
STUDENTS WHO PROGRESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION STEM DEGREES FROM THE IRISH FURTHER EDUCATION SECTOR

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ABSTRACT

In this research we analyse Irish Further Education graduates who progress to Higher Education STEM degrees. In particular we will focus on their level of mathematical preparedness for such a progression. An overview of the Irish Further Education system is presented and comparison is made with several over European systems. We present an analysis of the Irish Further Education sector, how mathematics is taught and assessed in the sector, and existing progression pathways from this sector into HE STEM degrees. Data has been collected from Further Education students aiming to progress to Higher Education, in addition to data from students aiming to make similar progressions from the secondary school sector. A comparison is made between the academic performance of FE graduates relative to other entrants to HE STEM degrees. A student survey consisting of three main parts has been devised. The first part collects demographic information for profile-building, the second part will contain the Indiana Belief Scales Instrument (Stage & Kloosterman, 1992), a questionnaire which has been used in Mathematics Education research internationally to assess students' 'beliefs' around mathematics, and finally the survey will contain a short diagnostic test of key mathematical skills, designed for the specific purpose of this research. Full details of the student survey will be presented along with our initial findings.

Keywords Maths Education · Pathways · Maths Education

References

- [1] Stage & Kloostermann., Measuring beliefs about mathematical problem solving, *School Sciences Mathematics* 92: 3, 1992.

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