Science progression rates is also recorded (25% down to 23% in 2010/11). It is interesting to note that Construction and related non-progression rates are not affected at level 8 in the institutes of technology where the median points did not change between 2007 and 2010 compared to the dramatic declines in progression at levels 6 and 7 shown above.

Table 8 shows the changes in non-progression rates at level 8 in the universities over the three year period.

Table 8: Level 8 non-progression rates by field of study, universities

Disciplines	Universities	
	L8 2010/11	L8 2007/08
Education	5%	7%
Healthcare	5%	6%
Combined and Other Disciplines	11%	12%
Social Science Business and law and Arts and Humanities	8%	9%
Science and Agriculture and Veterinary	9%	11%
Engineering (excl Civil)	9%	9%
Construction and Related	9%	5%
Services	23%	7%
Computer Science	16%	16%
All Disciplines	9%	9%

Improvements across a number of disciplines are recorded albeit very slight. Again it is interesting to note increased non-progression rates in Construction and related from 5% to 9% where the non-progression rates in the institutes of technology although higher at 22% did not dis-improve. The major decline in the institutes of technology ability to retain new entrants at level 6 and 7 on Construction & Related courses will require monitoring over the next few years.

It is interesting to note the improvements in progression rates across Computer Science and Science, Agriculture and Vet resulting from, one would assume, increased demand and thus higher entry points and better employment prospects over the three year period. These results should continue to improve into the future as demand has remained high from 2011/12 to 2013/14 and an increasing number of Leaving Certificate students opted to sit Higher Level Mathematics with the introduction of bonus points in 2012. Table 9 outlines changes in non-progression rates by level, sector and institution. The table shows that five out of seven universities have improved progression in Computer Science over the study period. In the institutes of technology sector seven out of 12 improved their rates at level 8, six out of 13 at level 7 and five out of eight at level 6.

Table 9: Changes in non-progression rates in computer science by NFQ level and institution, 2007/8–2010/11

HEI	L8 2010/11	L8 2007/08		L7 2010/11	L7 2007/08		L6 2010/11	L6 2007/08
Dublin City University	25%	29%		-	-		-	-
University College Dublin	5%	21%		-	-		-	-
University College Cork	7%	11%		-	-		-	-
NUI Galway	21%	22%		-	-		-	-
University of Limerick	21%	16%		-	-		-	-
NUI Maynooth	16%^	4%		-	-		-	-
Trinity College Dublin	5%	11%		-	-		-	-
All Universities	16%	16%		-	-		-	-
Athlone IT	27%			32%	18%		-	
Blanchardstown IT	16%	33%		28%	50%		38%^	33%
Cork IT	15%^	28%		33%^	46%		36%^	35%
IT Carlow	24%	29%		29%	31%		21%	46%
Dundalk IT	18%	13%		39%	37%		-	-
Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology	37%^	37%		41%^	27%		-	-
Dublin IT	26%	26%		-	-		-	-
Galway-Mayo IT	-	-		35%	47%		25%	34%
Limerick IT	20%	26%		43%	-		42%	26%
Letterkenny IT	54%^	18%		48%	35%		24%	21%
IT Sligo	-	-		27%	29%		-	-
IT Tallaght	15%	21%		34%	29%		21%^	27%
IT Tralee	24%^	32%		33%	33%		25%^	41%
Waterford IT	20%	21%		27%	36%		27%	48%
All Institutes of Technology	23%	25%		34%	36%		31%	35%

^Course with <25 students enrolled in 1st year

Table 10 shows changes in non-progression rates in Science, Agriculture and Veterinary by level and institution between 2007/08 and 2010/11. The table shows that four out of seven universities improved their progression rates at level 8 while five out of eleven institutes of technology showed

improved rates. Non-progression rates at level 7 in Science showed significant improvements with seven of the institutes improving their progression rates since 2007.

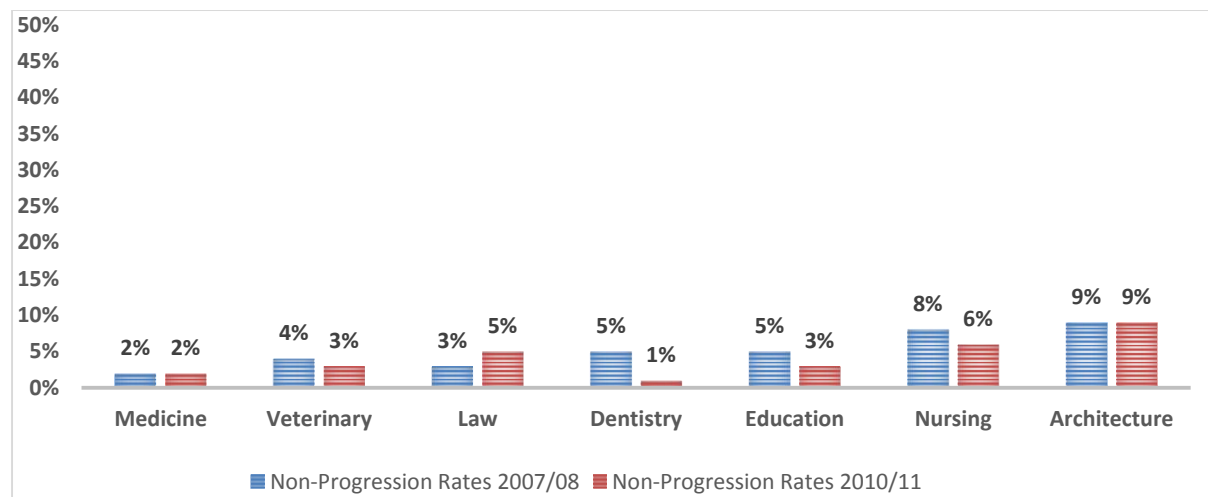
Table 10: Changes in non-progression rates in science, agriculture and veterinary by NFQ level and institution, 2007/8–2010/11

HEI	L8 2010/11	L8 2007/08		L7 2010/11	L7 2007/08		L6 2010/11	L6 2007/08
Dublin City University	12%	14%		-	-		-	-
University College Dublin	6%	10%		-	-		-	-
University College Cork	8%	7%		-	-		-	-
NUI Galway	14%	13%		-	-		-	-
University of Limerick	9%	11%		-	-		-	-
NUI Maynooth	10%	12%		-	-		-	-
Trinity College Dublin	9%	9%		-	-		-	-
All Universities	9%	11%		-	-		-	-
Athlone IT	21%	14%		11%	27%		16%	32%
Blanchardstown IT	17%			27%	20%		-	-
Cork IT	10%	22%		16%	19%		44%	-
IT Carlow	3%	10%		6%	8%		26%	26%
Dundalk IT	-			25%	45%		0%	-
Dunlaoghaire Institute of Art, Design & Technology	-			-	-		-	-
Dublin IT	20%	22%		27%	28%		-	-
Galway-Mayo IT	22%	30%		23%	30%		-	-
Limerick IT	14%			35%	-		33%	29%
Letterkenny IT	-			25%	20%		21%	-
IT Sligo	19%	5%		18%	23%		37%	-
IT Tallaght	14%	44%		11%	-		22%	25%
IT Tralee	22%			44%	-		47%	19%
Waterford IT	20%	13%		22%	8%		21%	30%
All Institutes of Technology	16%	22%		22%	24%		27%	26%

3.3 Profession-oriented courses

This section looks at those courses that lead to qualifications which prepare an individual for a particular career, such as Medicine or Law. In general Figure 2 shows that students enrolling on these courses seem to be much more likely to progress than all new entrants with the exception of Architecture. Improvements in non-progression rates in Veterinary, Dentistry, Education, and Nursing have been recorded over the 3 year study period.

Figure 2: Non-progression rates in selected profession-oriented courses, 2007/08–2010/11



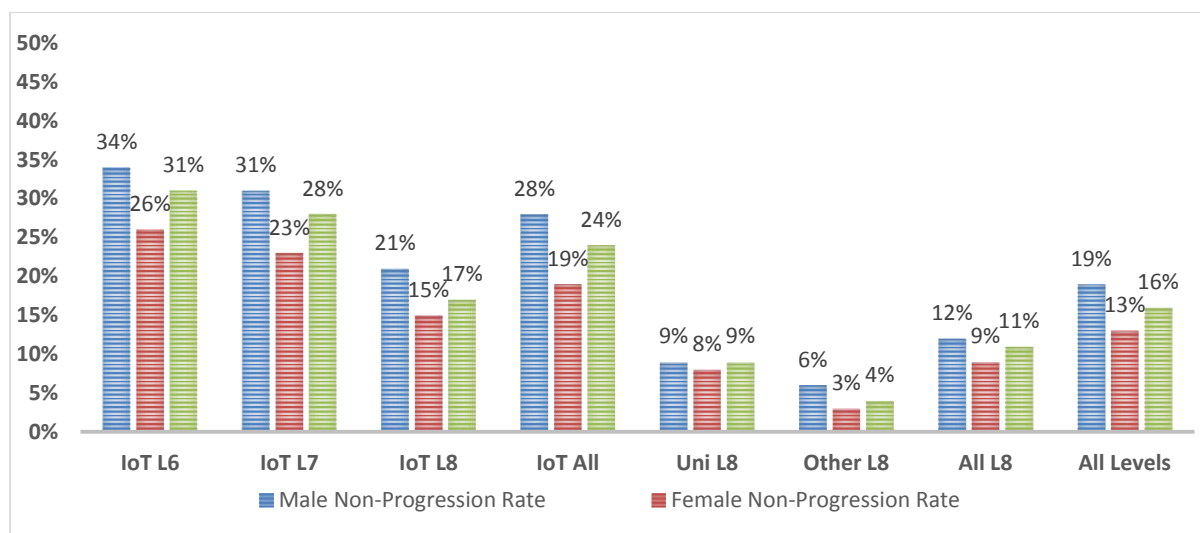
Chapter 4: Student characteristics

This section briefly reviews the issue of progression across a range of student characteristics such as gender, age, nationality and socio-economic background.

4.1 Non-progression and gender

Higher education new entrant gender is now balanced. It had been biased in the favour of females for a number of years. Figure 3 outlines the non-progression rates by gender, sector and level in 2010/11.

Figure 3: Non-progression rates by gender, sector and NFQ level, 2010/11



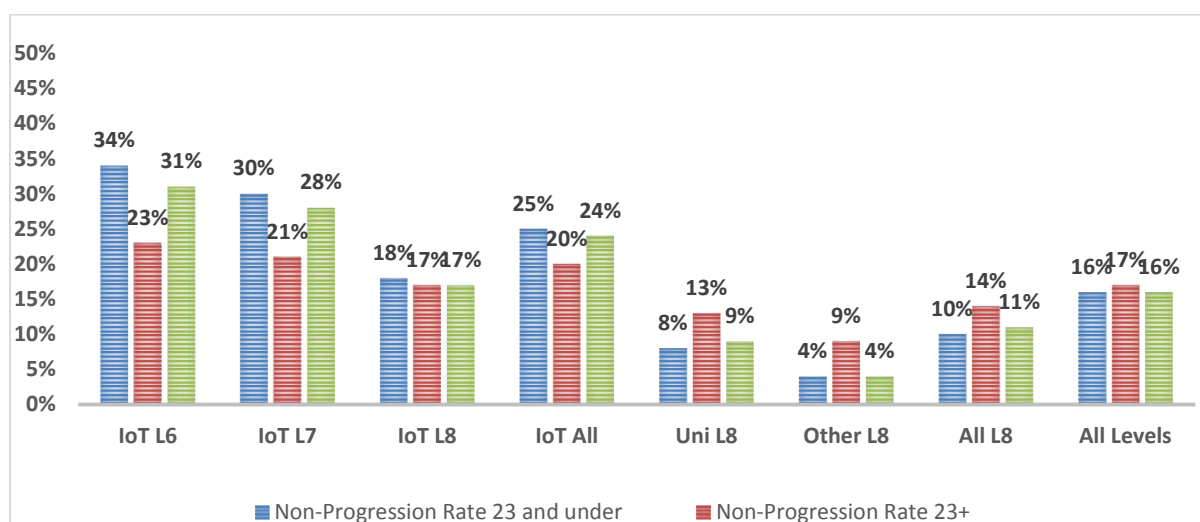
At aggregate level females continue, as was the case in 2007/08, to display higher rates of progression than males. The male non-progression rate is above average at 19% while female rates are below average at 13%. These differences are most pronounced in the institute of technology sector across all levels, although modest differences are apparent at level 8 in the universities and the other colleges. Increases in the non-progression rates of males in particular are evident in the institutes of technology sector at levels 6 and 7. The male non-progression rate at level 6 in the institutes of technology sector has increased from 28% in 2007/08 to 34% in 2010/11 and from 26% at level 7 in 2007/08 to 31% in 2010/11. Female non-progression rates at level 7 in the institutes of technology declined by 1%. Overall, in the institutes of technology at all levels male non-progression rates increased from 24% to 28% and female rates declined from 20% to 19%. Increases in non-progression rates in male dominated disciplines such as Construction and Related may be contributing to these increases.

4.2 Non-progression and age

Figure 4 outlines non-progression rates of students under 23 vs mature students⁵. The impact of age appears to vary according to the students' level and sector of study. Figure 4 shows that at levels 6 and 7 mature new entrants are substantially more likely to progress to the following year than a new entrant who is under the age of 23. This is in line with the finding in 2007/08. At level 6 and 7, 23% and 21%, respectively, of new entrants aged 23+ are not present in the following year compared to 34% and 30% respectively of those aged under 23. This represents a relatively high level of progression in the institutes of technology. This may be attributable to their greater dedication to their studies than their younger fellow students, particularly if the course duration is shorter than that of many level 8 courses. However, it may also be linked to the geographical dispersion of the institutes of technology throughout the country which, through their proximity to students' homes, may increase their attractiveness to mature students.

At level 8 in the institutes of technology there is no difference between the age groups but at the same level in the universities and other colleges mature students are less likely to progress to the following year than those under 23.

Figure 4: Non-progression rates by age, sector and NFQ level, 2010/11

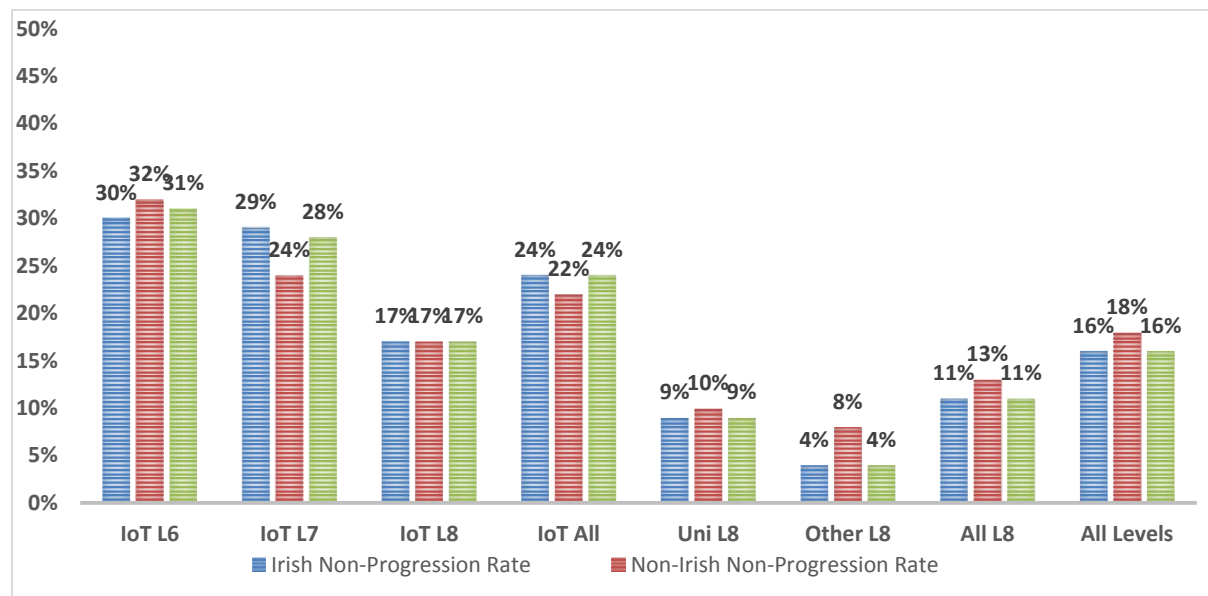


⁵ Mature students are defined as students aged 23 or over on 1st January 2010

4.3 Non-progression and nationality

Figure 5 represents a comparison of the non-progression rates of Irish and non-Irish students, and it shows that the patterns of progression vary according to level and sector. The data shows that at level 7 in the institutes of technology non-Irish students are more likely to progress to the following year than Irish new entrants. In the universities Irish students are more likely to progress as was the case in 2007/08.

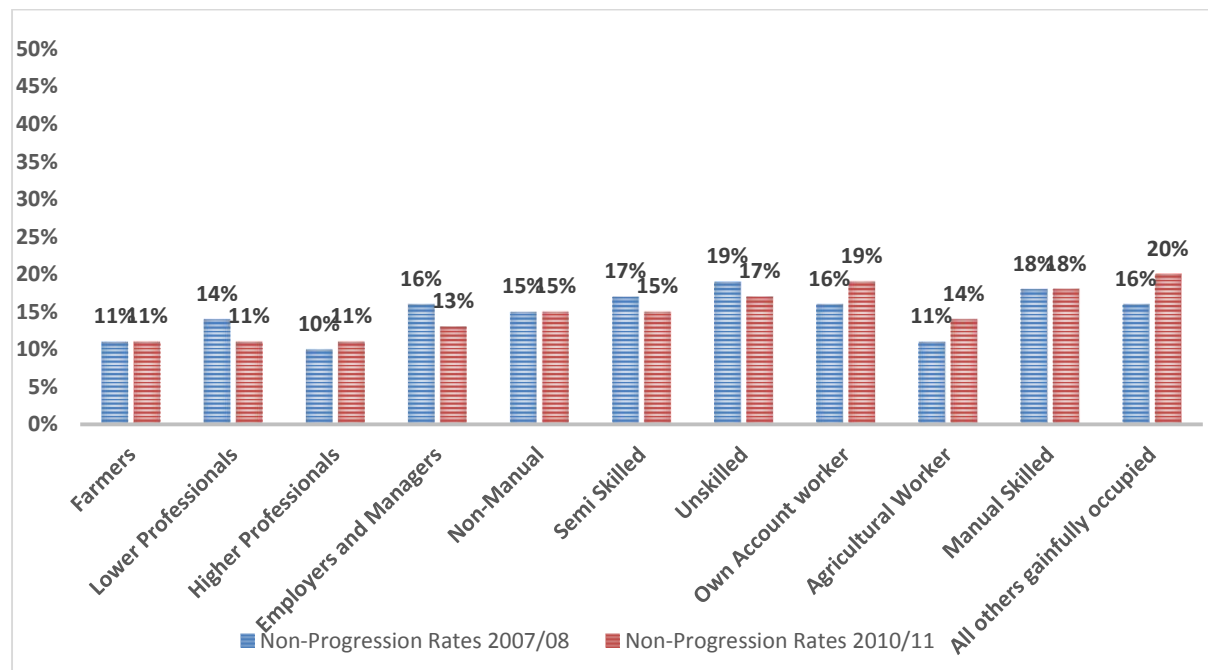
Figure 5: Non-progression rates by nationality, sector and NFQ level, 2010/11



4.4 Non-progression and socio-economic group

This section examines the variation in non-progression rates across socio economic groups in 2010/11.

Figure 6: Non-progression rates by socio-economic group, 2007/08–2010/11



The groups with the lowest non-progression rates are Farmers, Higher Professionals and Lower Professionals. This corresponds to the overall pattern of access to higher education. The lowest levels of progression are found amongst the unknown, manual skilled, semi-skilled, unskilled, own account workers and agricultural workers. In 2007/08 the unskilled group had the highest non-progression rate this group is now the unknown group in 2010/11 having increased its non-progression rate from 16% in 2007/08 to 20% in 2010/11. Agricultural workers have increased their non-progression rate over the three year period from 11% to 14%.

A detailed analysis of non-progression rates by sector and NFQ level is presented in Table 11.

Table 11: Non-progression rates by socio-economic group, sector and NFQ level, 2010/11

Fathers' Socio-Economic Group	All Sectors All Levels	IoTs L6	IoTs L7	IoTs L8	IoTs All	Uni L8	Other L8	All Sectors L8
Employers and Managers	13%	30%	27%	16%	22%	8%	4%	10%
Higher Professional	11%	25%	32%	14%	21%	7%	9%	8%
Lower Professional	11%	25%	29%	16%	21%	7%	1%	8%
Non-manual	15%	34%	26%	16%	23%	8%	3%	10%
Manual skilled	18%	35%	28%	16%	24%	9%	6%	11%
Semi-skilled	15%	25%	25%	16%	21%	8%	5%	10%
Unskilled	18%	33%	25%	18%	24%	10%	9%^	13%
Own account workers	17%	30%	31%	17%	25%	9%	8%	11%
Farmers	11%	19%	24%	11%	19%	6%	2%	6%
Agricultural workers	14%	22%^	28%	8%	20%	8%	0%^	8%
All others gainfully occupied, and unknown	20%	33%	30%	21%	27%	9%	8%	13%

^Field with 25 or fewer students enrolled in 1st year

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The publication of this second report on progression of 1st year full-time undergraduate new entrants highlights the HEA's commitment to maintain transparency in relation to progression in our higher education institutions. The development of trend data will greatly enhance our evidence base in the area of progression. This report does not contain any qualitative data such as information on local access intelligence such as exit interview data and local credit transfer arrangements. There will also be a number of factors influencing non-progression that are personal to the student such as personal finances. This report reveals some interesting trends in progression by field of study that are not only influenced by a student's prior educational attainment but by the current economic climate and labour market trends.

The low progression rates particularly amongst those studying at levels 6 and 7 in the institutes of technology raise some concerns regarding entry routes to higher education. Some students entering with a Leaving Certificate attainment of 255-300 points are struggling to remain in higher education. Possible further declines in higher education funding coupled with projected increases in higher education participation has the potential to negatively impact those students requiring high levels of staff-student interaction. According to the results of the 2013 Irish Student Survey of Engagement first year students scored lowest for staff student interactions compared to final year and postgraduate students.

Improvements in Computing and Science, Agriculture and Veterinary non-progression rates are identified in this study. These two disciplines are experiencing considerable growth in the Irish economy and although not quantifiable in this study one would attribute this positive growth in the economy to improved progression. The tangibility of employability appears to be influencing some student's decisions with regard to progression. The demand for graduates from these disciplines has led to increased demand for such courses which in turn also leads to increased entry point requirements. This is most likely also impacting these improved progression rates.

The apparent impact of the major downturn in the Construction industry on progression rates in Construction courses warrants special mention. Progression rates have declined from 20% in 2007/08 to 28% in 2010/11. This is particularly evident at levels 6 and 7 in the institute of technology sector where progression rates declined from 30% to 38% and 20% to 40% respectively. Demand for these courses dropped by 40% in the time period and the median points on entry declined from 320 to 285. At the same time registration on Apprenticeship courses declined from 6,763 to 1,307. It is possible, although no data is available, that a number of young males that would have otherwise registered for an apprenticeship are now enrolling on level 6 and 7 higher education courses and finding that they are not suited to higher education and realising that there is very little prospect of employment.

Appendices

Appendix A Higher education institutions analysed

The following Higher Education institutions were included in this study:

Universities

Dublin City University (DCU)

University College Dublin (UCD)

Trinity College Dublin (TCD)

University of Limerick (UL)

National University of Ireland Maynooth (NUIM)

National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG)

University College Cork (UCC)

Institutes of Technology

Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)

Institute of Technology Blanchardstown (ITB)

Institute of Technology Tallaght (ITTAL)

Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)

Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)

Institute of Technology Carlow (ITC)

Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DKIT)

Institute of Technology Sligo (ITS)

Institute of Technology Tralee (ITTRA)

Limerick Institute of Technology (LIT)

Letterkenny Institute of Technology (LYIT)

Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art Design and Technology (IADT)

Waterford Institute of Technology (WIT)

Other Colleges

St. Patricks College Drumcondra (SPD)

Mater Dei Institute of Education (MDEI)

National College of Art and Design (NCAD)

Mary Immaculate College Limerick (MI)

Appendix 1B Institutional non-progression rates

Table 1: Level 8 Non-Progression Rates University Sector

University	Level 8 Non-progression 2010/11	Level 8 Non-progression 2007/08
Dublin City University	9%	11%
University College Dublin	7%	9%
University College Cork	8%	9%
National University of Ireland Galway	9%	9%
University of Limerick	11%	9%
National University of Ireland Maynooth	10%	10%
Trinity College Dublin	8%	8%
All Universities	9%	9%
National Average	11%	11%

Table 2: Level 8 Non-Progression Rates Institutes of Technology Sector

Institute of Technology	Non-progression L8 2010/11	Non-progression L8 2007/08
<i>Athlone Institute of Technology</i>	18%	11%
<i>Institute of Technology Blanchardstown</i>	20%	18%
<i>Cork Institute of Technology</i>	15%	23%
<i>Institute of Technology Carlow</i>	13%	18%
<i>Dundalk Institute of Technology</i>	17%	13%
<i>Dunloaghair Institute of Art, Design and Technology</i>	14%	14%
<i>Dublin Institute of Technology</i>	19%	13%
<i>Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology</i>	24%	22%
<i>Limerick Institute of Technology</i>	18%	18%
<i>Letterkenny Institute of Technology</i>	22%	4%
<i>Institute of Technology Sligo</i>	20%	10%
<i>Institute of Technology Tallaght</i>	19%	25%
<i>Institute of Technology Tralee</i>	17%	12%
<i>Waterford Institute of Technology</i>	15%	21%
All Institutes of Technology	17%	16%
National Average	11%	11%

Table 3: Level 8 Non-Progression Rates Other Colleges Sector

Other Colleges	Non-progression L8 2010/11	Non-progression L8 2007/08
National College of Art and Design	7%	5%
Mater Dei Institute of Education	6%	4%
Mary Immaculate College Limerick	5%	5%
St. Patricks College Drumcondra	2%	3%
All Other Colleges	4%	4%
National Average	11%	11%

Table 4: Level 7 Non-Progression Rates Institutes of Technology

Institute of Technology	Non-progression L7 2010/11	Non-progression L7 2007/08
<i>Athlone Institute of Technology</i>	24%	26%
<i>Institute of Technology Blanchardstown</i>	32%	27%
<i>Cork Institute of Technology</i>	22%	21%
<i>Institute of Technology Carlow</i>	23%	26%
<i>Dundalk Institute of Technology</i>	33%	30%
<i>Dunloaghare Institute of Art, Design and Technology</i>	32%	24%
<i>Dublin Institute of Technology</i>	32%	25%
<i>Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology</i>	31%	30%
<i>Limerick Institute of Technology</i>	28%	23%
<i>Letterkenny Institute of Technology</i>	33%	25%
<i>Institute of Technology Sligo</i>	28%	24%
<i>Institute of Technology Tallaght</i>	24%	33%
<i>Institute of Technology Tralee</i>	22%	20%
<i>Waterford Institute of Technology</i>	24%	22%
All Institutes of Technology	28%	26%

Table 5: Level 6 Non-Progression Rates Institutes of Technology

Institute of Technology	Non- progression L6 2010/11	Non- progression L6 2007/08
<i>Athlone Institute of Technology</i>	27%	24%
<i>Institute of Technology Blanchardstown</i>	46%	29%
<i>Cork Institute of Technology</i>	31%	22%
<i>Institute of Technology Carlow</i>	29%	28%
<i>Dundalk Institute of Technology</i>	20%	21%
<i>Dunloaghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology</i>	-	19%
<i>Dublin Institute of Technology</i>	24%	15%
<i>Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology</i>	37%	34%
<i>Limerick Institute of Technology</i>	29%	28%
<i>Letterkenny Institute of Technology</i>	25%	19%
<i>Institute of Technology Sligo</i>	34%	38%
<i>Institute of Technology Tallaght</i>	38%	31%
<i>Institute of Technology Tralee</i>	33%	21%
<i>Waterford Institute of Technology</i>	35%	26%
All Institutes of Technology	31%	25%

Appendix 2B: Institutional Non-Progression Rates by Field of Study

Table 1: Institutes of Technology Level 6 Non-progression Rates by Field of Study															
Field of Study	AIT	ITB	CIT	ITC	DKIT	IADT	DIT	GMIT	LIT	LYIT	ITS	ITTAL	ITTRA	WIT	IoT
Healthcare	12%	-	-	21%	-	-	11%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13%
Science & Ag. & Vet	16%	-	44%^	23%	0%	-	-	-	33%^	21%^	37%	22%	47%	21%	27%
Soc. Sci., Business, Law, Arts, and Humanities	39%	56%^	29%^	33%	-	-	18%	-	28%	-	33%	22%	28%	35%	30%
Engineering	41%	38%^	40%^	-	-	-	58%	-	21%	86%^	-	46%	46%^	35%	39%
Construction & Related Fields	40%^	-	-	53%^	-	-	-	-	30%^	-	-	-	40%^	32%^	39%
Services	21%	-	26%	-	33%	-	31%	42%	24%	14%	-	46%	29%	58%	33%
Computer Science	-	38%^	36%^	21%^	-	-	-	25%	42%	24%^	-	21%^	25%^	27%	31%
All Disciplines	27%	46%	31%	29%	20%	-	24%	37%	29%	25%	34%	38%	33%	35%	31%

^Field with 25 or fewer students enrolled in 1st year

Table 2: Institutes 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	ITTAL	ITTRA	WIT	All IoT
Education	-	-	18%^	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18%^
Healthcare	-	22%	10%	10%	21%^	-	-	-	38%^	6%	17%	6%^	16%	17%	16%
Science & Ag. & Vet	11%	27%^	16%	6%^	25%	-	27%	23%	35%	25%	18%^	11%	44%^	22%	22%
Soc. Sci., Business, Law, Arts, and Humanities	0%^	37%	22%	24%	32%	29%	47%	28%	24%	30%	34%	25%	33%^	33%	29%
Engineering (excl. Civil)	25%^	42%	20%	26%	34%	-	34%	22%	21%	41%	36%	32%	8%^	-	29%
Construction & Related Fields	45%^	-	32%	46%	49%	-	28%^	49%	29%	50%^	44%	-	22%	33%	40%
Services	28%	35%^	28%	16%	26%	-	26%	40%	22%^	25%	25%	27%	22%	21%	28%
Computer Science	32%	28%	33%^	29%	39%	41%^	-	35%	43%	48%	27%	34%	33%	27%	34%
All Disciplines	24%	32%	22%	23%	33%	32%	32%	31%	28%	33%	28%	24%	22%	24%	28%

Table 3: Institutes 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	ITTAL	ITTRA	WIT	All IoTs
Education	-	-	-	-	-	-	8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8%
Healthcare	6%	15%	2%	13%	9%	-	12%	18%	9%	9%	15%	8%	8%	10%	11%
Science & Ag. & Vet	21%^	17%^	10%	3%	-	-	20%	22%	14%	-	19%	14%^	22%	20%^	16%
Soc. Sci., Business, Law, Arts, and Humanities	28%	31%	13%	12%	25%	13%	18%	33%	19%	-	25%	22%	20%	15%	18%
Engineering (excl. Civil)	-	33%^	19%	50%^	-	-	20%	6%^	-	-	-	20%^	-	35%	22%
Construction & Related Fields	17%^	-	27%	17%^	21%^	-	18%	32%^	37%	-	23%^	-	-	10%	21%
Services	-	15%	39%^	6%	-	-	22%	39%	16%	-	-	-	29%^	18%^	21%
Computer Science	27%	16%	15%^	24%	18%	37%^	26%	-	20%	54%^	-	15%	24%^	20%	23%
Combined & Other Disciplines	-	-	-	-	-	-	23%	-	16%	-	-	11%	-	-	17%
All Disciplines	18%	20%	15%	13%	17%	14%	19%	24%	18%	22%	20%	19%	17%	15%	17%

Table 4: Institutes 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	ITTAL	ITTRA	WIT	All IoTs
Education	-	-	18%^	-	-	-	8%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	11%
Healthcare	9%	18%	7%	14%	10%	-	12%	18%	12%	8%	16%	8%	12%	12%	12%
Science & Ag. & Vet	14%	21%	15%	13%	20%	-	23%	22%	27%	24%	28%	14%	38%	21%	21%
Soc. Sci., Business, Law, Arts, and Humanities	34%	37%	18%	22%	30%	15%	19%	28%	23%	30%	31%	23%	24%	21%	24%
Engineering (excl. Civil)	36%	40%	21%	29%	34%	-	33%	21%	21%	44%	36%	38%	27%	35%	31%
Construction & Related Fields	38%	-	30%	43%	43%	-	19%	46%	34%	50%^	40%	-	29%	22%	32%
Services	25%	21%	29%	13%	29%	-	24%	41%	20%	19%	25%	34%	24%	36%	28%
Computer Science	30%	23%	28%	25%	33%	39%	26%	31%	34%	45%	27%	25%	30%	25%	30%
Combined & Other Disciplines	-	-	-	-	-	-	23%	-	16%	-	-	11%	-	-	17%
All Disciplines	24%	28%	20%	21%	27%	17%	22%	31%	23%	31%	27%	25%	24%	21%	24%

Table 5: Universities Level 8 Non-progression Rates by Field of Study								
Field of Study	DCU	UCD	UCC	NUIG	UL	NUIM	TCD	Universities
Education	9%	-	4%	0%^	5%	2%	0%^	5%
Healthcare	4%	5%	4%	4%	4%	0%	7%	5%
Science & Ag. & Vet	12%	6%	8%	14%	9%	10%	9%	9%
Soc. Sci., Business, Law, Arts, and Humanities	7%	8%	7%	7%	11%	10%	7%	8%
Engineering (excl. Civil)	11%	4%	6%	3%	15%	13%	10%	9%
Construction & Related Fields	-	11%	9%	5%	0%^	-	-	9%
Services	-	-	-	23%	-	-	-	23%
Computer Science	25%	5%	7%	21%	21%	16%^	5%	16%
Combined & Other Disciplines	7%	-	13%	10%	0%^	11%	11%	11%
All Disciplines	9%	7%	8%	9%	11%	10%	8%	9%

Table 6: Other Colleges Level 8 Non-progression Rates by Field of Study					
Field of Study	NCAD	MDEI	MI	SPD	Other Colleges
Education	-	4%	2%	1%	2%
Science & Ag. & Vet	-	-	0%	-	0%
Soc. Sci., Business, Law, Arts, and Humanities	7%	13%	13%	4%	8%
All Disciplines	7%	6%	5%	2%	4%