**Identifying and helping “challenging” students:**

**Quantitative and exploratory qualitative approaches**

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**QUANTITATIVE AND EXPLORATORY QUALITATIVE APPROACHES**

ABSTRACT

Ireland, like the rest of the Western world, has seen steadily increasing third-level education participation rates and so a greater concentration on student motivation and learning styles in order to inform teaching and examining methodologies with many non-traditional and challenging students. To address these issues, this paper describes cross-sectional and longitudinal research, since 2011, into 3rd level students in an Irish sub-university college. Students’ study and academic practice was examined in personal and group interviews plus in surveys and psychometric questionnaires. Results suggest effective strategies colleges can use to inform instructor/lecturer approaches and to inspire student effort.