

Students with Disabilities

Tracking Report – 2005 Intake

An analysis of their progression, retention and success through Higher Education Institutions



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Published by: Pathways to Education which is a joint access initiative of University College Cork and Cork Institute of Technology

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Pathways to Education, on behalf of University College Cork and Cork Institute of Technology, gratefully acknowledge the contribution of staff from the following institutions that provided essential data for this project:

Athlone Institute of Technology

Dublin City University

Dublin Institute of Technology

National University of Ireland Galway

National University of Ireland Maynooth

Institute of Technology Tallaght (IT Tallaght)

Trinity College Dublin

Grateful thanks are also due to numerous other departments and individuals who gave so generously of their time and expertise in the research and advancement of this project:

Louise Bermingham, Access Office, CIT

Barry O'Sullivan and Sandra Hackett, Computer Centre, UCC

Ann Heelan, Executive Director, AHEAD

Mairead O'Sullivan and Anne-Marie Scarry, Disability Support Service, UCC

Barry O'Sullivan, Audio Visual Services, CIT

Staff of the Disability Support Service, UCC

Staff of the Examinations Offices in both UCC & CIT

A special thank you is extended to the students of UCC and CIT who participated in interviews for the purposes of this research and also to those who provided information regarding their first destinations. Without your contributions this research would not be complete.

GLOSSARY

Participating Institutions

| | |
|-------------|---|
| AIT | Athlone Institute of Technology |
| CIT | Cork Institute of Technology |
| DCU | Dublin City University |
| DIT | Dublin Institute of Technology |
| NUIG | National University of Ireland Galway |
| NUIM | National University of Ireland Maynooth |
| IT Tallaght | Institute of Technology Tallaght |
| TCD | Trinity College Dublin |
| UCC | University College Cork |

Disability Categories

| | |
|------|--------------------------------|
| HI | Deaf/Hard of Hearing |
| MH | Mental Health Difficulties |
| PHY | Physical/Mobility Difficulties |
| SOI | Significant Ongoing Illness |
| SPLD | Specific Learning Difficulties |
| VI | Blind/Vision Impaired |

Figure Headings

| | |
|----------|--------------------------------|
| INT | Intake |
| WD/DF/UK | Withdrawn / Deferred / Unknown |
| RR | Re-registered |
| GD | Graduated |
| EX GD | Expected to graduate |

Reasons for Withdrawal

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| Unknown | Unknown status – eligible to return but has not registered |
| WD (Perm/Temp.) | Withdrew (Permanent/Temporary) |
| WD (Wrong Prog) | Withdrew (Wrong Programme) |
| WD (Health) | Withdrew (Health Reasons) |
| Failed/Absent | Failed/Absent from exams and has not returned |
| Deferred | Deferred - did not return |
| Deferred & re-ent | Deferred – re-entered course at later stage |
| Pass – Year(s) out | Passed exams and took time out from studies |
| Fail – Year(s) out | Failed exams and took time out from studies |
| Changed Course | Changed course |
| Re-entered | Re-entered College |
| Deceased | Student died during course of their studies |

Other

| | |
|-------|--|
| AHEAD | Association for Higher Education Access & Disability |
| DARE | Disability Access Route to Education |
| DAWN | Disability Advisors Working Network |
| DSS | Disability Support Service |
| ESF | European Social Fund |
| HEA | Higher Education Authority |
| HETAC | Higher Education & Training Awards Council |
| HEI | Higher Education Institutes |
| NAO | National Access Office (officially known as the National Office or Equity of Access to Higher Education) |

FOREWORD

Increasing the access and participation of students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties in higher education has become a national imperative and a key strategic goal for the Disability Support Service in University College Cork.

This research project stemmed from a dearth of information available on the access, retention and success of students with disabilities in higher education in Ireland. In understanding the pitfalls experienced by students with disabilities, it is hoped that retention levels can be improved, thus increasing the success of students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties in making a successful transition to employment. Access is not only a matter of social inclusion; it also makes sound economic sense, as graduates with disabilities contribute to the social, cultural and economic life of the country.

This report tracks the access, retention and success of 438 students, who entered higher education in the 2005/06 academic year, across nine higher education institutions in Ireland. The national study analyses the progression of these students in their degree programmes whilst the case study tracks students from University College Cork and Cork Institute of Technology in greater depth. The research also analyses the progression and success of individual categories of disability in their journey through higher education. The report also gives an insight into the qualitative experience of students derived from interviews conducted with the students by the researcher. Conclusions from this study and recommendations which were highlighted through the research process are outlined for the reader.

The Disability Support Service in University College Cork welcomes this report funded as part of the SIF Pathways Connection project. This report will prove to be a valuable resource to the educational sector in addressing the challenges of increasing the access and participation of students with disabilities and specific learning difficulties in higher education in the future. I would like to commend and congratulate the excellent work of the research team in bringing this report to a conclusion.

Mary O'Grady

Disability Support Officer and Head of Disability Support Service
University College Cork

CIT are pleased to contribute to this extremely valuable piece of research. Education, and particularly higher education, is assuming an increasing role in empowering individuals with disabilities to claim their rightful place in society as well as contributing towards society as part of a skilled workforce.

The Disability Support Service within the Access Service in CIT is committed to assisting students with disabilities to achieve their academic goals. There is a growing awareness of disability issues within the third level sector. The service and supports that are provided through the Disability Support Service in CIT have proved to be invaluable to students who avail of them. The Disability Support Service in CIT is growing and evolving with each academic year.

CIT welcomes this report from the Connections Research project. It is important that students with disabilities are examined in relation to progression with their studies whilst in third level education in order to enable services such as the Disability Support Service, to be informed as regards what the future service provision for these students should entail going forward.

This report will assist the Disability Support Service as regards information dissemination for potential students, who may be better advised regarding decision making after reading a report such as this one. It can be beneficial for potential students as regards guidance. This report also serves to educate and create awareness amongst academic staff as well as students, and so it is with great pleasure that CIT have become a part of this research project and welcome the findings. The Disability Support Service in CIT would like to extend our congratulations to the research team on an extremely beneficial and valuable piece of work.

Laura O'Rourke

Disability Support Officer and Head of Disability Support Service
CIT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction

This report investigates the access, retention and success rates (Appendix 1) of students with disabilities across Ireland. It is one of the few studies of its kind to track statistical data relating to access and participation across a number of Higher Education Institutes in any one academic year, in this case the 2005 intake. The report can be comprehensively divided into two sections; the first section comprises of a National study which produces and examines data gathered from nine HEIs. The data is illustrated and the trends which have emerged are discussed. The second section presents a more detailed case study of two of the HEIs involved in the National study, UCC and CIT. The case study incorporates qualitative and quantitative methods which allows students with disabilities to contribute to the report. This case study is valuable in expanding on the trends which emerge from the National study and may be used as a model for future research.

Education Access and Participation in Ireland

Traditionally the number of students with disabilities entering third level education have been low, this can be attributed to low expectations, shortage of information, or failure to qualify for third level. More recently however, the state has come to recognise the value and importance of the contribution made by students with disabilities. An increasing commitment to the inclusion of people with disabilities in all facets of education is observable in legislative and government-funded initiatives of the past two decades and the numbers entering third level are increasing. Recent Irish funding initiatives, individual development and strategic projects and legislative changes have all encouraged this rise in intake. The challenges facing students with disabilities and the resources provided by institutions will be discussed in relation to access, retention and success of students with disabilities.

Methodology

In order to establish a National sample members of DAWN (Disability Advisors Working Network) organisation were approached. Of these nine HEIs were willing to participate within the allocated time frame. Given the nature of the National study the data produced was quantitative. A selection criteria was established in order to filter the students and ensure the comparability of results. The majority of the information was gleaned from institutional databases on permission. Once received, the data was manipulated into one particular format for analysis. The case study on the other hand better supported the collection of qualitative and

quantitative data. The quantitative data was gathered in a similar fashion to the National study, through the use of a central database system. The qualitative data was produced through interviews where confidentiality was paramount. Face to face semi-structured interviews were preferred but this had to be flexible in order to accommodate a variety of disabilities.

Framework of Analysis

Based on previous research models, this research set about refining themes by which the data would be grouped and analysed. The headings identified for analysis were: entry rates by category of disability, retention and success rates. Issues of confidentiality and comparability arose when transferring data into a template for analysis. Each institution has its own method of categorising and recording students with disabilities.

National Study Findings

The data provided an interesting insight into the activity of students with disabilities. The results illustrated in this chapter highlight the areas of achievement and point to the areas which require further study. The following trends emerged from the nine HEIs;

- There is a significant difference in the entry rates of individual categories of disabilities. For example, the categories of Vision Impaired (VI), Hearing Impaired (HI) and those with Mental Health difficulties (MH) have respectively demonstrated extremely low levels of entry; between 2% and 7% whereas students with specific learning difficulties (SPLD) are the most well represented across all the institutions at 61.4%.
- Overall the VI and SPLD categories have the highest retention rates once enrolled in college whereas the category of MH has the lowest overall retention rates in the national sample with only 56% of students being retained over the course of their studies.
- The largest number of student withdrawals occurs in the first year of study. This year is crucial in the retention of students with disabilities and it is essential that institutions are aware of this.
- The number of students entering particular third level institutions is not reflective of their capacity, that is the students with the largest student populations do not have the largest percentage of students with disabilities.

Case Study Findings

This chapter presents additional quantitative and qualitative data which was gathered from the in-depth study of the two Pathways to Education institutions, University College Cork (UCC) and Cork Institute of Technology (CIT). The following are the main findings from this section.

- Statistical data on programmes of study correlates strongly with the size of the college and trends in the general student population, the data from the interviews highlights the considerations which students with disabilities need to make when choosing a course.
- In contrast to the findings from the National study it emerged that the second year of the case study institutions showed the highest withdrawal rate. This could be due to the fact that there was more detailed information available from these institutions.
- The qualitative data shed some more light on this in that obstacles such as shyness, inaccessibility of social activities and age profile in deterring students with disabilities.
- Results show that while proximity of primary residence plays an important role for many students, it is not imperative that students with disabilities reside near the institution but many students highlighted the positive aspects of living nearer to the campus.
- Over 70% of students with disabilities in the case study institutions receive funding at some stage in their academic career. Some categories of disability need resources to be provided on an ongoing basis such as VI and HI whereas other categories may only seek funding in first year such as SPLD. Funding was frequently described as essential.

Conclusion

The dearth of information available on these aspects of education for students with disabilities was a driving force in this research and some significant data has been produced to tackle this dearth. The results illustrated will be invaluable to the HEIs involved and the National Access Office, in meeting targets and in understanding the access, retention and success rates of students with disabilities. Results show that students with disabilities, once supported are extremely successful in third level education and a continuous effort must be made to increase access, integration and retention of these students.

Recommendations

- At institutional level it is advisable that consent of students is gained for the use of non-personal statistical data in reports. This could be done on initial assessment and registration of the student with the disability support service.
- Students have suggested that communication should be improved at an institutional level to better inform students with disabilities about the services and supports on offer to them. They also encourage the continuation of updating infrastructure in order to grant access for students with mobility difficulties.
- Further research is suggested in the area of withdrawal. For example; why is withdrawal so high in first year?, why is it so high amongst those in the MH category?
- Further research is also advisable in the area of first destinations. The first destinations of all graduates with disabilities of 2005 across the nine HEIs would be a beneficial undertaking and would further enhance the findings of this report. In a similar vein, further research could be done on the first destinations of those who withdrew from the 2005 sample.

1 INTRODUCTION

Increasing the number of non-standard students including those with disabilities, in third-level education is now a national educational imperative¹.

In the past two decades a number of Irish agencies and associations concerned with the tertiary education sector including universities, colleges and institutes of technology have collated and analysed data and statistics concerning the participation and progression of students with disabilities in third level institutions. Overall, these reports paint a positive picture as a rise in participation is noted “*from 1.1% to 3.8% of the total student population in the last ten years*”². Using quantitative statistical data, supplemented by qualitative research, this report frames a more comprehensively holistic picture of the student experience. This report can be comprehensively divided into two sections: the first section deals with cross-institutional data production from a National sample of higher education institutes (HEIs) and the second section presents a more detailed case study of the two Pathways to Education partner institutions, University College Cork and Cork Institute of Technology.

The first section of the report focuses on the shared areas of concern across HEIs: the numbers of students with particular disabilities, their preferred programmes of study, the success and retention rates of students with disabilities and their reasons for withdrawal. This report tracks statistical data relating to access and participation across a number of HEIs in any one student intake, in this case the 2005 intake group is examined across nine institutions. It is important to note that increased enrolment does not automatically result in increased retention and few reports capture this distinction. Quantitative data was gathered from nine Irish HEIs, this information was collated to generate useful cross institutional National data on students with disabilities.

Cross institutional data of this kind is difficult to collate given the range of recording and categorisation systems utilised across institutions yet it is drawn together here for the first time in terms of students who began their chosen course of study in 2005 in the various participating institutions³.

The second section of the report utilises both quantitative and qualitative data from University College Cork and Cork Institute of Technology to provide a detailed case study which produced rich data and recommendations for future research. The case study explores the representation of students in particular disability categories, programmes of study, funding and supports available and captures the nuances of individuals experiences. Qualitative data was collated using both electronic and paper surveys with the method dependent on a student’s location. These were followed up by face to face or telephone interviews to determine their experiences of higher level education. This report is primarily concerned with capturing these from the point of view of the students themselves.

The benefits of this study are plenty. It is clear that data relating to disability categories, student retention and success will directly inform the providers of education to students with disabilities and will be of interest to State funding bodies and initiatives, University planners and the various branches of University and college Access Officers, including Disability Support Officers. The qualitative data may provide valuable information to prospective students making decisions on their future activities and careers, their parents/guardians, career guidance officers, teachers and principals. Data of this nature is also of interest to those disability support staff in a position to guide, educate and support people with disabilities.

1 Disability Support Service UCC, 2006, Review of Supplementary Procedures for Students with Disabilities, p. 4.

2 AHEAD, 2009, Survey on the Participation Rates of Students with Disabilities in Higher Education for the Academic Year 2008-2009, Summary.

3 University College Cork, Cork Institute of Technology, Athlone Institute of Technology, Dublin City University, Dublin Institute of Technology, National University of Ireland Galway, National University of Ireland Maynooth, Institute of Technology Tallaght and Trinity College Dublin.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the policy background in Ireland noting significant developments in relation to participation and access initiatives in the tertiary education sector. Internationally, 1990-2000 saw a “marked increase in participation in higher education by students with a disability”⁴. Legislative imperative and changing social norms, as well as the knock on effect of increased integration and inclusion, have exercised significant influence over the numbers of students with disabilities applying, enrolling and completing third level education. It also notes the main trends in the access and participation debate which is ongoing in Ireland and situates these in relation to international activities. A significant factor in increasing numbers of students with disabilities in HEIs is the widely acknowledged improvements in the provision of financial, education and other supports to students with disabilities.

2.2 Policy Context: Educational Access and Participation in Ireland

The historic rates of low participation by students with disabilities noted in HEIs have been attributed to a number of factors including: low expectations traditionally associated with people with disabilities in first and second level education, and subsequent lack of interest in and/or failure to qualify for third level education; institutional obstacles to participation; inequitable social structures which limit access, success and inadequate conceptualisations of people with disabilities which influence educational policies and practices⁵.

Recently improved recognition of the need for enhanced accommodation and provision for students with disabilities is reflected in various strategic plans issued by the State, relevant agencies and educational institutions – proof that both the State and the State’s institutions recognise and value the contribution to be made by students with disabilities to both long term and short term economic, educational and social goals. Individual institutions contribute significantly to access and participation initiatives in their own literature,

policies and practices, and reference is made here to UCC’s *Strategic Plan 2009-2012* as an illustrative example. Other HEIs in Ireland have issued similar reports which cite common goals and aims⁶. In its *Strategic Plan 2009-2012* UCC states a commitment to developing teaching, learning and the student experience by:

Widening participation through an inclusive environment that embraces diversity and equality, ensuring that the objectives of the National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013 are achieved [...] Further increase access for socio-economic disadvantaged students, people with a disability and mature learners through collaborative partnerships with educational providers, community groups and other relevant stakeholders in the region⁷.

UCC cites the increase in enrolment by students with disabilities by 5% as one of its core targets for 2012, while also citing a commitment to increasing retention rates in first year of 93% or greater, and increasing the types of programmes (flexible/part-time) by 15% at undergraduate level. A wider choice of programme type and model of study provides maximum opportunity for participation by students with disabilities or those whose consistent attendance may be affected by health concerns⁸.

Part-time education is the route of choice for many adults with disability due to the impact of their disability and without these supports in place aspiring adults do not have equality of opportunity to access higher education⁹.

In common with other institutional strategic plans, UCC’s Strategic Plan highlights its commitment to the achievement of objectives cited within the *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013*, the State’s strategic plan for increasing the access and participation of minority students and those with disabilities in Higher Education in Ireland. While *The National Plan* recognises the positive developments which have taken place in HEIs and in the State’s mechanisms in recent years it equally acknowledges that much work remains to be done:

4 HEA, 2000, *Access and Equity in Higher Education: An International Perspective on Issues and Strategies*, Dublin, HEA, p. 42.

5 Shevlin, M., Kenny, M. & McNeela, E. (2004), ‘Access Routes to Higher Education for Young People with Disabilities: A Question of Chance?’, *Irish Educational Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, Autumn, 2004, p. 38.

6 UCD’s Strategic Plan 2005-2008; TCD’s Strategic Plan 2009-2014; CIT’s Strategic Plan 2005-2010.

7 UCC (2009) *UCC Strategic Plan 2009-2012*, Cork, UCC, p. 18/19.

8 UCC (2009) *UCC Strategic Plan 2009-2012*, Cork, UCC, p.19.

9 HEA (2008) *National Plan for Equity of Access to Higher Education 2008-2013*, Dublin, p. 53.

Notwithstanding the encouraging progress that has been made over recent years, people with disabilities continue to be under-represented in higher education. In the case of people with sensory disabilities, physical disabilities and multiple disabilities, this under-representation is particularly severe. Current participation rates...are well below the current national entry rates of 55 per cent and lower than the entry rates of any socio-economic group.

Under the Equal Status Act (2000) HEIs, and all service and goods providers, have a legal imperative to do all that is reasonable to encourage, welcome, accommodate and support students with disabilities. This report explores some of the accommodations, supports and services available to students with disabilities under the Equal Status Act.

Recent legislative developments require educational institutions to do all that is reasonable to accommodate students with disabilities. This accommodation can be by means of providing special treatment or facilities if, without such accommodation, it would be impossible or unduly difficult for the person to avail of the service provided by the educational establishment.

Traditional criticism of the interaction between academics and professionals, and students with disabilities has mainly relied on the medical model and ongoing compilation of findings about students with disabilities without their inclusion or consultation in the research process¹⁰. While Ireland is no different in this respect, an increasing commitment to the inclusion of people with disabilities in all facets of education is observable in legislative and government-funded initiatives of the past two decades. They include the

Universities Act (1997), Education Act (1998), Equal Status Act (2000), EPSEN Act (2004) and Disability Act (2005)¹¹. Cumulatively, these Acts have supported people with disabilities in achieving their right to: an appropriate education for people with disabilities; be heard and to have fair representation; appeal; fair and equitable assessment and resources. Recent Irish publications, and guidelines mirror this imperative¹².

2.3 Irish, European and Global Access and Participation Initiatives

Internationally, participation in higher education has dramatically increased ... Ireland is no exception to this general trend¹³.

Recent Irish funding initiatives, individual development and strategic projects, and legislative changes replicate those already in place or recently developed in many UK, European and international educational contexts. Ireland is not alone in the fact that many of these initiatives are recent phenomena: “as late as the early 1990s the majority of British colleges and universities offered little systematic support to disabled students”¹⁴. Although there is “considerable variation” in definitions of disability internationally¹⁵, the mainstreaming of disability issues and concerns has many similarities. It includes, but is not limited to: increased legal requirements placed on HEIs to detail; widespread appointment of university disability advisors and coordinators; use of financial support to purchase a range of assistive aids and technologies, provision of accessible transport schemes; modifications to entry procedures and examination arrangements¹⁶.

¹⁰ Goode, J. (2007), ‘Managing Disability’: early experiences of university students with disabilities’, *Disability and Society*, Vol. 22, No.1, January 2007, p. 35.

¹¹ Shevlin, M., Kenny, M. & McNeela, E. (2004), ‘Access Routes to Higher Education for Young People with Disabilities: A Question of Chance?’, *Irish Educational Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, Autumn, 2004, p. 37/38.

¹² Kenny, M., McNeela, E., Shevlin, M. And Daly, T. (2000) *Hidden Voices: Young People with Disabilities Speak about their Second Level Schooling*. Cork: South West Regional Authority. Rose, R. & Shevlin, M. (2003) *Encouraging Voices: Respecting the Insights of Young People who have been Marginalised*. Dublin: NDA.Griffin, S. & Shevlin, M. (2007). *Responding to Special Educational Needs: An Irish Perspective*. Dublin: Gill and MacMillan.Department of Education and Science. (2007). *Inclusion of students with special educational needs: Post Primary Guidelines*. Dublin: Government Publications.

¹³ Shevlin, M., Kenny, M. & McNeela, E. (2004), ‘Access Routes to Higher Education for Young People with Disabilities: A Question of Chance?’, *Irish Educational Studies*, Vol. 23, No. 2, Autumn, 2004, p. 37/38.

¹⁴ Goode, J. (2007), ‘Managing Disability’: early experiences of university students with disabilities’, *Disability and Society*, Vol. 22, No.1, January 2007, p. 36.

¹⁵ HEA, 2000, *Access and Equity in Higher Education: An International Perspective on Issues and Strategies*, Dublin, HEA, p. 42.

¹⁶ Goode, J. (2007), ‘Managing Disability’: early experiences of university students with disabilities’, *Disability and Society*, Vol. 22, No.1, January 2007, p. 36.

Disability is culturally and socially constructed and it is essential to view disability as an organic entity uniquely tied to the society in which it is situated. In Sweden the funding structures provided mean that in order to achieve additional classroom resources for children who have difficulty reading and writing dyslexia is widely diagnosed, while in Australia people with learning disabilities do not qualify for funding during their schooling, as a result only 2% of students registered in HEIs are diagnosed with dyslexia¹⁷. As such the suggestion is that the incidence of certain categories of disability is directly influenced by public perception and institutional support. For students grouped in other categories of disability across the globe their education is shaped by both attitudinal and professional knowledge trends.

Two key challenges which unite educational institutions across the globe are that: i) “cultural barriers” or attitudinal issues remain¹⁸, that is, positive attitudes to

students with disabilities are still not widespread, in some cases there is a fear that inclusivity may provoke a lowering of standards¹⁹ and ii) staff need to enhance their understanding of the needs of students with disabilities in order to best accommodate them²⁰. Teacher training and access and participation initiatives need to be both ‘integrated’ and ‘differentiated’²¹, that is, made part of the institution’s wider provision and also informed by students’ specific and particular needs.

Shevlin et al concur:

This is intimately connected with the many examples of insufficient knowledge and lowered expectations in relation to young people with disabilities [...] (it) must be treated as a cultural shift that will transform the current ‘deficit’ conceptualisation of disabilities and establish an equitable, transparent system ...²².

17 HEA, 2000, Access and Equity in Higher Education: An International Perspective on Issues and Strategies, Dublin, HEA, p.42.

18 Goode, J. (2007), ‘Managing Disability’: early experiences of university students with disabilities’, Disability and Society, Vol. 22, No.1, January 2007, p. 36.

19 Goode, J. (2007), ‘Managing Disability’: early experiences of university students with disabilities’, Disability and Society, Vol. 22, No.1, January 2007, p. 36.

20 HEA, 2000, Access and Equity in Higher Education: An International Perspective on Issues and Strategies, Dublin, HEA, p. 45.

21 Shevlin, M., Kenny, M. & McNeela, E. (2004), ‘Participation in higher education for students with disabilities: an Irish perspective’, Disability and Society, Vol. 19, No. 1, p. 15.

22 Shevlin, M., Kenny, M. & McNeela, E. (2004), ‘Access Routes to Higher Education for Young People with Disabilities: A Question of Chance?’, Irish Educational Studies, Vol. 23, No. 2, Autumn, 2004, p. 51.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview

To develop a system for tracking students with disabilities who entered third level education in the academic year 2005/06, it was decided that both qualitative and quantitative research methods would provide the best results. Given the nature of quantitative data, outcomes in this category are objective, reliable and provide the 'outsider perspective' (Blaxter et al, p. 65). The quantitative methods provide the researcher with statistical information that can be easily compared and analysed. Qualitative data on the other hand, is more concerned with understanding behaviour and trends from the student perspective; in this sense it is more subjective in nature and can be said to provide the 'insider perspective' (Blaxter et al, p. 65). The qualitative methods gather relevant and important information that cannot be easily quantified, such as a student's personal experience of their own progression through third level. This combination yields the best results. The analysis of this data was undertaken using a variety of methods such as implementing a tracking system for both the National sample and the case study. In-depth statistical analysis was carried out and results were displayed in graph and tabular format as well as qualitative/narrative information from the interviews.

3.2 Addressing the Issue of Confidentiality

Confidentiality was of paramount importance from the outset of this project. Considerable thought was given to the anonymity of the students involved. On collection of the data all institutions were asked not to use any names and were given the option of using false identification numbers in order to distinguish between students. The researcher was never given access to data which would breach the confidentiality of students in any institution. Once the anonymous data had been transferred into the proposed format for the research it was returned to the participating institutions for their approval before being published in the report. Students interviewed for the research were given details of what the information would be used for and were assured that their name would not be used in the report.

3.3 Selection Criteria of 2005 New Entrants

The subjects of the research were named 2005 New Entrants for the purposes of this study. Specific indicators were required in order for the data to be comparable and therefore Selection Criteria were developed to filter the student data. The following indicators were used to describe 2005 New Entrants in this piece of research:

- Students who entered first year (for the first time) in the 2005/06 academic year.
- Undergraduate students only.
- Full time, degree students only (excluding part-time, international students etc.).
- Excluding repeat first year students or deferred students who re-entered first year in 2005.

3.4 Data Collection Methods

ESTABLISHING A NATIONAL SAMPLE

The National sample was drawn for the most part, from institutions involved in the Disability Advisors Working Network (DAWN), a national forum for the sharing of expertise and the development of skills and knowledge on disability in higher education. The report initially received the support of UCC and CIT, the Pathways to Education institutions, and these would be the main focus of the case study. A further ten institutions that were active in the DAWN organization were approached via email to introduce the project and ask for a nominee with whom contact could be made. Using the selection criteria, relevant information was requested from each institution. By the set deadline seven of these ten colleges were in a position to partake, bringing the total to nine HEIs. As databases vary considerably in each institution the data returned in a variety of forms within Excel. The researcher then transferred this data into a generic layout. (i.e. the tracking tables which are incorporated in this research).

DATA COLLECTION METHODS FOR THE NATIONAL SAMPLE

Data was collected via the institutional databases. The database systems in the institutions generated figures of students with disabilities, examination results and general student population figures.

QUANTITATIVE DATA COLLECTION FOR THE CASE STUDY INSTITUTIONS

In the two case study institutions further data was collected on areas such as, county of origin, funding allocations and exam success of students with disabilities. The National Access Office provided the funding breakdown for UCC and CIT over the 4 year period for the students tracked in the research.

This study tracked UCC students who registered with the Disability Support Service (DSS) in the first year of their studies in the academic year 2005/06. Using specific criteria filtering system, 84 UCC students were tracked. The DSS in UCC records its service users on a central database system using Integrated Tertiary Software (ITS), within the college. Using an application called “Data-warehouse” the information from the ITS can be manipulated to provide reports and statistics for offices within the university. Using this integrated database system it was possible to determine the rates of access, retention and success of students with disabilities in comparison to the general UCC population of students.

In CIT, data was collected from paper based files in conjunction with the student database system as the numbers were smaller than UCC. Depending on the needs of a student in CIT they are directed to register with the DSS and/or the Exams Office. Sets of data were collected from both offices for a complete list of 2005/06 registrations. It ensured there was no duplication.

QUALITATIVE DATA COLLECTION FOR THE CASE STUDY INSTITUTIONS

Qualitative data was generated through interviews with students from the case study institutions. Students were selected from disability categories to ensure that there was a good balance and were then randomly targeted from these groups.

While face-to-face interviews are preferable there were some obstacles to overcome. Some students were no longer living in Cork after graduation and others were not well enough to travel to attend an interview. It was important to keep in mind the impact of a person’s disability. For example a dyslexic student may not be comfortable completing a survey in writing and a hearing impaired student may not be able to participate fully in a phone interview. For these reasons some interviews took place in a face-to-face situation, others emailed with initial responses and were then followed up with a phone conversation and more were conducted completely via email. An interview schedule was developed around the following themes of the research:

- Obstacles and barriers to social academic and cultural participation
- Students recommendations
- County of origin
- Funding allocation
- Exam success
- Disability category
- Programme of study

Each respondent was semi-structured, utilising a combination of structured questions under each theme along with open-ended questions which allow the student to speak freely. Each respondents was encouraged to provide any additional information they felt was relevant or important and which was not covered in the conversation up to that point.

3.5 Establishing a Framework to Analyse Data

DEVELOPMENT OF A TRACKING SYSTEM FOR 2005 NEW ENTRANTS

In order to track the progression of students with disabilities a framework or template was developed into which the figures of each institution could be entered. Modelled on a report carried out by Edinburgh University, this template consists of two sections: 1) programmes of study and 2) disability categories. Both tables have similar layout but the Programmes of Study table tracks each student by their general programme of study and the Disability Categories table tracks each student by their disability. Individually each table tracks:

- Each year in detail from 2005/06 up to and including 2009/10.
- If a student is on course to graduate in 2011.
- The numbers that entered, re-registered, withdrew and graduated for each year.
- Reasons for withdrawal are indicated at the bottom of the table.
- Total columns provide the overall intake, re-registration, withdrawals and graduates for each institution.

As there are no national definitions in relation to programme categories across institutions the Association for Higher Education Access and Disability (AHEAD) established common themes which they have used in

3 METHODOLOGY CONTINUED

their data collection. Initially the Programmes of Study were laid out according to these AHEAD categories. This allowed the reader to view the programmes in which students were progressing. On completion of this tracking template for the national sample, the information was returned to the participating institutions for their comments and approval for use within this report. It was noted that where numbers were small, there was a concern that students could be identified. For this reason the programmes had to be merged under broader categories to give greater anonymity to the students involved. While this obscures the details of which programmes are doing well across the country it prevents any students being inadvertently identified.

The tracking system designed was initially a more basic design than what has been presented in the final report. Time was invested in transferring the data to an updated template to ensure transparency and accuracy of the numbers for the year on year data. This transfer of data was necessary as the new layout provides the detail in a comprehensive format. Merging the Programmes of Study was an essential development in the tracking system in order to provide greater anonymity to the students.

3.6 Data Limitations

This report covers some broad areas in which there is a dearth of information available especially in relation to the trends occurring nationally in this critical aspect of our educational system. The higher education system

lacks a universal method of tracking students with disabilities. Each institution has its own method of recording and categorising student with disabilities. This makes comparability on a national level more difficult. While information is returned to the HEA and AHEAD on an annual basis these figures relate mainly to overall registrations, and categorisation of students with disabilities. There is a deficit of data returned on an annual basis regarding the key indicators addressed in this study.

The information available is deficient of data regarding the reasons for withdrawal of students with disabilities from higher education. In many institutions it is difficult to determine the reason for withdrawal while in other institutions there is a great level of detail available. It is essential to understand where the withdrawals are occurring, the rate of withdrawal by type of disability and area of study before strategies can be implemented to prevent these withdrawals.

In the case of UCC, time spent finalising figures highlighted issues around the use of databases in recording the participation of students with disabilities. While the database system is extremely detailed and beneficial, it was very difficult to narrow the information to the 84 students who met the selection criteria and who needed to be tracked for this research. Automatically the system pulled all students who started their studies in 2005 and who registered with the DSS at some stage of their studies causing many anomalies in the figures. Much time was spent working through these difficulties with the Computer Centre staff in UCC in order to get UCC's figures correct and the analysis underway.



4 NATIONAL STUDY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the quantitative data gathered from the nine participating institutions around the country. Then a broad overview of the findings from the data is provided, giving a synopsis of the feedback from all the institutions. Each set of data is presented in the same format. A brief description of each institution is provided and this is then followed by tables which summarise the access, retention and success of students with disabilities in each institution.

4.2 Participating Institutions

1. Athlone Institute of Technology (AIT)
2. Cork Institute of Technology (CIT)
3. Dublin City University (DCU)
4. Dublin Institute of Technology (DIT)
5. National University of Ireland Galway (NUIG)
6. National University of Ireland Maynooth (NUIM)
7. Institute of Technology Tallaght (IT Tallaght)
8. Trinity College Dublin (TCD)
9. University College Cork (UCC)

4.3 Cross-Institutional Findings

There are some key findings from the tracking analysis in each institution. Across all the participating institutions the categories of VI (vision impaired) and MH (Mental health difficulty) respectively have the lowest access and participation levels and the SPLD (Specific Learning Difficulty) category has the highest access and participation levels. Overall the retention of students with disabilities is very positive and the tables to follow outline these trends.



Figure 4.1

Percentage of New Entrants by Disability Category

Total Number of Students in Study: 438

| CATEGORY OF DISABILITY | NO. OF NEW ENTRANTS (INTAKE PER DISABILITY CATEGORY) | PERCENTAGE OF NEW ENTRANTS WITH DISABILITIES IN 2005/06 |
|--------------------------------|--|---|
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 43 | 9.81% |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 58 | 13.24% |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 26 | 5.93% |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 13 | 2.96% |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 269 | 61.41% |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 27 | 6.16% |
| Other | 2 | 0.45% |

NOTE: The category of "Other" is not usually a category considered by institutions and so may not be often referred to throughout the report.

PERCENTAGE OF NEW ENTRANTS BY DISABILITY CATEGORY

Figure 4.1 (above) illustrates the percentages of the 2005/06 intake which are tracked in this study for each disability category. It highlights that the VI category is extremely low and this is followed by the HI and MH categories.

Figure 4.2

Overall Undergraduate Retention Rates of Disability Categories

| CATEGORY OF DISABILITY | OVERALL FIGURES (FOR ALL NINE INSTITUTIONS) | | |
|--------------------------------|---|-----------------|------------|
| | NUMBER | NUMBER RETAINED | RETENTION% |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 43 | 31 | 72% |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 58 | 50 | 86% |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 26 | 22 | 85% |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 13 | 12 | 92% |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 269 | 242 | 90% |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 27 | 15 | 56% |

NOTE: Full breakdown per institution is included in Appendix 2

OVERALL UNDERGRADUATE RETENTION RATES OF DISABILITY CATEGORIES

Overall retention of students with disabilities across the years studied in this research is very encouraging as is outlined in Figure 4.2 (above). The categories of disability which are most successfully retained in third/ higher education appear to be the VI and SPLD groups. While

it is clear that the retention is very positive, it can be deduced that there are a number of withdrawals occurring more frequently in some categories more than others. This figure highlights that at a national level withdrawals are occurring most frequently in the category of MH (44% withdrawal rate). A breakdown per institution is provided in Appendix 2 of this report.

Figure 4.3

Retention of Students with Disabilities per Year

| | CIT | UCC | AIT | DIT | DCU | NUIG | NUIM | IT Tallaght | Trinity | Total |
|--------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| Started Year 1 | 25 | 84 | 22 | 144 | 20 | 34 | 35 | 16 | 58 | 438 |
| Reten. Year 1 | 23 | 77 | 20 | 136 | 20 | 32 | 30 | 11 | 55 | 404 |
| % Retention | 92% | 92% | 91% | 94% | 100% | 94% | 86% | 69% | 95% | 92.2% |
| Started Year 2 | 23 | 77 | 20 | 136 | 20 | 32 | 30 | 11 | 55 | 404 |
| Reten. Year 2 | 20 | 69 | 18 | 136 | 20 | 32 | 29 | 11 | 54 | 389 |
| % Retention | 87% | 90% | 90% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 97% | 100% | 98% | 96.3% |
| Started Year 3 | 20 | 68 | 15 | 118 | 19 | 32 | 29 | 7 | 51 | 359 |
| Reten. Year 3 | 20 | 65 | 10 | 118 | 19 | 32 | 27 | 7 | 50 | 348 |
| % Retention | 100% | 96% | 67% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 93% | 100% | 98% | 96.9% |
| Started Year 4 | 6 | 17 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 12 | 50 |
| Reten. Year 4 | 6 | 17 | 6 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 12 | 50 |
| % Retention | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 0% | 100% | 100% | 0% | 100% | 100% |

RETENTION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES PER YEAR

It is essential to know what years produce the highest and lowest rates of retention in order to target the related withdrawal rates. The table below presents a summary of the figures from the national tables per year of study. Figure 4.4 outlines the retention per year in each institution involved in the study. At a national level the majority of withdrawals are occurring in year 1, with a 92.2% retention rate. The number of students retained in their studies increases significantly in second year to 96.3%. In third year there is a further slight increase

to 96.9% and there is complete retention of students in fourth year at the time of survey (during first term of the college year). This data allows us to pinpoint where and when students with disabilities are withdrawing from third level. At an institutional level there are patterns to be observed. In CIT and UCC the highest withdrawal of students occurs in second year. In AIT third year shows the highest figure of withdrawals. DIT have all withdrawals in first year. DCU shows full retention while all remaining institutions show first year as the highest rate of withdrawal.



Figure 4.4

First Year Retention by Disability Category

| | CIT | UCC | AIT | DIT | DCU | NUIG | NUIM | IT Tallaght | Trinity | Total |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties Reten. % | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | | 75% | 50% | 100% | 88% |
| Significant Ongoing Illness Reten. % | 100% | 92% | 100% | 83% | 100% | 100% | 77% | 100% | 100% | 91% |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing Reten. % | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | | 100% | 100% | 100% | 75% | 96% |
| Blind/Vision Impaired Reten. % | 100% | 100% | | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 50% | 92% |
| Specific Learning Difficulty Reten. % | 88% | 95% | 82% | 95% | 100% | 96% | 100% | 67% | 97% | 94% |
| Mental Health Difficulty Reten. % | | 69% | 100% | 67% | 100% | 100% | 75% | | 100% | 78% |
| Other Reten. % | | | | 100% | | | | | | 100% |
| Overall Reten. % | 92% | 92% | 91% | 94% | 100% | 94% | 86% | 69% | 95% | 92% |

FIRST YEAR RETENTION BY DISABILITY CATEGORY

Given that Year 1 has the lowest retention rate it is important to document which categories of disability are experiencing the most difficulty. Nationally the category

of MH (mental health difficulty) has the lowest retention rate of 81% in year 1 for the academic year 2005/06. This is followed by the PHY (mobility difficulty) category at 88%. The HI (Hearing Impaired) category has the greatest retention rates nationally at 96% for year 1.

Figure 4.5

Completion Rate per Institution

| | CIT | UCC | AIT | DIT | DCU | NUIG | NUIM | IT Tallaght | Trinity | Total |
|---------------------------------|-----|-----|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------------|---------|-------|
| Intake | 25 | 84 | 22 | 144 | 20 | 34 | 35 | 16 | 58 | 438 |
| No. Expected to Graduate | 20 | 63 | 12 | 136 | 20 | 32 | 29 | 8 | 54 | 374 |
| % Success | 80% | 75% | 54.5% | 94.4% | 100% | 94.1% | 82.9% | 50% | 93.1% | 85.4% |

COMPLETION RATE PER INSTITUTION

The tracking tables provided for each institution document the number of expected graduates. These are “expected graduates” in that many had graduated at the time of the tracking but others were on course to graduate and had not yet finished on this date.

The expected completion rate of the National study is 85.4%”. This compares favourably with a figure calculated by the Sunday Times in its 2010 University Guide for all HEIs (based on 2004 intake) of 83%.

DISCUSSION OF CROSS-INSTITUTIONAL FINDINGS

This National study has uncovered some rich data on the access, retention and success rates of students with disabilities in Ireland. As this is the first project of its kind the results may be pivotal for all policy and future research surrounding students with disabilities.

The results from the nine institutions studied show that there is a significant discrepancy in the categories of disabilities registering for third level education. The categories of VI, HI and MH have respectively demonstrated extremely low levels of entry; between 2% and 7%. Whereas students with learning disabilities (SPLD) are the most well represented, they have the highest entry rates at 61.41%. It can not be suggested that this unbalance is due to unequal opportunities, but it is advisable that further research is carried out in order to target correct groups and encourage more balanced rates of entry.

Results show that across these nine institutions the category of VI has the highest rate of retention at 96%. However, on further inspection it appears that this group is represented by the least number of students, that is 13 students. This is not an overwhelming result as 96% retention means that 12 out of 13 VI students registered in 2005 went on to graduate. However the second highest retention rates can be seen in the SPLD category which is far more significant. 269 students registered under the SPLD category in 2005. Of these 269, 242 went on to graduate, that is a retention rate of 94%. This is an incredible achievement on behalf of the students and the institutions. The category of Mental Health Difficulties (MH) has the poorest overall retention rates in the national sample with only 56% of students being retained over the course of their studies.



4.4 OVERVIEW OF FINDINGS FROM THE NINE INDIVIDUAL HEIs

4.4.1 TRACKING STUDENTS IN ATHLONE INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Athlone Institute of Technology was established in 1970. The principal aim of the Institute is to provide education and training for the economic, technological, scientific, commercial, industrial, social and cultural development of the State. More than 6,000 students are undertaking programmes in Business, Humanities, Engineering and Science.

OVERVIEW OF AIT DATA

In the 2005/06 academic year 22 students with disabilities entered AIT at undergraduate level and registered with the DSS. One student changed courses after first year but then withdrew in 2006/07. One student deferred in 2006/07 but returned in 2008/09 to continue their studies. The 2007/08 year proved to be the year where most students withdrew with 5 out of the 10 overall withdrawals failing, deferring or dropping out. By 2009/10 12 have, or are expected to have, graduated with 10 withdrawing over the course of their studies.

Figure 4.6

AIT - Programmes of Study of 2005 New Entrants

| SUBJECT AREA | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | | 2007/08 | | | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
|---|---------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | | |
| Arts & Humanities | 3 | | 3 | | (1) | 3 | | (1) | 3 | | 3 (2) | 2 | | 2 | | 0 | 3 | |
| Business & Law | 4 | | 5 N1 | 1 N1 | (1) | 4 | 1 | | 3 | | 3 (1) | 1 | | 1 | | 2 incl. 1 transfer | 3 | |
| Science & Engineering | 6 | 2 *N1 | 4 | *1 | (2) | 3 | 1 | (1) | 3 | | (3) | 3 | | 3 | | 2 excl. 1 transfer | 3 | |
| Medicine & Health | 3 | | 3 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | |
| Other | 6 | 1 | 5 | 1 | (1) | 4 | 2 | (1) | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | 5 | 1 | |
| TOTALS per year | 22 | *3 | 20 | *3 | 2 | 15 | 5 | 0 | 11 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 6 | | 10 | 12 | |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| UNKNOWN | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | 2 | | 2 N1 | | | 3 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAIL - YEAR(S) OUT | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CHANGED COURSE | | 1 N1 | 1 N1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED | | | | | | | | | *1 | | | | | | | | | |

NOTES

Other Includes programmes such as construction, tourism, office management and communications related courses.

N1 Student changed from 1st Science to 1st Business in 2006/07 but did not complete course - dropped out.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

(1), (2), etc. Person(s) who graduated but carried on with their studies to the next level.

NOTE AIT only indicated that students were DUE to graduate in 2009. There was no confirmation if these all went through. For recording purposes these went in as graduates for 2009.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| TOTALS per year | 22 | *3 | 20 | *3 | 2 | 15 | 5 | 0 | 11 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 6 | | | |
|------------------|----|--------|-----------|--------|---------|----|---|---|---------|-----------|----------|---|---|---|--|----|----|
| Notes | | 3 - *1 | 19 + 1 RR | 3 - *1 | 7 - (5) | | | | 3 - (3) | 10 + 1 RR | 10 - (6) | | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 2 | | 2 | | | 5 | | | 1 | | | 0 | | | 10 | 12 |

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

In relation to the programmes of study in AIT, equally large numbers of students entered the Science & Engineering and other category programmes (6 in each group). The Other category includes construction, tourism, office management and communications related courses. The Other category had the largest dropout rate with 5 out of the 6 withdrawing.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

Students with SPLD were the largest group registering in 2005/06 (11 students) while the smallest group is the MH category (1 student). However, the SPLD category also had the largest withdrawal rate with 6 out of the 11 withdrawing or deferring. In both the SOI and HI categories 50% of those who registered withdrew over the course of the study.

Figure 4.7

AIT - Disability Categories of 2005 New Entrants

| DISABILITY | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | | 2007/08 | | | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
|---|-----------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | | |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 4 | | 4 | | 3 (2) | 3 | 1 | | 2 | 2 (1) | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | 3 | |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 4 | | 4 | | | 4 | 1 | (2) | 3 | 1 | 2 (1) | 1 | 1 | | | 2 | 2 | |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 2 | 1 *N1 | 2 | 1 N1 | (1) | 1 | | (1) | 1 | | (1) | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 11 | 2 | 9 | 2 (*1) N1 | 3 (2) | 6 | 3 | | 4 | 4 (3) | 3 | | 3 | | | 6 | 5 | |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 0 | 1 | |
| TOTALS per year | 22 | *3 | 20 | *3 | 2 | 15 | 5 | 0 | 11 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 6 | | 10 | 12 | |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| UNKNOWN | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | 2 | | 2 N1 | | | 3 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAIL - YEAR(S) OUT | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CHANGED COURSE | | 1 N1 | | 1 N1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED | | | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | |

NOTES

Other Includes programmes such as construction, tourism, office management and communications related courses.

N1 Student changed from 1st Science to 1st Business in 2006/07 but did not complete course - dropped out.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

(1), (2), etc Person(s) who graduated but carried on with their studies to the next level.

NOTE AIT only indicated that students were DUE to graduate in 2009. There was no confirmation if these all went through. For recording purposes these went in as graduates for 2009.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|--------|-----------|--------|---------|----|---|---------|-----------|---|----------|---|---|---|--|----|----|
| TOTALS per year | 22 | *3 | 20 | *3 | 2 | 15 | 5 | 0 | 11 | 1 | 4 | 6 | 0 | 6 | | | |
| Notes | | 3 - *1 | 19 + 1 RR | 3 - *1 | 7 - (5) | | | 3 - (3) | 10 + 1 RR | | 10 - (6) | | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 2 | | 2 | | | 5 | | | 1 | | | 0 | | | 10 | 12 |

4.4.2 TRACKING STUDENTS IN CORK INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

Cork Institute of Technology is one of the largest and longest established technological education centres in Ireland. Cork Institute of Technology is comprised of two constituent Faculties and three constituent Colleges. The constituent Faculties are Engineering and Science; and Business and Humanities. The qualifications awarded vary from Post-graduate Doctorates, to Degrees, Diplomas and Certificates, as well as thriving and internationally recognised trade craft courses.

OVERVIEW OF DATA FROM CIT

CIT currently has in the region of 12,000 registered students with approximately 2,000 new entries year on year. CIT supports over 500 students with disabilities at present (including apprentices on block release and part-time students). CIT operates a student database system and has a recording system in place for students with disabilities. Depending on the nature of their disability, students must register with the DSS and/or the Exams Office. Details of the 2005 entrants were drawn from both offices to compile a list of 25 students who were tracked in this research.

Figure 4.8

CIT - Programmes of Study of 2005 New Entrants

| SUBJECT AREA | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | | 2007/08 | | | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL | |
|-------------------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | |
| Arts | 4 | | 4 | | | 4 | 1 | | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | | 0 | 4 | |
| Business & Law | 8 | | 8 | 1 | | 7 | 1 | | 6 | 4 | 2 | | 2 | | | 1 | 7 | |
| Sciences | 11 | 2 | 9 | 2 | | 7 | 3 | | 4 | 2 | 2 | | 2 | | | 4 | 7 | |
| Performing Arts | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 0 | 1 | |
| Other | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | 0 | 1 | |
| TOTALS per year | 25 | 2 | 23 | 3 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 5 | 15 | 0 | 9 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 20 | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The largest number of students in CIT are in the Science and Engineering area (11), followed by the Business (8 students) and then Arts (4 students) The Performing Arts and the Other category each have 1 student enrolled with them. The percentages of students graduating (i.e. success rates of the sample) from the different areas of study are extremely positive and are outlined below:

- 100% of Arts students
- 100% of Performing Arts students
- 100% of Other category students
- 88% of students enrolled in Business
- 64% of Science and Engineering students

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

The category of SPLD is the largest category in CIT (16 students), followed by the PHY category (5 students). Two HI students are pursuing courses within CIT from this cohort. The SOI and VI categories have 1 student in each. Again the figures for those graduating from their studies from CIT is very encouraging. They are as follows:

- 100% of SOI students
- 100% of HI students
- 100% of VI students
- 80% of PHY students
- 75% of SPLD students

Figure 4.9

CIT - Disability Categories of 2005 New Entrants

| DISABILITY | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | | 2007/08 | | | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
|--------------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | | |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 5 | 5 | 1 | | 4 | | 1 | 3 | | 1 | 2 | | 2 | | | 1 | 4 | |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | 0 | 1 | |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 2 | | 2 | | 2 | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | 0 | 2 | |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | 0 | 1 | |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 16 | 2 | 14 | 2 | 12 | | 3 | 9 | | 6 | 3 | | 3 | | | 4 | 12 | |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 0 | |
| TOTALS per year | 25 | 2 | 23 | 3 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 5 | 15 | 0 | 9 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 5 | 20 | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

4.4.3 TRACKING STUDENTS IN DUBLIN CITY UNIVERSITY

Dublin City University (DCU) is one of the leading public universities in Ireland. DCU was established in 1980 to meet the needs of Ireland's growing economy. DCU was initially set up to fulfil the national requirement for a highly-trained workforce with skills in the areas of business, science and electronics, computer technology, communications and languages and as an agent for change in its local community. The first students came through the door in 1980 and the university is now recognized nationally and internationally as a centre of academic excellence. DCU currently has over 10,000 students.

OVERVIEW OF DCU DATA

DCU data illustrates that 20 students with disabilities registered with the DSS in 2005/06 in their first year of study. No students are recorded as having withdrawn between 2005/06 and 2008/09. All students, except one, graduated in 2007/08 (9 students) and 2008/09 (10 students). There were no students continuing their studies into the 2009/10 academic year.

Figure 4.10

DCU - Programmes of Study of 2005 New Entrants

| SUBJECT AREA | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | | 2007/08 | | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL | |
|------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
| Arts & Humanities | 2 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 2 |
| Business & Law | 8 | | 8 | | 8 | 7 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | 0 | 8 |
| Science & Engineering | 9 | | 9 | | 9 | | 9 | 9 | | | | | | | | 0 | 9 |
| Other | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| TOTALS per year | 20 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 1 | 19 | 0 | 9 | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20 |

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The majority of students entered the Science & Engineering (9 students) and Business & Law (8 students) courses. All of the Science & Engineering students graduated after 4 years. Seven of the Business & Law students graduated after 3 years with the remaining person graduating in 2008/09.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

SPLD is the largest category of disability (11 students) recorded in DCU with a significant number of SOI students registering (5 students). Two PHY students entered DCU in 2005/06 and the smallest groups were VI and MH (1 student in each).

Figure 4.11

DCU - Disability Categories of 2005 New Entrants

| DISABILITY | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | 2007/08 | | 2008/09 | | 2009/10 | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | |
|--------------------------------|---------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN / DEFERRED / UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN / DEFERRED / UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN / DEFERRED / UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN / DEFERRED / UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | | | WITHDRAWN / DEFERRED / UNKNOWN |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 2 | | 2 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | 0 | 2 | |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 5 | | 5 | | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | | | | | 0 | 5 | |
| Deaf / Hard of Hearing | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 0 | |
| Blind / Vision Impaired | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | 0 | 1 | |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 11 | | 11 | 1 | 10 | 5 | 5 | 5 | | | | | 0 | 11 | |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | 0 | 1 | |
| TOTALS per year | 20 | 0 | 20 | 0 | 1 | 19 | 0 | 9 | 10 | 0 | 10 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 20 |

4 NATIONAL STUDY CONTINUED

4.4.4 TRACKING STUDENTS IN

DUBLIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

The Dublin Institute of Technology was established as an autonomous institution under the DIT Act in 1992, but its origins go back to 1887 and the establishment of technical education in Ireland. DIT is one of the largest Higher Education Institutes (HEIs) in Ireland, with around 13,000 full-time students. Students pursue apprenticeship, ordinary degree, honours degree, masters and doctoral programmes across the six faculties of the Institute.

OVERVIEW OF DIT DATA

DIT has the largest set of data in the national sample with 144 students. Of this number 136 graduated and 8 withdrew during the course of their studies. The format for DIT data varies slightly from the rest of the sample as the years for withdrawal were not provided. Therefore to keep the data consistent, all withdrawals were entered in 2005/06 but in reality these would be spread out over the years. The academic year 2007/08 produced the most graduates with 80 students successfully completing their courses after 3 years.

Figure 4.12

DIT - Programmes of Study of 2005 New Entrants

| SUBJECT AREA | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | 2007/08 | | 2008/09 | | 2009/10 | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | |
|------------------------|------------|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | | | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
| Arts & Humanities | 5 | 1 | 4 | | 4 | | 4 | 4 | | | | | 1 | 4 | | |
| Business & Law | 33 | 3 | 30 | 18 | 12 | 2 | 10 | 9 | 1 | 1 | | | 3 | 30 | | |
| Science & Engineering | 60 | 1 | 59 | | 59 | 44 | 15 | 11 | 4 | 4 | | | 1 | 59 | | |
| Performing Arts | 8 | | 8 | | 8 | 2 | 6 | 6 | | | | | 0 | 8 | | |
| Other | 38 | 3 | 35 | | 35 | 22 | 13 | 12 | 1 | 1 | | | 3 | 35 | | |
| TOTALS per year | 144 | 8 | 136 | 0 | 118 | 0 | 70 | 48 | 0 | 42 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 8 | 136 |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED | | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

NOTES

N1 8 people failed/deferred and did not return to studies. We do not have data on what years these people left their studies and for this reason have all been inserted into the 2005/06 year for recording purposes. Realistically these would normally be spread over the years.

Other Tourism, built environment.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The largest number of students registered in the area of Science & Engineering (60 students). The smallest number entered the area of Arts & Humanities (5 students). Both these programme categories had the smallest withdrawals with 1 in each category. While the Other category (includes courses such as tourism and built environment) and Business & Law each had substantial registrations in 2005/06, with 38 and 33 respectively, they had the largest number of withdrawals with 3 in each category. Eight students entered the area of Performing Arts and all graduated after 3 and 4 years.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

SPLD is the largest category of disability (11 students) recorded in DCU with a significant number of SOI students registering (5 students). Two PHY students entered DCU in 2005/06 and the smallest groups were VI and MH (1 student in each).

Figure 4.13

DIT - Disability Categories of 2005 New Entrants

| DISABILITY | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | | 2007/08 | | | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL | |
|--------------------------------|---------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 5 | | 5 | 1 | 4 | | | 4 | | 1 | 3 | | 3 | | 0 | 5 | | |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 6 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 4 | | 2 | 2 | | 2 | | | | | 1 | 5 | | |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 8 | | 8 | | 8 | | 4 | 4 | | 2 | 2 | | 2 | | 0 | 8 | | |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 4 | | 4 | 1 | 3 | | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 0 | 4 | | |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 116 | 6 | 110 | 15 | 95 | | 59 | 36 | | 36 | | | | | 6 | 110 | | |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 3 | 1 | 2 | | 2 | | 2 | | | | | | | | 1 | 2 | | |
| Other: Speech, Voice | 2 | | 2 | | 2 | | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | 0 | 2 | | |
| TOTALS per year | 144 | 8 N1 | 136 | 0 | 18 | 118 | 0 | 70 | 48 | 0 | 42 | 6 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 8 | 136 | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED | | 5 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

NOTES

N1 8 people failed / deferred and did not return to studies. We do not have data on what years these people left their studies and for this reason have all been inserted into the 2005/06 year for recording purposes. Realistically these would normally be spread over the years.

4 NATIONAL STUDY CONTINUED

4.4.5 TRACKING STUDENTS IN

NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND GALWAY

Established in 1845, NUI Galway is one of Ireland's foremost centres of academic excellence. With over 16,000 students, it has a long established reputation of teaching and research excellence in each of its five Colleges: College of Arts Social Sciences and Celtic Studies, College of Business, Public Policy and Law, College of Science, College of Engineering and Informatics, College of Medicine, Nursing and Health Science.

OVERVIEW OF NUIG DATA

NUIG data illustrates the progression of its 34 students who registered in 2005/06 in their first year of study. Only 2 students withdrew from the sample and both did so in their first year. The remaining 32 students all graduated, mostly after their third and fourth years of study.

Figure 4.14

NUIG - Programmes of Study of 2005 New Entrants

| SUBJECT AREA | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
|---|-----------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | | 2007/08 | | 2008/09 | | 2009/10 | | 2010/11 | | | | | | | |
| Arts & Humanities | 14 | 1 N1 | 13 | | 13 | 11 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | 1 | 13 |
| Business & Law | 4 | | 4 | *1 N2 | 4 N2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | 0 | 4 |
| Science & Engineering | 12 | | 12 | | 12 | 1 | 11 | 10 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 0 | 12 |
| Medicine & Health | 3 | 1 | 2 | | 2 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 | 2 |
| Other | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| TOTALS per year | 34 | 2 | 32 | *1 | 0 | 32 | 0 | 14 | 18 | 0 | 16 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 32 |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| UNKNOWN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED AND RE-ENTERED | | | 1 N2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | 1 N1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED | | | | | 1 N2 | | | | | | | | | | | | |

NOTES

N1 Student failed 05/06, deferred 06/07 and withdrew 07/08 (did not re-register at any stage).

N2 Student deferred in 06/07 but continued on to second year of the programme in 07/08.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|---|----|--------|---|--------|---|----|----|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| TOTALS per year | 34 | 2 | 32 | *1 | 0 | 32 | 0 | 14 | 18 | 0 | 16 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | | |
| Notes | | | | 1 - *1 | | 31+1RR | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 2 | | 0 | | | 0 | | | 0 | | | 0 | | | 2 | 32 |

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The majority of students entered Arts & Humanities programmes (14 students) and Science & Engineering programmes (12 students). The smallest number of students entered the Other category (1 student entered communications course). The 2 withdrawals occurred in the Arts & Humanities and Medicine & Health categories. One Business & Law student deferred their course in 2006/07 but returned to their studies the following year.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

Students with SPLD are the largest group in the categories of disability accounting for 25 students. The smallest categories are MH, VI and PHY which all have 1 student each. The 2 withdrawals occur in the PHY and SPLD groups. One SOI student deferred their studies but re-entered at a later date and subsequently graduated.

Figure 4.15

NUIG - Disability Categories of 2005 New Entrants

| DISABILITY | INTAKE | | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | | RE-REGISTERED | | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | | GRADUATED | | RE-REGISTERED | | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | | GRADUATED | | RE-REGISTERED | | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | |
|---|-----------|----------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------|--------------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|---------------|----------|--------------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|---------------|----------|--------------------------------|----------|----------------------|----------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|-----------|----------------------------|--|
| | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | 2006/07 | 2007/08 | 2007/08 | 2008/09 | 2008/09 | 2009/10 | 2009/10 | 2010/11 | 2010/11 | 2011/12 | 2011/12 | 2012/13 | 2012/13 | 2013/14 | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 | 2015/16 | 2016/17 | 2016/17 | 2017/18 | 2017/18 | 2018/19 | 2018/19 | |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 1 | 1 N1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 0 | | |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 4 | 4 | *1 N2 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 4 | | |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 2 | 2 | | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 2 | | |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 | | |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 25 | 1 | 24 | | 24 | 8 | 16 | 14 | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 24 | | |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 | | |
| TOTALS per year | 34 | 2 | 32 | *1 | 0 | 32 | 0 | 14 | 18 | 0 | 16 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 32 | | |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| UNKNOWN | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED & RE-ENTERED | | | 1 N2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | 1 N1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED | | | | | 1 N2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

NOTES

N1 Student failed 05/06, deferred 06/07 and withdrew 07/08

N2 Student deferred in 06/07 but continued on to second year of the programme in 07/08

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|---|----|--------|---|--------|---|----|----|---|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|
| TOTALS per year | 34 | 2 | 32 | *1 | 0 | 32 | 0 | 14 | 18 | 0 | 16 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 32 |
| Notes | | | | 1 - *1 | | 31+1RR | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 2 | | 0 | | | 0 | | | 0 | | 0 | | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 32 | |

4.4.6 TRACKING STUDENTS IN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND MAYNOOTH

Building on a tradition of scholarship and excellence in all aspects of its Teaching and Learning, and Research activities, within the liberal arts and science tradition, NUI Maynooth is committed to being a first class research-led centre of learning and academic discovery. The university is also committed to providing an environment within which the student can learn, develop and mature. The focus is on ensuring that all students have an experience that will benefit them not just academically but personally as well, and that the environment is truly student friendly.

OVERVIEW OF NUIM DATA

NUIM recorded 35 first year students in 2005/06 which met the criteria of this study. In total 6 students withdrew from their studies, 5 of these in their first year. 29 students graduated overall, the majority of these (16) graduated in 2007/08 and another large number (11) completed their studies successfully in the following year. Two students deferred their studies and re-entered at a later date. These students are on track to complete their degrees in 2009/10 and 2010/11.

Figure 4.16

NUIM - Programmes of Study of 2005 New Entrants

| SUBJECT AREA | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | | 2007/08 | | | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
|---|---------|----------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|-----------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | | |
| Arts & Humanities | 24 | 3 | 21 | *1 N1 | | 20 | 1 | 15 | 4 | | 4 | 1 | N1 | | 1 | *4 | 20 | |
| Business & Law | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 | |
| Science & Engineering | 8 | 1 | 7 | | | 7 | *1 N2 | | 6 | | 6 | 1 | N2 | 1 | | 1 | 7 | |
| Performing Arts | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 0 | 1 | |
| Other | 1 | 1 N3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 1 | 0 | |
| TOTALS per year | 35 | 5 | 30 | *1 | 0 | 29 | *2 | 16 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 29 | |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PASS - YEAR(S) OUT | | | | | | | 1 N2 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED AND RE-ENTERED | | | | 1 N1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | 2 N3 | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 N1 & 2 | | | | | | |

NOTES

N1 This student deferred second year in 06/07, returned 09/10.

N2 This student passed and deferred 4th year, returned 2009.

N3 This student passed 1st year but never re-registered for 2nd year.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| TOTALS per year | 35 | 5 | 30 | *1 | 0 | 29 | *2 | 16 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | | |
|------------------|----|---|----|--------|---|----|--------|----|----|---|----|--------|---|---|---|---|----|
| Notes | | | | 1 - *1 | | | 2 - *1 | | | | | 0+2 RR | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 5 | | 0 | | | 1 | | | 0 | | | 0 | | | 6 | 29 |

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

Arts & Humanities attracted the most students from the 2005/06 cohort with 24 students taking up these type programmes. This group also had the highest number of withdrawals accounting for 4 of the 6 withdrawals. Business & Law, Performing Arts and Other (Media) categories all had an intake of 1 student each.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

SOI students (13) are the largest category of disability in the NUIM figures, closely followed by the SPLD group (11). The SOI category displays the largest number of withdrawals with 3 of the 6 occurring here.

Figure 4.17

NUIM - Disability Categories of 2005 New Entrants

| DISABILITY | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | 2007/08 | | 2008/09 | | 2009/10 | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | |
|---|-----------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 4 | 1 | 3 | | 3 | | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 3 | |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 13 | 3 N3 | 10 | *1 N1 | 9 | | 5 | 4 | | 4 | 1 N1 | | 1 | | *3 | 10 | |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 2 | | 2 | | 2 | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 0 | 2 | |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 0 | 1 | |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 11 | | 11 | | 11 | 2 *N2 | 6 | 3 | | 3 | 1 N2 | | 1 | | 1 | 10 | |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 4 | 1 | 3 | | 3 | | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 3 | |
| TOTALS per year | 35 | 5 | 30 | *1 | 0 | 29 | *2 | 16 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 6 | 29 | |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PASS - YEAR(S) OUT | | | | | | 1 N2 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED & RE-ENTERED | | | | 1 N1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | 2 N3 | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED | | | | | | | | | | | 2 N1 & 2 | | | | | | |

NOTES

N1 This student deferred second year in 06/07, returned 09/10.

N2 This student passed and deferred 4th year, returned 2009.

N3 This student passed 1st year but never re-registered for 2nd year.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|---|----|--------|---|----|--------|----|----|---|----|---------|---|---|---|---|----|
| TOTALS per year | 35 | 5 | 30 | *1 | 0 | 29 | *2 | 16 | 11 | 0 | 11 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 1 | | |
| Notes | | | | 1 - *1 | | | 2 - *1 | | | | | 0 + 2RR | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 5 | | 0 | | | 1 | | | 0 | | | 0 | | | 6 | 29 |

4.4.7 TRACKING STUDENTS IN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY TALLAGHT

IT Tallaght offers a wide range of full and continuing education courses in business, computing and information technology, engineering and science. It emphasises the appropriate use of new technology and the development of quality systems, and promotes the acquisition of modern language proficiency. Provides a range of services to industry and commerce, including short courses, research and consultancy.

OVERVIEW OF IT TALLAGHT DATA

IT Tallaght has the smallest set of data in the national sample with 16 students registering in first year in 2005/06. The data shows that 50% of the students with disabilities graduated from their studies over 4 years. One student deferred after first year but re-entered at a later date in another programme. Sadly another student died in the 2007/08 academic year. Most withdrawals occurred during the first year of study.

Figure 4.18

IT Tallaght - Programmes of Study of 2005 New Entrants

| SUBJECT AREA | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | | 2007/08 | | | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 2010/11 | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
|---|---------|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | | |
| Science & Engineering | 4 | 3 *N1 | 1 | | (1) | 1 | 1 N3 | | 1 N1 | 1 N1 | | | | | | 4 | 0 | |
| Business & Law | 9 | 2 | 7 | | 1 | 6 | 2 N2 | | 4 | | 4 | | | | | 4 | 5 | |
| Other | 3 | | 3 | | 1 | 2 | | | 2 | | 2 | | | | | 0 | 3 | |
| TOTALS per year | 16 | *5 | 11 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 6 | | | | | 8 | 8 | |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | | | | | | 2 N2 N3 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED | | 3 *N1 | | | | | | | | 1 N1 | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DIED | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED COLLEGE | | | | | | | | | 1 N1 | | | | | | | | | |

NOTES

Other Marketing and Audio Visual.

N1 1 deferred Engineering 05/06 but re-entered 08/09 to Computer Science, but deferred again.

N2 1 student split 1st year over 2 years & failed 2nd year.

N3 1 student failed in 07/08 but had already graduated with Higher Certificate in Engineering after 2 years.

(1) Graduated but carried on to next year.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| TOTALS per year | 16 | *5 | 11 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 6 | | | | | 8 | 8 |
|------------------|----|--------|----|---|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| Notes | | 5 - *1 | | | 3 - (1) | | | | 6 + 1 RR | | | | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 4 | | 0 | | 3 | | | | 1 | | | | | | 8 | 8 |

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

Business & Law has the largest intake with 9 students registering for these type courses but half the withdrawals occur here (including one student who died). Three students registered for programmes in the Other category (media courses). Four students registered for courses in the area of Science & Engineering and all 4 of these students withdrew.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

PHY and SPLD categories of disability display equally large numbers of students (6 in each group) registering in their first year in 2005/06. Of the 8 withdrawals overall 5 occur in the PHY category (one of these students was a student who died). All other categories of disability/conditions are represented in the IT Tallaght data with the exception of MH.

Figure 4.19

IT Tallaght - Disability Categories of 2005 New Entrants

| DISABILITY | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
|---|---------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | | 2007/08 | | 2008/09 | | 2009/10 | | 20010/11 | | | | | | | |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 6 | 3 | 3 | (1) | 3 | 2 | N3 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 5 | 1 |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 1 | | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 2 | | 2 | | 2 | 1 | N2 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 1 | | 1 | | 1 | | | | 1 | | 1 | | | | | 0 | 1 |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 6 | 2 | 4 | 1 | 3 | | | 4 | 1 | 3 | | | | | | 2 | 4 |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 0 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | 0 | 0 |
| TOTALS per year | 16 | *5 | 11 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 6 | | | | | 8 | 8 |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | | | | | 2 | N2 N3 | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED | | 3 | | | | | | | 1 | N1 | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DIED | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED COLLEGE | | | | | | | | 1 | N1 | | | | | | | | |

NOTES

N1 1 deferred Engineering 05/06 but re-entered 08/09 to Computer Science, but deferred again.

N2 1 student split 1st year over 2 years & failed 2nd year.

N3 1 student failed in 07/08 but had already graduated with Higher Certificate in Engineering after 2 years.

(1) Graduated but carried on to next year.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|--------|----|---|---------|---|---|---|----------|---|---|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| TOTALS per year | 16 | *5 | 11 | 0 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 6 | | | | | | |
| Notes | | 5 - *1 | | | 3 - (1) | | | | 6 + 1 RR | | | | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 4 | | 0 | | | 3 | | | 1 | | | | | | 8 | 8 |

4.4.8 TRACKING STUDENTS IN TRINITY COLLEGE DUBLIN

Trinity College Dublin is the only constituent college of the University of Dublin and the two names are interchangeable for all practical purposes. Founded in 1592 on the model of Oxford and Cambridge colleges, Trinity occupies an unrivalled position on a 45-acre site right in the heart of the city. Trinity College has much to offer: a beautiful campus in the heart of Dublin, an impressive academic record spanning over 400 years, a highly regarded international faculty and research community and a student population comprising students from over 90 countries.

OVERVIEW OF TCD DATA

The TCD data tracks 58 students through their studies and of this number 54 graduated successfully and 4 withdrew. Four students deferred their studies but returned to their courses at a later date. In relation to the withdrawals, 2 occur in the first year of studies, 1 in 2007/08 and 1 in 2008/09. The majority of students (41) in the TCD data graduate in 2008/09 after 4 years of study.

Figure 4.20

TCD - Programmes of Study of 2005 New Entrants

| SUBJECT AREA | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | | 2007/08 | | | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 20010/11 | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
|---|-----------|-----------------------------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | | |
| Arts & Humanities | 28 | *1 N1 | 27 | | | 28 N1 | | | 28 | 1 | 22 | 5 | | 5 | | | 1 | 27 |
| Business & Law | 3 | | 3 | | | 3 | | | 3 | | 2 | 1 | | 1 | | | 0 | 3 |
| Science & Engineering | 13 | | 13 | | | 13 | 1 | | 12 | | 10 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 12 |
| Medicine & Health | 12 | 2 | 10 | *1 N3 | | 9 | *2 N2 N4 | 1 | 6 | | 5 | 4 N2,N3,N4 | | 4 | | | 2 | 10 |
| Performing Arts | 2 | | 2 | | | 2 | | | 2 | | 2 | | | | | | 0 | 2 |
| TOTALS per year | 58 | *3 | 55 | *1 | 0 | 55 | *3 | 1 | 51 | 1 | 41 | 12 | 0 | 11 | 1 | 4 | 54 | |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | *1 N1 | | *1 N3 | | | *2 N2 N4 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED AND RE-ENTERED | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | 2 | | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED | | | | | | 1 N1 | | | | | | 3 N2,N3,N4 | | | | | | |

NOTES

N1 Student deferred to 2007/08.

N2 Student deferred, returned in 2009/10.

N3 Student deferred, returned in 2009/10.

N4 Student deferred, returned in 2009/10.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| TOTALS per year | 58 | *3 | 55 | *1 | 0 | 55 | *3 | 1 | 51 | 1 | 41 | 12 | 0 | 11 | 1 | | |
|------------------|----|--------|----|--------|---|----------|--------|---|----|---|----|---------|---|----|---|---|----|
| Notes | | 3 - *1 | | 1 - *1 | | 54 + 1RR | 3 - *2 | | | | | 9 + 3RR | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 2 | | 0 | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | 0 | | | 4 | 54 |

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

Arts & Humanities has the largest number of students with disabilities (28) and Performing Arts has the least (2). Two of the 4 withdrawals occur in the Medicine & Health category and 1 in each of Arts & Humanities and Science & Engineering. Three of the 4 students who deferred their studies (re-registering after a break) were studying Medicine & Health programmes and the remaining student was studying in the area of Arts & Humanities.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

Thirty-four SPLD students account for the largest category of disability and also accounts for 2 of the 4 withdrawals. The VI category is the smallest with 2 students registered. The 2 remaining withdrawals occur in the HI and MH groups. The 4 students who deferred their studies but came back in later are spread across 4 different disability groups (PHY, VI, SPLD and MH).

Figure 4.21

TCD - Disability Categories of 2005 New Entrants

| DISABILITY | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | 2007/08 | | 2008/09 | | 2009/10 | | 20010/11 | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | | |
|---|-----------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | | | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 3 | | 3 | | 3 | *1 N2 | | 2 | | 2 | 1 N2 | 1 | | 0 | 3 | | |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 11 | | 11 | | 11 | | | 11 | 9 | 2 | 2 | | | 0 | 11 | | |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 4 | 1 | 3 | | 3 | | | 3 | 3 | | | | | 1 | 3 | | |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 2 | 1 *N1 | 1 | | 2 | N1 | | 2 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | 0 | 2 | | |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 34 | 1 | 33 | | 33 | *1 N4 | 1 | 31 | 1 | 24 | 7 N4 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 32 | | |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 4 | | 4 | *1 N3 | 3 | 1 | | 2 | 2 | 1 N3 | 1 | | | 1 | 3 | | |
| TOTALS per year | 58 | *3 | 55 | *1 | 0 | 55 | *3 | 1 | 51 | 1 | 41 | 12 | 0 | 11 | 1 | 4 | 54 |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERREB & RE-ENTERED | | 1 *N1 | | *1 N3 | | | *2 N2 N4 | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | 2 | | | | 1 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED | | | | | | 1 N1 | | | | | | 3 N2,N3,N4 | | | | | |

NOTES

N1 Student deferred to 2007/08.

N2 Student deferred, returned in 2009/10.

N3 Student deferred, returned in 2009/10.

N4 Student deferred, returned in 2009/10.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/universtiy.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|--------|----|--------|---|--------|--------|---|----|---|----|---------|---|----|---|---|----|
| TOTALS per year | 58 | *3 | 55 | *1 | 0 | 55 | *3 | 1 | 51 | 1 | 41 | 12 | 0 | 11 | 1 | | |
| Notes | | 3 - *1 | | 1 - *1 | | 5+1 RR | 3 - *2 | | | | | 9 + 3RR | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 2 | | 0 | | | 1 | | 1 | | | 0 | | | | 4 | 54 |

4.4.9 TRACKING STUDENTS IN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE CORK

Founded in 1845, UCC is one of the oldest universities in Ireland. Today UCC has grown to over 19,000 students in total including some 13,000 undergraduate students and some 3,000 students pursuing postgraduate programmes up to PhD level. The university's teaching and research programmes are offered across eight faculties. Using the selection criteria 84 students were tracked who registered with the Disability Support Service in 2005.

OVERVIEW OF DATA FROM UCC

Looking at the overall UCC figures it is clear that there was a significant number of students involved in this study (84 in total). 75% of the students tracked in this study for UCC successfully completed (or are expected to complete) their studies. Twenty-one students withdrew during the years studied in this research. The majority of students who withdrew did so in the 2006/07 academic year when 8 people formally withdrew and a further 3 took year(s) out and came back to study in later years. The 2005/06 and 2008/09 academic years each saw 5 students formally withdrawing and an additional 2 students withdrew temporarily in first year but returned to their studies at a later date.

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The largest numbers of students are taking degrees within the Arts area (41 students), followed by the Sciences with 20 students and Business and Law 13 students. Medicine and Health and Performing Arts each enrolled 5 students into their courses. In relation to the percentage of students graduating (i.e. success rates of the sample) from the different Colleges of the University the following emerges:

- 100% of Business and Law students
- 85% of students in the Sciences
- 80% of Medicine and Health students
- 63% of the Arts students
- 60% of Performing Arts students

BRIEF ANALYSIS OF CATEGORIES OF DISABILITIES

The category of SPLD is the largest category in the UCC figures (39 students). The PHY, SOI and MH categories each have 13 students. Reflecting national trends, the HI and VI students are in the minority (4 and 2 respectively). The statistics relating to the students who have/will graduate from their studies in the UCC sample are detailed below:

- 87% of SPLD students
- 85% of SOI students
- 77% of PHY students
- 75% of HI students
- 50% of VI students
- 31% of MH students

Figure 4.22

UCC - Programmes of Study of 2005 New Entrants

| SUBJECT AREA | INTAKE | | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | | RE-REGISTERED | | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | | GRADUATED | | RE-REGISTERED | | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | | GRADUATED | | RE-REGISTERED | | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | | |
|---|---------|----------|--------------------------------|------------|---------------|----|--------------------------------|--------------|-----------|------------|---------------|----|--------------------------------|----|-----------|--|---------------|---|--------------------------------|--|----------------------|------------------------|-----------------|----|----------------------------|--|--|
| | 2005/06 | | 2006/07 | | 2007/08 | | 2008/09 | | 2009/10 | | 2010/11 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Arts | 41 | 3 *N2 | 37 | 6 *N1 | | | 32 | 5 *N4 *N6 | 16 | 12 N1 | 4 N1 | 4 | 6 N4 N6 | | 5 | | | 1 | | | | 14 excl. 1 transfer | | 26 | | | |
| Business & Law | 13 | *1 | 12 | | | | 13 | | 5 | 8 | | 7 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | 0 | | 13 | | | |
| Sciences | 20 | 3 N2 | 18 N2 | 2 *N3 | | | 16 | | | 17 N3 | | 9 | 8 | | 8 | | | | | | | 4 incl. 1 transfer | | 17 | | | |
| Medicine & Health | 5 | | 5 | | | | 5 | | | 5 | 1 | 3 | 1 | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | 4 | | | |
| Performing Arts | 5 | | 5 | 3 *N5 | | | 2 | | 1 | 1 | | 1 | 1 N5 | | | | | | | | | 1 | | 3 | | | |
| TOTALS per year | 84 | *7 | 77 | *11 | 0 | 68 | *5 | 22 | 43 | 5 | 24 | 17 | 0 | 15 | 2 | | | | | | | 21 | | 63 | | | |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | 5 | | 4 | | | 1 N4 | | | | 4 N1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED | | | | 1 | | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW WRONG PROGRAMME | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW HEALTH | | | | 1 | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| PASS - YEAR(S) OUT | | 2 | | 1 N3 | | | 1 *N6 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAIL - YEAR(S) OUT | | | | 2 N1 N5 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| CHANGED COURSE | | 1 N2 | 1 N2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED | | | | | | 2 | | | | 2 N1 N3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

NOTES

- N1 Student failed 2nd Year in 06/07, took year out and repeated in 08/09 but did not sit exams.
- N2 Student began Bachelor of Arts but changed to Department of Food Science in second year.
- N3 Student took one year Sabbatical Leave for Students Union.
- N4 Student changed course within Arts for 06/07, took year out and returned to Bachelor of Arts course in 09/10.
- N5 Student failed second year in 06/07, took two years out and returned in 09/10 to repeat.
- N6 Student repeated 2nd Year in 07/08 and passed, took year out, returned in 09/10 to 3rd year.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|------|----|-------|---|--------|------|----|--------|---|----|--------|---|----|---|----|----|
| TOTALS per year | 84 | *7 | 77 | *11 | 0 | 68 | *5 | 22 | 43 | 5 | 24 | 17 | 0 | 15 | 2 | | |
| Notes | | 7-*2 | | 11-*3 | | 66+2RR | 5-*2 | | 41+2RR | | | 14+3RR | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 5 | | 8 | | | 3 | | | 5 | | | 0 | | | 21 | 63 |

Figure 4.23

UCC - Disability Categories of 2005 New Entrants

| DISABILITY | INTAKE | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | GRADUATED | RE-REGISTERED | WITHDRAWN/DEFERRED/ UNKNOWN | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | EXPECTED TO GRADUATE | TOTAL WITHDRAWN | TOTAL EXPECTED TO GRADUATE |
|---|---------|--------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------------|--------------------------------|----------------------|----------------------|-----------------|----------------------------|
| | 2005/06 | 2006/07 | | | 2007/08 | | | 2008/09 | | | 2009/10 | | | 2010/11 | | | |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 13 | | 13 | 2 | | 11 | 1 | 2 | 8 | | 6 | 2 | 2 | | | 3 | 10 |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 13 | *1 | 12 | 1 | | 12 | *1 N4 | 4 | 7 | 1 | 4 | 3 N4 | 3 | | | 2 | 11 |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 4 | | 4 | | | 4 | 1 | | 3 | | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | 1 | 3 |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 2 | | 2 | | | 2 | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 1 | 1 |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 39 | 2 *N2 | 37 N2 | 3 *N1 *N3 | | 34 | | 14 | 22 N1 N3 | 2 N1 | 12 | 8 | 8 | | | 5 | 34 |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 13 | 4 | 9 | 5 *N5 | | 5 | 2 *N6 | 1 | 2 | 1 | | 3 N5 N6 | 1 | 2 | | 9 | 4 |
| TOTALS per year | 84 | *7 | 77 | *11 | 0 | 68 | *5 | 22 | 43 | 5 | 24 | 17 | 0 | 15 | 2 | 21 | 63 |
| <i>Please see notes section below for in-depth explanations of these totals</i> | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OUTCOME | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAILED/ABSENT | | 4 | | 4 | | | 1 N4 | | | 4 N1 | | | | | | | |
| DEFERRED | | | | 1 | | | | | | 1 | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW PERMANENT/TEMPORARY | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW WRONG PROGRAMME | | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WITHDREW HEALTH | | 1 | | 1 | | | 2 | | | | | | | | | | |
| PASS - YEAR(S) OUT | | 2 | | 1 N3 | | | 1 N6 | | | | | | | | | | |
| FAIL - YEAR(S) OUT | | | | 2 N1 N5 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| CHANGED COURSE | | 1 N2 | 1 N2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RE-ENTERED | | | | | | 2 | | | 2 N1 N3 | | | 3 N4 N5 N6 | | | | | |

NOTES

N1 Student failed 2nd Year in 06/07, took year out & repeated in 08/09 but did not sit exams.

N2 Student began Bachelor of Arts but changed to Department of Food Science in second year.

N3 Student took one year Sabbatical Leave for Students Union.

N4 Student changed course within Arts for 06/07, took year out and returned to Bachelor of Arts course in 09/10.

N5 Student failed second year in 06/07, took two years out and returned in 09/10 to repeat.

N6 Student repeated 2nd Year in 07/08 and passed, took year out, returned in 09/10 to 3rd year.

* This indicates a student who came back into the system later and therefore should not be counted as a "Withdrawal" who has formally left the college/university.

Explanation of total figures in table above:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----|------|----|-------|---|--------|------|----|--------|---|----|--------|---|----|---|----|----|
| TOTALS per year | 84 | *7 | 77 | *11 | 0 | 68 | *5 | 22 | 43 | 5 | 24 | 17 | 0 | 15 | 2 | | |
| Notes | | 7-*2 | | 11-*3 | | 66+2RR | 5-*2 | | 41+2RR | | | 14+3RR | | | | | |
| Actual Withdrawn | | 5 | | 8 | | | 3 | | | 5 | | 0 | | | | 21 | 63 |

4.5 Discussion of Findings from the Nine Individual HEIs

Most significant findings:

- DIT had the largest number of new entry students with disabilities in 2005
- Students in the SPLD category had the highest entry rate in 2005
- Students in the VI category had the lowest entry rate in 2005
- Students in the MH category had the lowest retention rate across nine institutions
- Student in the VI category had the highest retention rate
- On average the institutions showed an 85% pass rate for students with disabilities

The number of students entering particular third level institutions is not reflective of their capacity; for example with a general student population of 13,000 students, DIT took in 144 students with disabilities in 2005. NUIG however, with a general student body of 16,000 students, only 34 students with disabilities registered with the DSS in 2005. It would be valuable to know the reasons behind these figures. Are students deterred or attracted by location, facilities, resources for students with disabilities, programmes on offer? Given the quantitative nature of this National study, these figures cannot be discussed in terms of motivations or experiences of particular students.

The category of MH had the highest withdrawal rate on average across all nine institutions. In IT Tallaght there were no students registered with the DSS in this category while three more institutions had only one student registered under this category. The reasons for the low rate of retention is not explained through the statistical data gathered by this National study but this trend does highlight the need to target students with Mental Health Difficulties, particularly in first year, when the highest withdrawals occur.

One of the most significant outcomes of this National study is the wealth of data gained on student withdrawals. Interestingly similar trends have emerged across all nine institutions. The largest number of student withdrawals occurs in the first year of study. This year is crucial in the retention of students with disabilities and it is essential that institutions be aware of this.

In relation to Access to third level it has emerged that the least represented category is that of vision impaired (VI), Across all nine institutions as they only amounted

to 2.96% of the total intake in the 2005 sample. This was followed by the categories of Hard of Hearing (HI) at 5.93% and Mental Health Difficulties (MH) at 6.16%. Unfortunately due to the quantitative nature of the data received from the National study the reasons for poor access, retention or success rates were not discovered. The various data systems and methods of recording students with disabilities across all institutions created major obstacles which prevented this kind of in-depth data collection.

4.6 Conclusion of the National Study

This report is one of the first of its kind to produce cross-institutional data on the access, retention and success of students with disabilities in third level education. The results illustrated in this chapter highlight the areas of achievement and point to the areas which need further study. The trends which emerge from the data provide an interesting insight into the activity of students with disabilities. As the results are outlined for both individual institutions and National averages, they can be used by a wide range of individuals and institutions concerned with the integration and success of students with disabilities.

Some significant challenges were presented throughout the preparation of this report, some of which require further attention. The majority of obstacles pertained to the gathering of cross-institutional data in Ireland. Not only is there a lack of data on students with disabilities on a National level but some institutions did not have much/any information on the reasons for withdrawal. It is imperative that institutions are informed as to the reasons for withdrawal of their students in order to address the issue of retention. There is a need for a standardised system of tracking students with disabilities across institutions. Each institution has its own method of recording students and for categorizing programmes of study and this makes the gathering of national data very difficult.

This National Study analyses data under Programmes of Study and Disability Category. However it would be extremely interesting to evaluate which programmes the different disability categories are choosing to enter. Some trends were seen by the researcher during the analysis stage. In a similar vein it would be useful to know why particular students are withdrawing and whether or not they are re-entering at a later date. These details could be analysed using a more in-depth quantitative National study.

5 UCC/CIT CASE STUDY FINDINGS

5.1 Introduction

Data gleaned from the National study was valuable in highlighting the National trends surrounding access, retention and success of students with disabilities, however it became evident that a more holistic view of students experiences and choices were needed to analyse the trends and statistical results in more detail. While the case study institutions can not be representative of the entire National sample they provide some insight into students experiences while also acting as a model for any future research which may be carried out on a National level. This chapter presents additional quantitative and qualitative data which was gathered from the in-depth study of two Pathways to Education institutions, University College Cork (UCC) and Cork Institute of Technology (CIT). Additional quantitative data such as disability categories, breakdown of final exam results, programmes of study and county of origin was collected from databases and files of the case study institutions while qualitative data was gathered through interviews. Students were asked to discuss their feelings and experiences of student life. Each section is presented and discussed in order to present a more detailed view of the trends which emerged from the National study. In 2005, 84 undergraduate students in UCC registered with the Disability Support Service in the first year of their studies. In CIT 25 undergraduate students registered for supports in their first year.

5.2 Additional Qualitative Data on Categories of Disability

It is evident from interviews that many students with disabilities do not let obstacles stand in their way to participating socially, academically or culturally in so far as possible. Most students said they enjoyed taking part in the social aspect of college life and they enjoyed making new friends. Clubs and societies are a very useful way of making new friends and one interviewee commented on the fact that making friends; *“is as difficult as you want it to be”... any obstacles are “of your own creation really”*.

Obstacles can vary depending on the disability category. Some clubs and societies / activities can be inaccessible to students with particular disabilities/ conditions (e.g. mobility difficulties). A student with significant ongoing illness remarked: *“I enjoyed college life to the best of my ability when I could... I just knew my own limitations. I was honest with my friends from the start so they knew what they could expect or what not to expect and they were great. They didn't make a big deal or treat me any differently”*.

Mature students with disabilities can in some ways have double the number of obstacles to overcome. Not alone do they have obstacles relevant to their disability/

condition/ illness but they also have the obstacles related to entering higher education after a long period away from education. For many their last experience of education may not have been a positive one. One interviewee suggested that getting involved in clubs, societies and volunteer work is very beneficial and looks great on a student's CV. *“Mature students are treated very well in UCC. When you walk among young people you do feel your age but so what... I'm comfortable here”*

DISCUSSION OF CASE STUDY CATEGORIES OF DISABILITY

It is evident that category SPLD is the most well represented in the case study institutions. Students with SPLD account for 55% of the 2005 students with disabilities. The categories of MH, SOI, VI and HI have much smaller rates of intake. The qualitative data had shed some light on the obstacles that different categories of disability face when entering third level. Perhaps the obstacles mentioned here such as shyness, inaccessibility of social activities or even age is deterring some students with sensory difficulties. As suggested by one student, resources from the disability support services may encourage further participation of students in categories with low entry rates.

5.3 Additional Qualitative Data on Access, Retention and Success Rates

For the majority of students with disabilities they are able to progress through their studies without any issues. However others require a longer period of time in which to complete their studies due to the impact of their disability/condition. Often the best option for a student might be to take a year out to concentrate on their health and then come back to continue with their studies. Another option would be to split their studies over two years or split their exams between summer and autumn examinations, spreading out the work and making it more manageable. In exceptional circumstances a student may require an optional method of completing their studies such as through distance learning (which would be authorized by the department and college). Of the 21 students tracked in this project who withdrew the following is a breakdown of their reasons for withdrawal/ current status:

- 6 (28%) are unknown (we were unable to contact these students)
- 10 (48%) withdrew due to deteriorating health conditions and have not returned
- 4 (19%) went to study / are returning with another institution
- 1 (5%) currently in employment

5.4 Additional Quantitative Data on Programmes of Study in UCC and CIT

In UCC, the Arts faculty had the highest number of participants with 30 out of 84 students registering. This is reflective of the registration trends of the general students population in UCC. The College of Arts is the largest college within the University and holds the largest number of students at 3,900. This is followed by Science and Social Studies. Commerce, Law and Accounting/ Finance were all on a par regarding the number of students (4 in each area) pursuing these areas. Other areas

had less than 3 students. In CIT, Business and Humanities and Science and Engineering attracted similar student numbers (13 & 12 respectively).

Interestingly, the most common programmes of study pursued by the tracked students with disabilities are not unique to the institutions studied. For example; Arts (UCC) and Engineering (CIT) are provided by the vast majority of third level institutes nationwide. Therefore, it can be assumed that the programme on offer was not crucial in the decision to attend UCC or CIT.

Figure 5.1

Programmes of Study Pursued by 2005 New Entrants in UCC

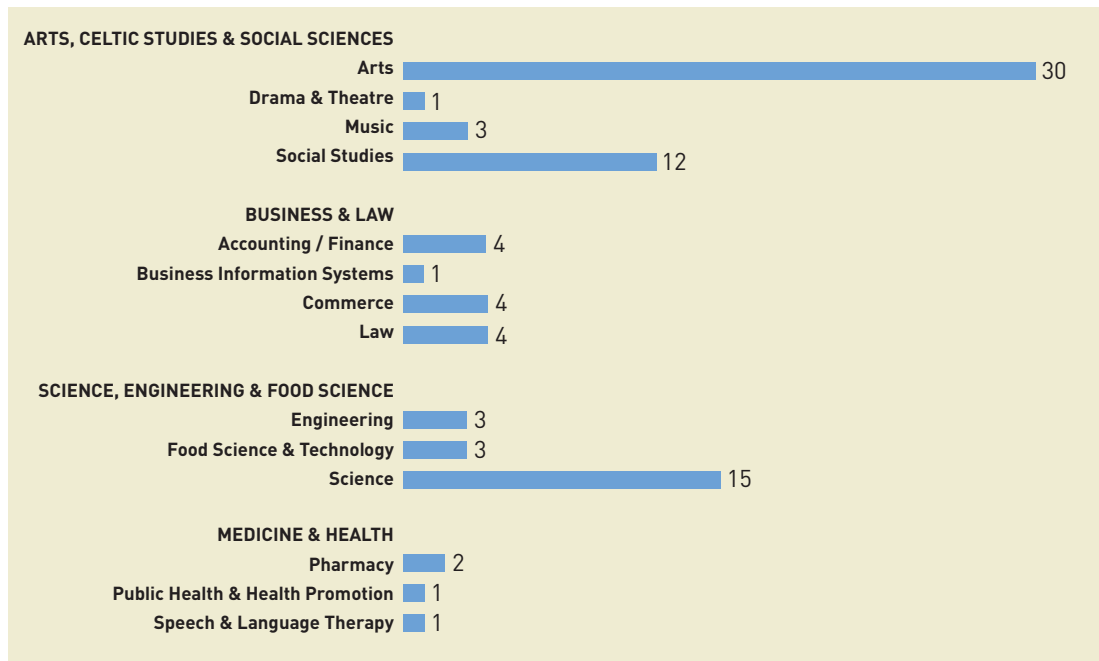
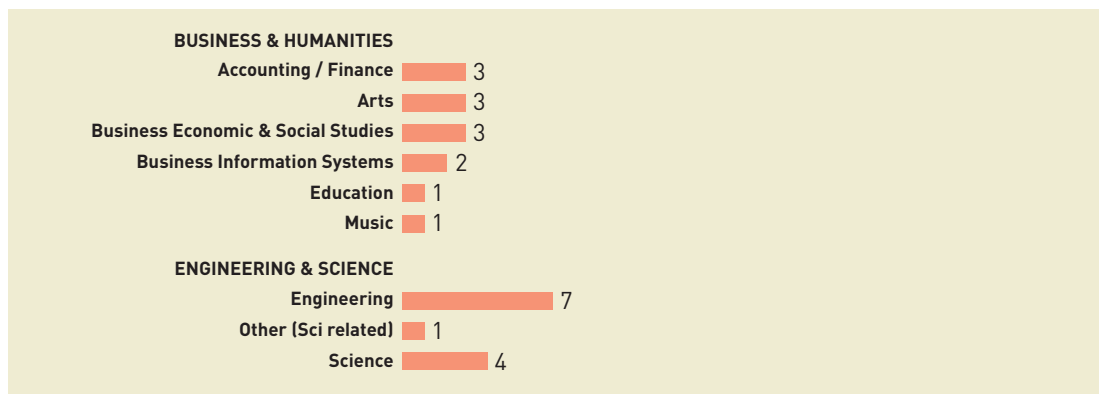


Figure 5.2

Programmes of Study Pursued by 2005 New Entrants in CIT



QUALITATIVE DATA ON PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The impact and type of disability a person has needs to be given serious consideration in terms of how realistic it is that the student will be able to work in their chosen career area. One student highlighted the difficulty of working directly with children when her condition has resulted in a depleted immune system (due to the likelihood of her picking up an infection). In saying this it is clear that some students are using their degree to progress into a related area which is of more interest to them.

Support and understanding from a student's department can have a considerable impact on a student's ability to complete their studies and achieve their educational goals. However it was highlighted that unwarranted special treatment is neither expected nor appreciated on the part of the departments. Many students are self-conscious about their disability and do not like to be targeted or singled out. The support from the DSS

provides an additional security when a student is experiencing a difficult time in their studies. However it was mentioned that additional support in approaching lecturers, particularly in first year, would be very helpful.

DISCUSSION OF PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

The combination of qualitative and quantitative data gathered in this section illustrates how a persons disability can impact on the choice of programme they study. Despite the fact that the statistical data produced correlates strongly with the size of the college and trends in the general student population, the data from the interviews highlights the considerations which students with disabilities need to make. These considerations are often unique to specific disabilities or conditions and are not evident from the overall statistical data. Overall, the students show strong motivation and generally try to enrol in programmes which are of most interest to them.

5.5 Additional Data on County of Origin

It would appear that the students county of origin and thus proximity to the third level institution does play a vital role in their choice. The majority of students with disabilities attending UCC and CIT live in the Munster region, particularly Cork City and County. These figures correlate strongly to the general student population.

QUALITATIVE DATA ON COUNTY OF ORIGIN

Adapting to a different way of life in first year of college can be the biggest challenge. While living at home maintains family support in the first year of college life, living near college can facilitate the development of a social network. Residing nearby the campus means that

social events are more accessible and the student usually shares accommodation with other students. One student drew attention to this in the interview: "... *what is most important for me is the "normal" integration with others ... it's an opportunity to break away from [stereotypes]. If college does that for me then it's served its purpose*".

DISCUSSION OF COUNTY OF ORIGIN

Results show that location plays an important role for students but is not imperative. Some students with disabilities travel to college, in this way students do not seem to be limited by their condition. Interviewees discuss the positive aspects of moving away from ones county of origin. Living nearer to the campus and perhaps sharing accommodation is a huge factor in encouraging integration.

Figure 5.3

County of Origin

| UCC | | | CIT | | |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------------|----------------------------|--------------|--------------------|
| STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES | STUDENT BODY | COUNTY OF ORIGIN | STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES | STUDENT BODY | COUNTY OF ORIGIN |
| 69% | 60% | Cork City & County | 56% | 74% | Cork City & County |
| 20% | 30% | Rest of Munster | 32% | 21% | Rest of Munster |
| 9% | 7% | Leinster | 8% | 4% | Leinster |
| 2% | 2% | Connaught | 4% | 1% | Connaught |

5.6 Additional Quantitative Data on Examination Results

In CIT first class honours were obtained by 3 SPLD students. No other disability categories received first class honours from the CIT sample. 78% of the second class honours were achieved by SPLD students while PHY and VI students each yielded 11% of the graduates with second class honours. There were no representatives for second class honours from the HI or SOI students. In UCC, Students with SPLD achieved the majority of the first and second class honours with 58% of the first class honours and 57% of the second class honours groups. HI students represent 7% of the second class honours results and MH and VI students each graduated with 3% of the second class honours group. There is a marked difference in the results of students with disabilities in UCC and CIT. It would be interesting to discover if this reflects the trends of the general student population or indeed National trends.

QUALITATIVE DATA ON FINAL EXAMINATION RESULTS

The interviews discussed the how the impact of a disability can effect academic performance and experiences in the final year of third level. Stress often increases in third level/higher education due to many factors such as larger rooms and bigger classes. Some specific examples of how a disability can effect student in third level were highlighted by the interviewees:

- Lack of concentration, in particular for students who are taking medication.
- Inability to take notes in class due to a variety of difficulties (e.g. vision/hearing impairment, physical disability, dyslexia, etc).
- Inappropriate supports / technologies (e.g. one interviewee found that changing the type of hearing aids she used had a significant impact on her level of hearing in different social situations).

- Embarrassment in using aids and devices.
- Some students with disabilities can be at a significant disadvantage due to long absences in attendance as outlined by one student:

There was “a daily routine of medication, physio and antibiotics. Also in times of bad infections hospital stays may be needed or use of intravenous antibiotics at home for a minimum of two weeks ...My second year I missed some time again but managed to do my exams and my placement. However in my final year I got ill in February and couldn't return to college to finish with my class”.

The final year of study in higher education can be stressful for any student but it can exacerbate the health conditions of many students with disabilities. Absences from college can be an obstacle for students with certain conditions. *“... from Feb of my final year I wasn't in college [due to deterioration in my health] I was allowed to skip the exams as I would not have had the material covered, ...and instead take a series of essays that the lecturers set and these then were marked for the examinations... I was really grateful that the college allowed me to finish out my course in the way I did”.*

DISCUSSION OF FINAL EXAMINATION RESULTS

While examination results achieved by students with disabilities in the two case study institutions may not be as high as those achieved by the general student population, the reasons for this became clear through the interviews. The challenges and obstacles facing students with disabilities are far greater than those facing other students, concerns such as classes missed, allocation of resources and medication can have enormous effects on the students study. In a similar vein the stress and anxiety caused by study in the final year can exacerbate health conditions of students. Students expressed their gratitude for the services made available to them such as note taking which alleviates stress in some cases.

Figure 5.4

Progression of Students with Disabilities

| | PHY | SOI | HI | VI | SPLD | MH | TOTAL |
|-----------------------|------|-------|------|------|-------|------|-------|
| UCC 1st class honours | 4.7% | 7.2% | | | 16.6% | | 28.5% |
| CIT 1st class honours | | | | | 25.0% | | 25.0% |
| UCC 2nd class honours | 9.5% | 11.0% | 4.8% | 2.4% | 40.4% | 2.4% | 70.5% |
| CIT 2nd class honours | 8.3% | | | 8.3% | 58.4% | | 75.0% |

5.7 Additional Data on Funding for Students with Disabilities

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) provides funding for educational supports for students with disabilities through the Fund for Students with Disabilities which is made available through the European Social Fund (ESF). This fund is managed by the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education (NAO). Each institution's disability service is responsible for making applications on behalf of their students with disabilities and also for the management of this funding locally. Only students in full time higher education can apply for this financial support. Some of the services and supports which students find essential are as follows:

- Note-taking
- Tutoring
- Personal assistants
- Educational assistants

- Technology (e.g. laptop, dictaphone, specialised software)
- Alternative media format service (e.g. scanned books for blind / vision impaired students)
- Scribe (for exams)
- Transport service (for students with mobility difficulties)

It is evident that significant amounts were provided to support students at third level (Figure 5.5). 75% of UCC new entrants and 68% of CIT new entrants were approved for funding at some stage during their studies.

Figure 5.6 outlines the numbers of students by disability category who were approved for funding at some point during their studies. Some students may have received funding for one year and others received funding every year.

Figure 5.5

Total Funding Received Over 4 Years for UCC & CIT (New Entrants)

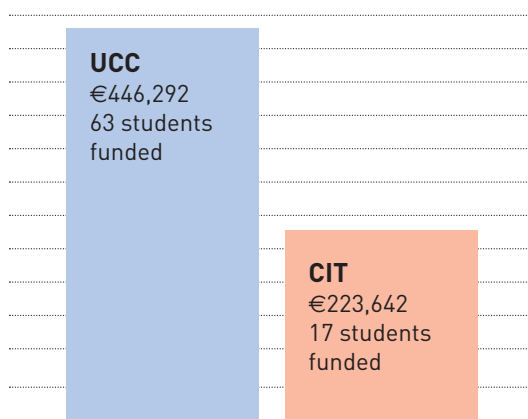


Figure 5.6

Outline of Funding Trends

| DISABILITY CATEGORY | UCC | | | CIT | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------------|------------|----------------|----------------------|------------|
| | NO. REGISTERED | NO. FUNDED (OVERALL) | % FUNDED | NO. REGISTERED | NO. FUNDED (OVERALL) | % FUNDED |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 4 | 4 | 100% | 2 | 2 | 100% |
| Mental Health Difficulties | 13 | 8 | 62% | 0 | 0 | 13% |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 13 | 10 | 77% | 5 | 3 | 13% |
| Significant Ongoing Illnesses | 13 | 10 | 77% | 1 | 0 | 0% |
| Specific Learning Difficulties | 39 | 29 | 74% | 16 | 12 | 75% |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 2 | 2 | 100% | 1 | 0 | 0% |
| Totals | 84 | 63 | 75% | 25 | 17 | 68% |

OUTLINE OF FUNDING TRENDS

As can be seen in Figure 5.6, students with Specific Learning Difficulties (SPLD) received the largest amount of funding (41%) in UCC. Many SPLD students require significant supports in first year in the form of staff time, technologies and personal supports such as notetaking. However, once these supports have been put in place students learn to adapt to a new way of learning from that of secondary school and require less funding as they move on through their studies. Students with physical difficulties (PHY) received 21% of the funding allocations. Many students in the PHY category need enormous supports in all forms and these require large funding allocations per student.

HI and VI received 15% and 13 % of the funding respectively. Interestingly however, these were the two smallest groups of students registered. The supports needed are costly; such as staff time, technologies, personal supports such as a PA and notetaking/stereotyping. The groups MH and SOI received 5% of the funding allocations each. These were however two of the larger groups registered in 1st year in 2005/06 at 16% and 15% respectively. Most supports are implemented through personal staff time or other student services within the university such as Student Health and Counselling services, U-Link Peer Support services and weekly meetings on campus with GROW.

In CIT Students with PHY difficulties received the largest funding amounts of 51% of the total. While the PHY group received over half of the funding allocations, they only amounted to 20% of the 2005 new entrants. Students in the HI and SPLD groups received similar amounts of funding at 24% and 25% respectively. While HI students received approximately one quarter of the allocations they only made up 8% of the number who registered in first year with disability services. SPLD students received 25% of the funding which accounted for 64% of new entrants.

QUALITATIVE DATA ON THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDING

‘The funding given to me for my supports has changed my life. I wouldn’t be pursuing my chosen career otherwise. I absolutely would not cope without my supports in college [if I didn’t have them] I would have dropped out’. The majority of interviewees were unaware of the source of funding and do not recall being involved in the funding process. Students interviewed did not feel that these supports created any additional barriers between them and their peers. However one student found that she was queried by her classmates on why she was receiving “special treatment” (referring to the laptop she was funded for).

DISCUSSION ON THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDING

The importance of the Fund for Students with Disabilities was highlighted through the interview process. All interviewees explained the value of their supports in maintaining their ability to partake in higher education. There are a wide variety of supports available to students through this fund and these are tailored to meet the needs of individual students. Without these supports many would not be in a position to attend college at all.

The results have shown that over 70% of students with disabilities in the case study institutions receive funding at some stage in their academic career. Some categories of disability need resources to be provided on an ongoing basis such as VI and HI whereas other categories may only seek funding in first year such as SPLD. Throughout the interviews students highlighted the value of the resources, however, the ‘special treatment’ students with disabilities receive in terms of funding allocation can sometimes draw attention to them as being different from the general student population. A more in-depth outline of the services provided by the DSS in UCC and CIT which were discussed by the interviewees can be found in Appendix 3.

5.8 Additional Data on First Destinations of Students with Disabilities

The data for students destinations were not sought from CIT, therefore the data presented here is solely from the UCC sample. These students were tracked in October/November 2009. Following up the 84 students in the sample in June 2010 provided interesting information on the first destinations of these students. Of the 84, 63 graduated (or were expected to graduate at the time of analysis) and 21 withdrew. The breakdown of the 63 expectant graduate students is as follows:

- 18 (29%) were not contactable
- 14 (22%) went on to study postgraduate courses
- 14 (22%) are still in undergraduate studies:
 - 11 will graduate in September 2010
 - 1 is still studying an undergraduate degree
 - 2 carried on to further study
- 10 (16%) are currently in employment:
 - 8 went straight into employment (4 of these are considering returning to study a postgraduate course in the coming years)
 - 2 withdrew in this last academic year (this is new information since the data was initially collected) and are now in employment
- 3 (5%) are unemployed (1 is considering returning to do a postgraduate course)
- 4 (6%) are taking time out due to health issues (1 is considering returning to do a postgraduate course)

6 CONCLUSION OF CASE STUDY FINDINGS

The benefits of conducting a more detailed case study of access, retention and success of students with disabilities are plenty. It is clear from the results that the data gathered from the case study institutions illuminates discrepancies in the National data. Information gathered from the case study institutions has questioned the accuracy and reliability of some cross-institutional data. For instance; in contrast to the findings from the National study it emerged that the second year of the case study institutions showed the highest withdrawal rate. This could be due to the fact that there was more detailed information available from these institutions and so we were able to track students who may have re-registered in 2006/07 but withdrawn very early in this year.

Case study data has also correlated with National findings in terms of access by disability category and grades. For example in both case study institutions the SPLD category has the highest participation and VI category has the lowest. The majority of students with disabilities in each of these institutions come from Cork City / County. Thus correlating strongly with the National findings that the majority of students with disabilities enrol in third level institutions close to their family home or county of origin.

What also emerged from the case study was a valuable explanation of the trends which have been identified nation wide, by students with disabilities themselves. This was a major goal of this project from initiation and some interesting and insightful conclusions can be drawn from the interviews. The following experiences were discussed in terms of access, retention and success. The first year of a student's studies can be a major challenge in how they adapt to college life. The negative impact of a disability increases in higher education due to factors such as larger rooms, bigger classes, and inappropriate technologies. Getting involved in clubs and societies is a must in order to develop a social network in third level but this can be difficult in terms of access or resources. Flexibility of institutions and departments of study was highlighted as an important factor in the progression of students with disabilities. However, looking back on their studies, students found that they would not do anything differently. Their advice is to get the supports early and make the college experience an enjoyable one.

7 CONCLUSION

The task undertaken in this report was to investigate the trends happening across the country in relation to access, retention and success of students with disabilities. The dearth of information available on these aspects of education for students with disabilities was a driving force in this research and some significant data has been produced to tackle this dearth. The results illustrated will be invaluable to the National Access Office, educational institutions in meeting targets and in understanding the access, retention and success rates of students with disabilities. The report also highlights some areas which need further research such as the withdrawal of students with disabilities. While this report provides an overview of withdrawal rates across nine HEIs and identifies trends, a more detailed report would provide institutions with information which will enable them to counteract some of the withdrawals of new entrants thus increasing retention rates.

Access to higher education is becoming more inclusive for students with disabilities. The data illustrated in this report emphasises the success of students with disabilities across the country and discusses the challenges they face in third level. An increase in the numbers of students with disabilities entering higher education institutions creates a driving force for cultural and structural change that embraces programme design, provision of materials, more flexible assessment and accessible buildings. Departments, institutions and policy makers must build on this knowledge and continue to expand the understanding, integration and resources for students with disabilities in third level.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Recommendations of Interviewees from UCC and CIT

IMPROVE INFRASTRUCTURAL RESOURCES AND TIMETABLING

While locations of departments is not something that can be controlled it was emphasised as being a significant obstacle in the interviews. Some lecture venues could be a 10 or 20 minute walk for a person with full mobility. Students who have restricted mobility can never manage this type of distance if one lecture immediately follows another. “Although it may just mean a brisk walk for a “normal” person it may mean missing the lecture for someone like me or someone in a wheelchair etc”. Accessibility of buildings is also an immense difficulty highlighted by interviewees. Many buildings are old, in UCC in particular, and have been adapted in so far as possible. Despite this, issues still present themselves as one student explained; “The geography building in UCC has a ramp up to the door but as soon as you go inside the door you have to get down steps. This is the case in many buildings around campus. I feel for other DSS users [with regards to these accessibility issues]”.

INCREASE COMMUNICATION OF SERVICES ON OFFER

Positive advertising of the institutions and the disability services available should be invested in. Second level students need to be encouraged to progress to third level, as one student so appropriately phrased this: “There are so many professional opportunities in life, and a hearing/visual impairment, or any disability should never be considered a barrier to those opportunities... The supports are there waiting for you. Grab them and use them to help you reach your goal!” Many students indicated that greater information on funding or services opportunities should be circulated in order to initially encourage participation and subsequently to maintain retention.

8.2 Recommendation at an Institutional Level

- Gain consent of students for use of non-personal statistical data in reports. This could be done on initial assessment and registration of the student with the disability support service (e.g. a tick box on the registration form). Absence of consent from students tracked in this research meant that individual courses / programmes had to be merged under faculties / colleges of study in order to obscure students who were at risk of being identified due to low numbers participating in some programmes. Tracking individual programmes would have highlighted the areas of study where students with disabilities are excelling / struggling.

8.3 Further Research is Recommended in the Following Areas

- The case study could be used as a model for more in-depth cross institutional research on similar issues.
- Reasons for withdrawal rates in first year.
- Why withdrawals are highest in the category of Mental Health Difficulties (MH), especially given the fact that MH appears to have one of the lowest access levels nationally.
- First destinations of all graduates with disabilities of 2005 across the nine participating HEIs.
- Destinations of those students from the 2005 sample who withdrew from their studies across the nine participating HEIs.

8.4 Other Recommendations

- Compare the access, retention, and success of students with disabilities in Higher Education Institutions in Ireland with other countries.
- Continue tracking students with disabilities to increase the level of information available on challenges faced by different and emerging disability categories such as students with Aspergers.

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APPENDIX 1: DEFINITIONS OF ACCESS, PARTICIPATION, RETENTION AND SUCCESS FOR UCC

Access

Access in this report is seen as a measure of whether students with disabilities are able to gain entry into university study. Access shows the percentage of the students with disabilities commencing study with UCC in the 2005/06 academic year.

Retention

Retention is a measure of whether students who commence study at UCC continue with their studies. Retention is calculated by comparing the number of students re-enrolling in a given year with the number of students who were

enrolled in the previous year. This is calculated for UCC by comparing the numbers of students with disabilities who enrolled in 1st year in 2005/06 with the number who re-registered in 2006/07. The UCC retention percentage includes students who repeated 1st year or who transferred into another course.

Success

Success is a measure of whether students are passing in their course of study. Success is taken to include those students who passed their final year examinations, taking into account the summer and autumn exam results.

APPENDIX 2:
COMPLETE TABLE
FOR THE OVERALL
RETENTION RATES
OF DISABILITY
CATEGORIES

Table 4.2A
Overall Undergraduate Retention / Expected Success Rates of Disability Categories

| DISABILITY CATEGORY | CIT | | UCC | | AIT | | DIT | | DCU | | NUIG | | NUIM | | IT Tallaght | | Trinity | | Overall | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|--------------------|----------|-----|-----|-------|
| | NUMBER RETAINED | RETEN. % | NUMBER RETAINED | RETEN. % | NUMBER RETAINED | RETEN. % | NUMBER RETAINED | RETEN. % | NUMBER RETAINED | RETEN. % | NUMBER RETAINED | RETEN. % | NUMBER RETAINED | RETEN. % | NUMBER RETAINED | RETEN. % | NUMBER RETAINED | RETEN. % | NUMBER RETAINED | RETEN. % | | | |
| Physical/Mobility Difficulties | 5 | 80% | 13 | 77% | 4 | 3 | 5 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 75% | 6 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 100% | 43 | 31 | 72% |
| Significant Ongoing Illness | 1 | 100% | 13 | 85% | 4 | 2 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 4 | 13 | 10 | 77% | 1 | 1 | 11 | 11 | 100% | 58 | 50 | 86% |
| Deaf/Hard of Hearing | 2 | 100% | 4 | 75% | 2 | 1 | 8 | 8 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 100% | 2 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 75% | 26 | 22 | 85% |
| Blind/Vision Impaired | 1 | 100% | 2 | 50% | 0 | 0 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 100% | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 100% | 13 | 12 | 92% |
| Specific Learning Difficulty | 16 | 75% | 39 | 87% | 11 | 5 | 116 | 110 | 11 | 11 | 25 | 24 | 11 | 10 | 91% | 6 | 4 | 34 | 32 | 94% | 269 | 242 | 90% |
| Mental Health Difficulty | 0 | 0% | 13 | 31% | 1 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 75% | 0 | 0 | 4 | 3 | 75% | 27 | 15 | 56% |
| Other: Speech, Voice | | | | | | | 2 | 2 | | | | | | | | | | | | | 2 | 2 | 100% |
| Total | 25 | 20 | 84 | 63 | 22 | 12 | 144 | 136 | 20 | 20 | 34 | 32 | 35 | 29 | | 16 | 8 | 58 | 54 | | 438 | 374 | 85.4% |

APPENDIX 3: SERVICES PROVIDED BY DSS IN UCC AND CIT DISCUSSED BY INTERVIEWEES

Transport

For students with mobility difficulties (i.e. physical and vision impaired students) the availability of a transport service is their life line to taking part in higher/third level education. UCC in particular has a campus which is very widely spread and there are often long distances between lecture venues. The on-campus bus provides an essential service to these students.

Technology

In both UCC and CIT, technological supports such as laptops and specialised software converters, loop systems and Dictaphones provide students with the ability to work from home. This is particularly important for students with ongoing illnesses, physical/mobility difficulties and vision impairments. These types of disabilities restrict students from commuting and spending long hours in the college in order to complete course work.

Notetaking is provided in UCC and CIT and is an essential service for many students, especially if classes are large and facilities such as Blackboard are not utilised.

Blackboard has the capability of replacing this system of notetaking and putting students with disabilities on an equal footing with their peers. However this system is very ad hoc at present as some lectures put up very detailed notes, others do not make their notes available at all and others only upload very basic material. Students with many different categories of disabilities avail of notetaking to combat different difficulties they are experiencing.

Exam

In both UCC and CIT exam support provides students with alternative arrangements such as a scribe/laptop/separate room with an invigilator. Again students avail of this service for a variety of reasons. In UCC exam support is provided through the DSS in conjunction with the Examinations Office. In CIT this service is provided by the Examinations Office in conjunction with the Disability Support Service.

About Pathways to Education

Pathways to Education is a partnership and joint access initiative between UCC and CIT funded through the Strategic Innovation Fund – Cycle 2. It has the specific aim of widening participation and increasing access to higher education. It builds upon the work already undertaken by the Access offices of UCC and CIT and work carried out in the wider body of each institution.

About UCC and CIT

University College Cork

Founded in 1845 UCC is one of the oldest institutes of higher learning in Ireland. The University has a current enrolment of almost 12,600 undergraduate students and some 3,600 at postgraduate level. There are 1,000 visiting students and almost 2,000 participating in Adult Education courses. The University has four constituent colleges. The aim of the Access service in UCC is to broaden the participation of under-represented groups so that UCC has a more inclusive and a more diverse student body that reflects Irish society at large.

Cork Institute of Technology

CIT comprises of two constituent Faculties and three constituent Colleges. CIT currently has in the region of 12,000 registered students with approximately 2,000 new entries year on year. Of these approximately 6,000 are full-time and the remaining are part-time. The CIT Access Service is committed to widening participation, increasing access and supporting positive educational outcomes for under-represented groups.



This research report is published as part of the Pathways to Education Project, which is funded under the HEA's Strategic Innovation Fund – Cycle 2

