

IAUCC Strategic Plan 2009 - 2013



**IAUCC Executive Review
12th May 2011**

February, 2011

Irish Association of University and College Counsellors (IAUCC) Strategic Plan 2009 – 2013

Introduction

The IAUCC was launched in November 1994. The purpose of the Association is to provide a professional association to represent and support the Student Counselling profession within Higher Education Institutions in Ireland. Since then the Association has grown in significance and has an approximate membership of seventy in 2009.

The Association holds an annual conference and regular training events. It also offers professional support and best practice guidelines for Student Counselling services in Higher Education institutions in Ireland.

Current Context

The IAUCC has traditionally focused its work on the area of annual conferencing, training events professional support and best practice guidelines. In order to review this focus the IAUCC Executive held a series of meetings during 2008-2009 with a renewed vision and aim to develop a Strategic Plan for the Association covering the next four years.

The Executive decided that it was timely and necessary to review the main activities and agree key priorities for the purpose of enhancing and further developing the Association. It was agreed that this approach required the endorsement and support of the wider membership. A membership survey was carried out in the summer of 2009. Following this it was agreed at the Annual Conference 2009 that a draft Strategic Plan would be put to the membership for comment and feedback in 2010.

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Membership Survey

The survey provided a helpful profile of the membership. It highlighted the members' attitude to the IAUCC and its role. The majority supported propositions that the IAUCC:

- *gives me a sense of professional belonging*
- *is part of my professional identity*
- *cares about my professional development*
- *is a thriving organisation*
- *is meeting my needs*

There was consistent and clear **disagreement** with the alternative proposition that the:

- *IAUCC is less relevant than it used to be*

Respondents were asked to rank a number of IAUCC activities in order of importance.

The most highly valued activities were ranked as follows:

- *Support and networking*
- *Professional development*
- *Training events*
- *Promotion of Student Counselling*
- *Production of Best Practice Guidelines*
- *Advice and mentoring*

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The activities which scored the lowest were the production of National Statistics and the development of the IAUCC website. There are a number of ways of interpreting this. The production of statistics and developing the website imply a more public role. Historically the Executive, with notable exceptions, has focused on other key activities. Therefore it is not surprising that they are less valued by the membership. Equally it could be argued that the Executive has not prioritised these areas, precisely because they have not felt that the membership wanted them to. The full text of the Membership Survey is available in Appendix One of this document.

IAUCC Structure

During the process of drawing up a framework for the Strategic Plan the legal and constitutional status of the IAUCC was discussed. After long deliberation it was agreed that the present, relatively informal structure was appropriate to the current functions of the Association. If IAUCC wishes to have a more 'public' face, then it may need to consider a change in structure. This may be facilitated by having a public relations spokesperson and a clear constitutional and legal status.

Also, if we decide to take on a more public role, for example the generation and publication of national statistics about developments and trends in Student Counselling, then a commitment from all members will be required to meet this aim on an annual basis.

In so doing an acknowledgment of the concerns and barriers to undertaking this commitment may need to be addressed. Barriers may include: commitment and agreement across the sector, time constraints and staffing resources within services, a lack of consistency in database systems and a fear as to how such statistics may be publicised and interpreted.

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Structure of the Executive

The Executive comprises of named representatives from the membership who undertake key tasks and activities for the operation and organisation of the Association. The structure of the Executive holds the normal officers such as Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary as well as a number of active committee members. The Executive committee is nominated and voted in by the membership at the AGM. The committee meets four times a year and in addition over the last three years have undertaken to consult on issues via phone conferencing bi-weekly. Executive positions have traditionally been held for a four-year period. Relevant reports are given annually at conference keeping the membership abreast with proceedings and actions that have occurred throughout the previous year. The Executive takes on the role of organising training and conference events. In addition one of its key objectives has been to provide and create a supportive network for the membership as a whole.

One of the aims of this Strategic Plan is to review the current structure of the Executive and identify new ways of enhancing the Association which will best meet the needs of the membership. (Please refer to Appendix Two for list of Executive Members 2010)

Strategic Framework

The Strategic Plan espouses the following three aims:

- **Facilitate and promote the development of the Association**
- **Increase awareness of the value of Student Counselling in Higher Education**
- **Assist Student Counselling Services to meet their aims regarding student mental health and well-being, including retention, progression and course completion**

A number of objectives have been identified under each aim with corresponding performance indicators outlined. The Strategic Plan is due for launch at the IAUCC Annual Conference in June 2010. Following this the Executive will be tasked with delivering the Strategic Plan within an agreed timeframe.

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Contextual Factors

Alongside internal organisational processes, the external economic context altered radically in 2009. The effect of reduced funding has impacted throughout the sector. For Counselling Services this resulted in budget cuts with further reductions anticipated. Other realities include increased student numbers and greater financial challenges leading to higher levels of student stress. This leads to a greater demand for services, which in turn will have to be provided with fewer resources. In this context the IAUCC may have to consider whether we should change our existing emphasis and play more of an advocacy and public promotion of the student counselling role. (Please see Appendix Three for Strategic Challenges and Contextual Factors)

Priorities

The Executive at their meeting in January 2010 agreed to prioritise five of the objectives outlined in the Strategic Plan 2009-2013 document. These are:

Priority 1

Strategic Aim One - Objective Two: Training and Sharing of Effective Practice

- Annual Conference and twice yearly training events
- One annual training event for Counselling Service Administrative Staff
- Certificates of Attendance for all training events and Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Timescale: Ongoing annually

Priority 2

Strategic Aim Two - Objective One: Support Student Counselling Services to Influence Policy Makers Locally and Nationally

- Generate Annual Statistics
- Review methodology used for the collection and generation of Annual Statistics
- Agree standard for categorization
- Annual Statistics to reflect qualitative aspect and outcomes

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- Seek agreement across the sector between Heads of Services for the collection and generation of annual statistics
- Timescale:** Ongoing annually

Priority 3

Strategic Aim Two - Objective Two: Publicise the work of Student Counselling Services and the role of IAUCC, with particular reference to developing and maintaining the website.

- Establish a management structure to maintain the development and maintenance of the website. Offering a placement or project opportunity to a student may be a means of achieving this aim

Timescale: Web editor and new management structure to be nominated and decided on over the next twelve months

Priority 4

Strategic Aim Two - Objective One: Support Student counselling Services to Influence Policy Makers Locally and Nationally

- Review and update all IAUCC documents in relation to best practice

Documents to include:

- Constitution
- Code of Ethics
- Practice Protocols and Policies
- Guidelines for Student Placement

Timescale: Ongoing over next two years reviewing one document per term.

Progress Review

A progress report will be given at the annual IAUCC Conference by the Executive Committee.

Strategic Framework 2010/2013

VISION

To have well resourced and effective Counselling Services in all Higher Education (HE) Institutions in Ireland, which support students in achieving their personal and learning goals.

CORE PURPOSE

To provide a professional framework to support the provision of high quality counselling services for students in a diverse environment.

We will realise our vision through the following strategic aims

<p>1. Facilitate and promote the development of the Association</p>	<p>2. Increase awareness of the value of Student Counselling in Higher Education</p>	<p>3. Assist Student Counselling services to meet their aims regarding student mental health and wellbeing; including retention, progression, and course completion</p>
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Our objectives are:

<p>1.1 Membership development</p>	<p>2.1 Support Student Counselling Services to influence policy makers locally and nationally</p>	<p>3.1 Collaborate in ongoing development of programmes and resources for supporting student wellbeing.</p>
<p>1.2 Training and sharing of effective practice</p>	<p>2.2 Publicise the work of Student Counselling Services and the role of IAUCC, with particular reference to developing and maintaining the website</p>	<p>3.2 Collect and collate service experiences, knowledge and learning to refine practice.</p>
<p>1.3 Maintain and develop links with relevant groups and other agencies</p>	<p>2.3 Support members with regard to professional issues.</p>	

Aim 1: Facilitate and promote the development of the Association

OBJECTIVE 1	ACTIVITY AREA	TARGET GROUP	OUTCOME	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	AUDIT TRAIL
1.1 Membership Development	1.1.1 Welcome new members and liaise with inactive members	1.1.1 New Members	1.1.1. Enhanced professional identity and involvement Increased sense of inclusion	1.1.1 New and lapsed members contacted	1.1.1. Membership Secretary Ongoing
	1.1.2 Increase membership of and participation within the Association	1.1.2 Membership	1.1.2. Decrease isolation for single posts holders	1.1.2 Regular updated membership list	1.1.2 Membership Secretary Annually
	1.1.3 Offer a professional supportive network to membership	1.1.3 Membership	1.1.3 Accurate and up-to-date information on membership	1.1.3 Training/Annual Conference/Peer Support Network	1.1.3 Executive Ongoing

Aim 1: Facilitate and promote the development of the Association

OBJECTIVE 2	ACTIVITY AREA	TARGET GROUP	OUTCOME	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	AUDIT TRAIL
1.2 Training and Sharing of Effective Practice	1.2.1 Annual Conference and Training Events	1.2.1 Membership	1.2.1. Increased learning and engagement with events	1.2.1 Arrange and record proceedings Store in archive	1.2.1 Executive Ongoing
	1.2.2 Continuing Professional Development Certificates	1.2.2 Membership	1.2.2 Certificates available for professional bodies	1.2.2 Issue Certificates	1.2.2 Executive Ongoing
	1.2.3 Training – Administrative Staff	1.2.3 Admin support staff	1.2.3 Enhanced experience for students attending services nationally	1.2.3 Professional training day	1.2.3 Executive and Membership Annually
	1.2.4. Regional mentoring network	1.2.4 Membership	1.2.4. Increased inclusion at regional and national level	1.2.4. Peer support meetings (use Western Regional Group model)	1.2.4. Membership: One Regional Meeting per Academic Term

Aim 1: Facilitate and promote the development of the Association

OBJECTIVE 3	ACTIVITY AREA	TARGET GROUP	OUTCOME	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	AUDIT TRAIL
1.3 Maintain and Develop links with relevant Groups and other Agencies.	1.3.1 Maintain and strengthen relationship with IHUCCS	1.3.1. Executive, Membership IHUCCS	1.3.1. Increased sharing of information	1.3.1 Reports to AGM	1.3.1 IHUCCS Representative on IAUCC Executive Annually
	1.3.2 Links with Professional Bodies:	1.3.2 Executive membership Professional Bodies e.g.AUCC; IACP; PSI.	1.3.2 Professional Growth Awareness Sharing of Resources	1.3.2 Increase communication with professional bodies	1.3.2 Executive Ongoing

Aim 2: Increase awareness of the value of Student Counselling in Higher Education

OBJECTIVE 1	ACTIVITY AREA	TARGET GROUP	OUTCOME	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	AUDIT TRAIL
2.1 Support Student Counselling Services to influence Policy Makers locally and nationally	2.1.1 Generate Annual Statistics	2.1.1. IAUCC Executive IHUCCS Membership	2.1.1. Production of annual statistics for the purpose of reporting on local and national trends and activities within student counselling	2.1.1. Ongoing consultation with IHUCCS regarding the collection of annual statistics. Report on national statistics at AGM	2.1.1 Executive Annually
	2.1.2. Agree Standard for Categorisation	2.1.2 IAUCC Executive and IHUCCS	2.1.2. Uniform Standardisation system for annual reporting of data from Student Counselling Services nationally	2.1.2. AUCC categories agreed upon and in use since 19 th February 2009.	2.1.2 Executive Ongoing
	2.1.3. Review and update relevant IAUCC documents	2.1.3 IAUCC Executive	2.1.3 Inform the work and nature of Student Counselling nationally	2.1.3 Updated documents ratified at AGM	2.1.3 Executive Ongoing

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Aim 2: Increase awareness of the value of Student Counselling in Higher Education

OBJECTIVE 2	ACTIVITY AREA	TARGET GROUP	OUTCOME	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	AUDIT TRAIL
2.2. Publicise the work of Student Counselling services and the role of IAUCC, with particular reference to developing and maintaining the website	2.2.1 Develop and maintain the IAUCC Website	2.2.1 Membership Students and Public	2.2.1 Promote and enhance image of IAUCC	2.2.1 Appoint Web editor	2.2.1 Web Editor Ongoing
	2.2.2 Highlight role of IAUCC	2.2.2 Membership Institutions and Public	2.2.2 Increased awareness of work of IAUCC and Student Services	2.2.2 Appoint PR for IAUCC Press Releases AGM/Annual Conference	2.2.2 PR Ongoing

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Aim 2: Increase awareness of the value of Student Counselling in Higher Education

OBJECTIVE 3	ACTIVITY AREA	TARGET GROUP	OUTCOME	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	AUDIT TRAIL
2.3 Support members with regard to professional issues.	2.3.1 Promote and demonstrate the role of counselling in H.E institutions: ie contribution to recruitment and retention of students	2.3.1 H.E. Institutions	2.3.1 Acknowledge the importance and relevance of student counselling in each institution	2.3.1 Collate annual reports from services nationally	2.3.1 Members and Executive Ongoing
	2.3.2 Advocate on behalf of Student Counselling profession with respect to its growth, sustainability and development	2.3.2 IAUCC Executive	2.3.2 Increased awareness of the contribution of Student Counselling Services in H.E sector	2.3.2 Policy statements, best practice guidelines. Collate supervision, professional training nationally. Record meetings	2.3.2 Executive Ongoing
	2.3.3 Maintain communication among members through e-mail, phone and face to face contact	2.3.3 Membership	2.3.3 Provide membership with supportive professional network	2.3.3 Confidential record of all issues arising	2.3.3. Executive Ongoing

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Aim 3: Assist Student Counselling services to meet their aims regarding student mental health and wellbeing; including retention, progression, and course completion.

OBJECTIVE 1	ACTIVITY AREA	TARGET GROUP	OUTCOME	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	AUDIT TRAIL
<p>3.1 Collaborate in ongoing development of programmes and resources for supporting student wellbeing</p>	<p>3.1.1 Researching, developing and sharing relevant therapeutic and psycho-educational materials stored and available in an online archive</p>	<p>3.1.1 Students Institutions Membership</p>	<p>3.1.1 Increased resources, programmes and intervention tools for the benefit of student wellbeing and learning</p>	<p>3.1.1 Availability of resources ie Mymindmatters.ie</p>	<p>3.1.1 Ongoing Executive Working groups Colleges</p>

Aim 3: Assist Student Counselling services to meet their aims regarding student mental health and wellbeing; including retention, progression, and course completion.

OBJECTIVE 2	ACTIVITY AREA	TARGET GROUP	OUTCOME	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	AUDIT TRAIL
<p>3.2. Collect and collate service experiences, knowledge and learning to refine practice</p>	<p>3.2.1 Discussion boards, conferencing, training and written submissions including policy documents</p>	<p>3.2.1 Membership</p>	<p>3.2.1 Shared learning</p>	<p>3.2.1 Annual survey conducted by Executive targeting specific themes (clinical issues, e.g., suicide risk assessment; case management e.g., waiting list management)</p>	<p>3.2.1 Results to be presented at Annual Conference Available in an online archive</p>

Appendices

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Appendix One Membership Survey

IAUCC Membership Survey 2009 Results

Compiled by
Chuck Rashleigh
Student Counselling Service
Trinity College Dublin

September 2009

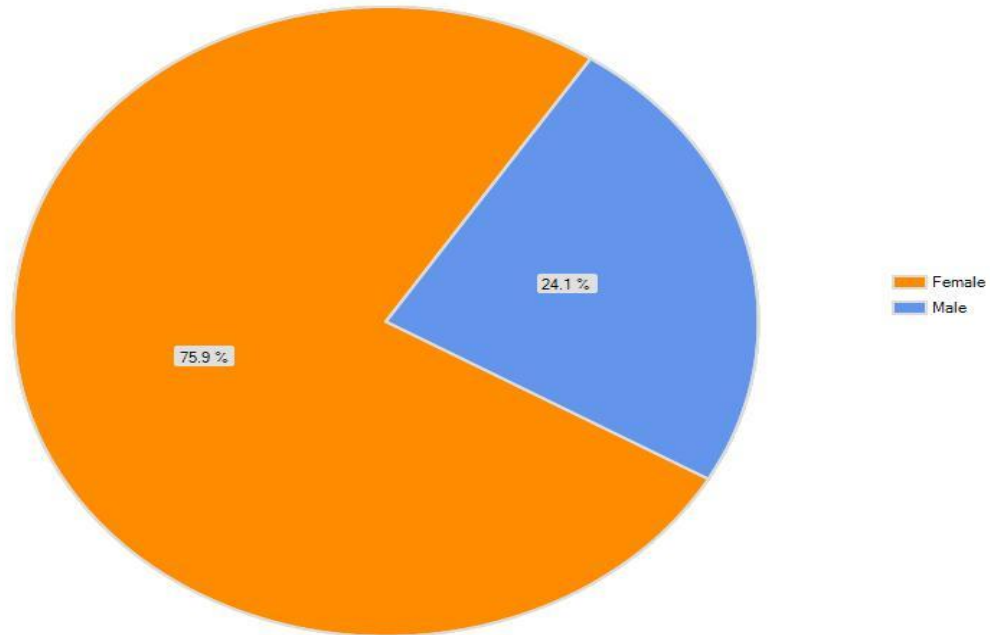
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Survey Background: The IAUCC Executive Committee surveyed the membership at the Annual Summer Conference 2009 regarding member demographics, working patterns, and attitudes towards the association.

Paper surveys were distributed to all conference participants and input by hand into web-based survey software, Surveymonkey.com.

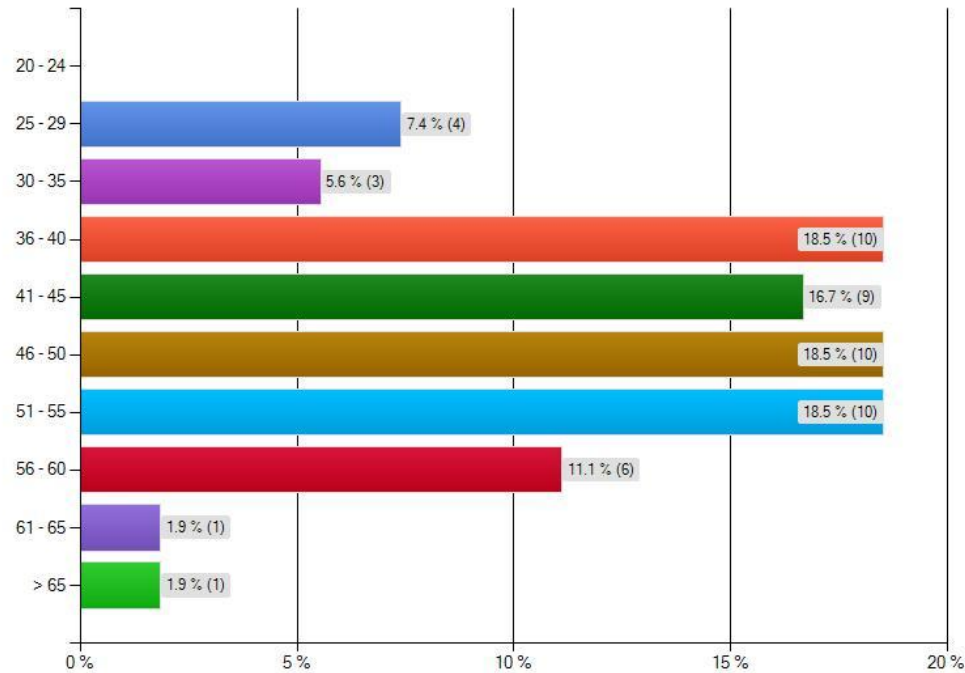
54 surveys were collected, with a total of 50 completed in full. The results are summarized below.

Gender:



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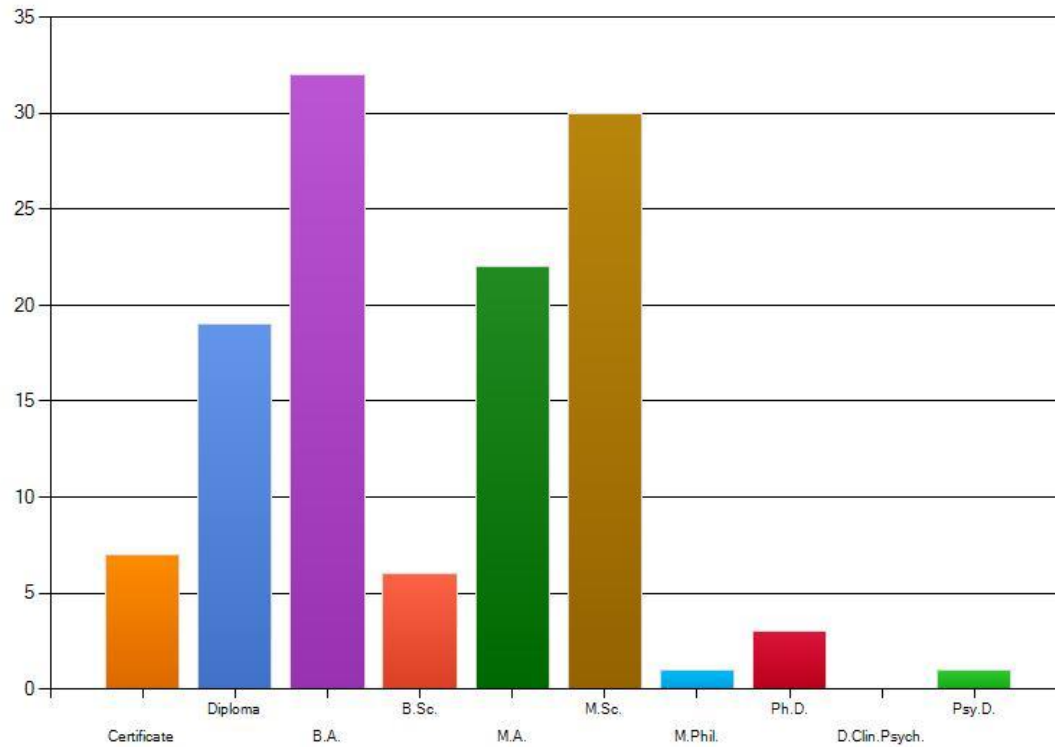
Age Range:



Not surprisingly, the majority of members are between the ages of 36 – 56 years. This majority is nearly evenly distributed across ranges.

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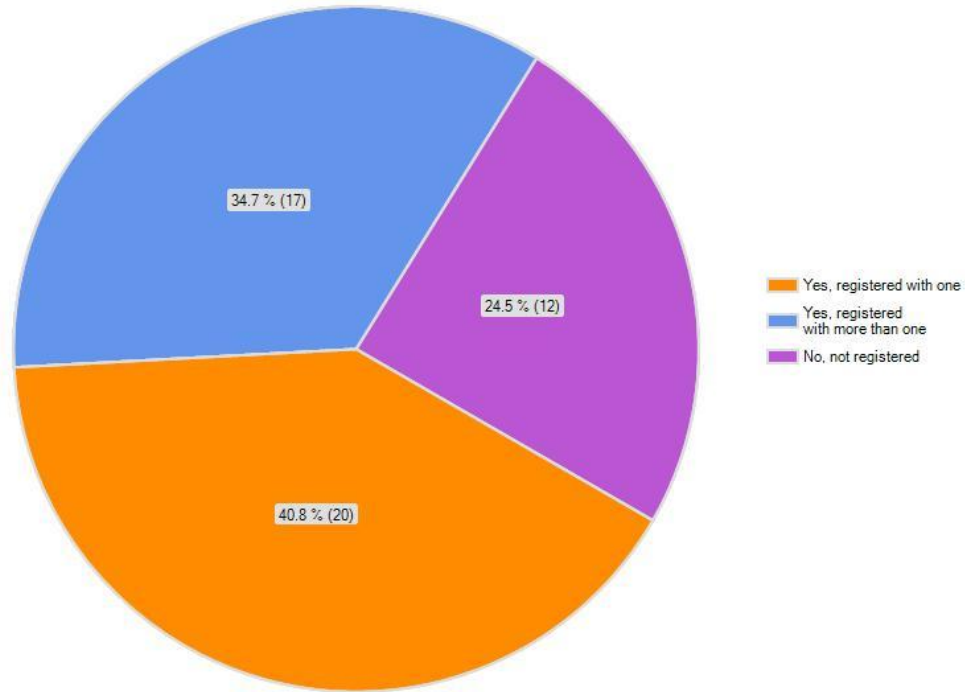
Types of qualifications you have (tick all that apply):



Types of degrees are not mutually exclusive. 55% of responding members are qualified to Masters Level or higher.

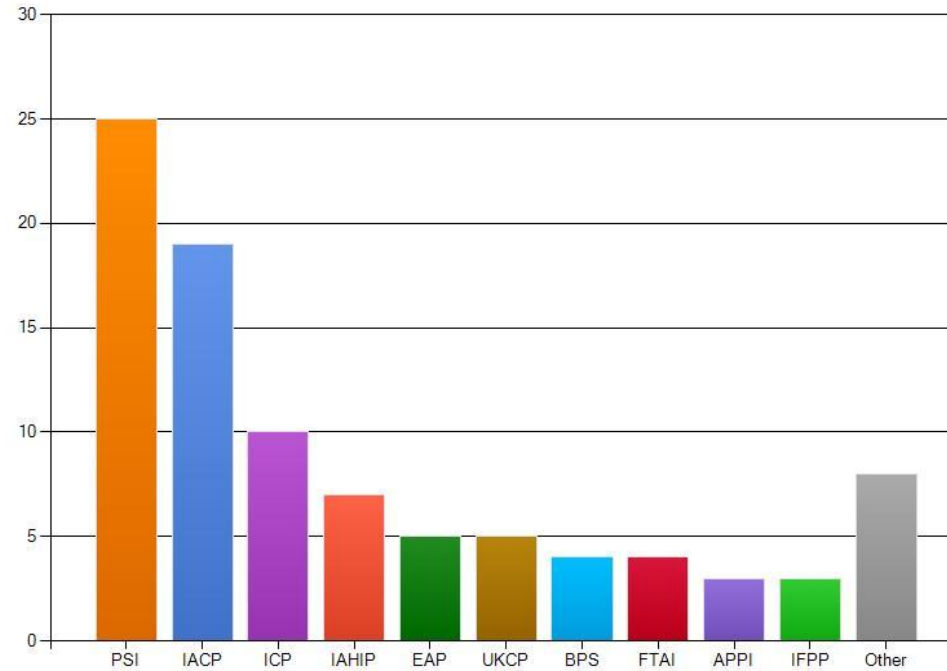
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Are you registered (accredited) with a professional body?



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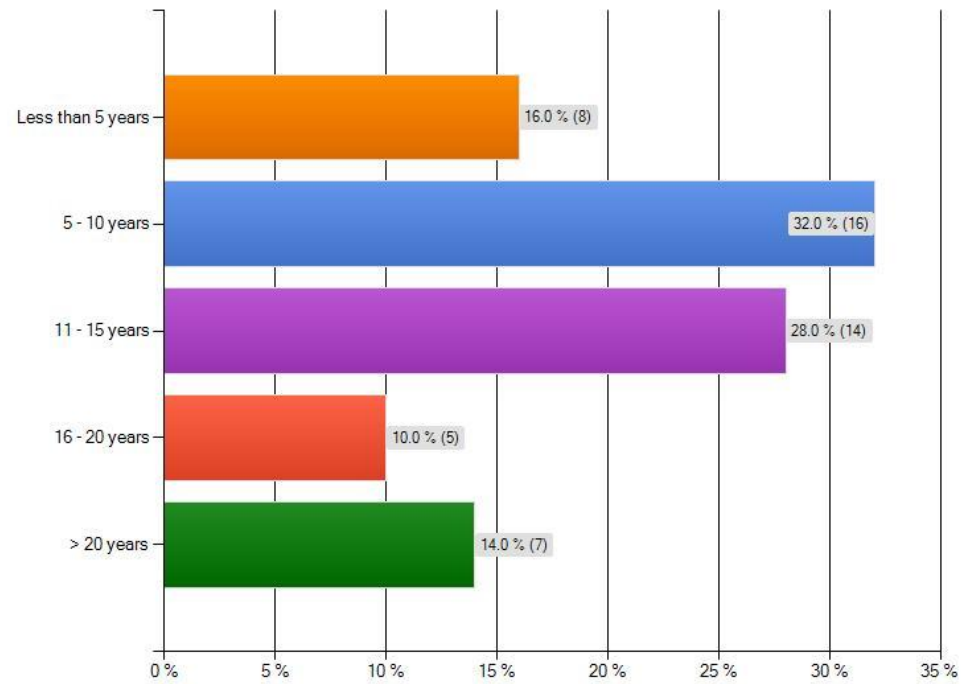
Your professional affiliations (tick all that apply)



The above 2 figures show that 75% of members are registered with a professional body, most being affiliated with the Psychological Society of Ireland and the Irish Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists. These categories are not mutually exclusive however, as some members are affiliated with more than 1 body.

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How long have you been professionally qualified?



Years of experience in Student Counselling Services

Mean = 6.7 yrs, Standard Deviation = 5.4 yrs.

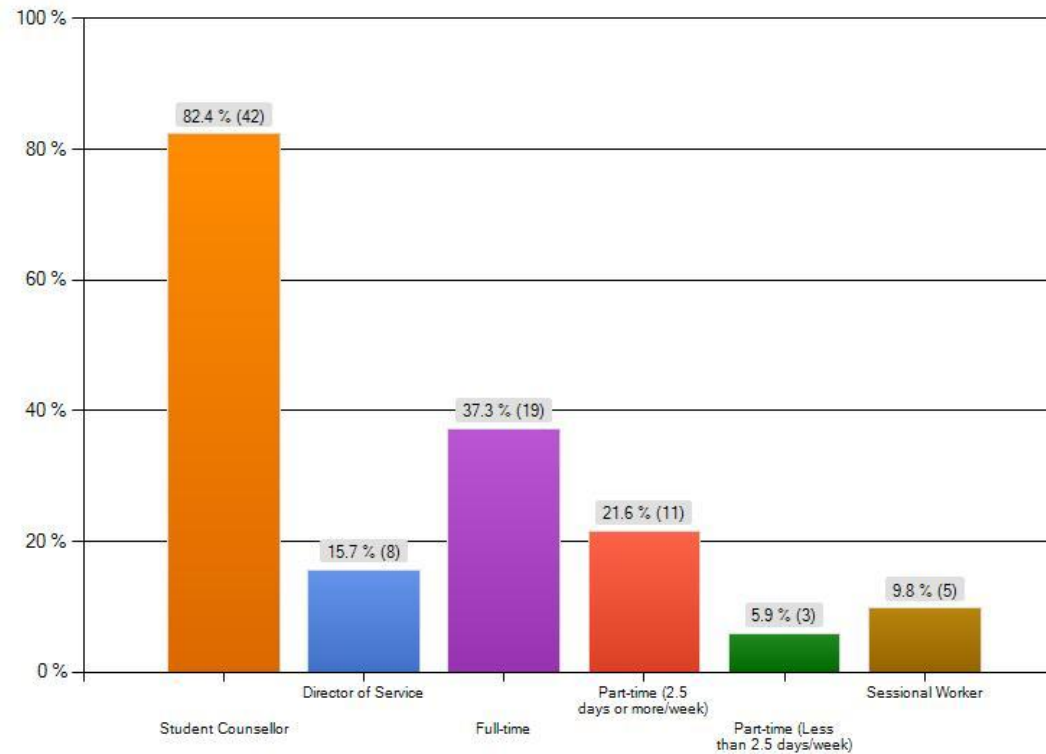
Max = 23 yrs, Min = 0.5 yrs

50% work in Universities, 50% in I.T.'s

The above two figures show that 60% of members have been professionally qualified for between 5 – 15 years, with a quarter of members being qualified 16 years or more. There was a significant spread of experience in the field of student counselling, with 6.7 years being the average, with a comparably large standard deviation of over 5 years.

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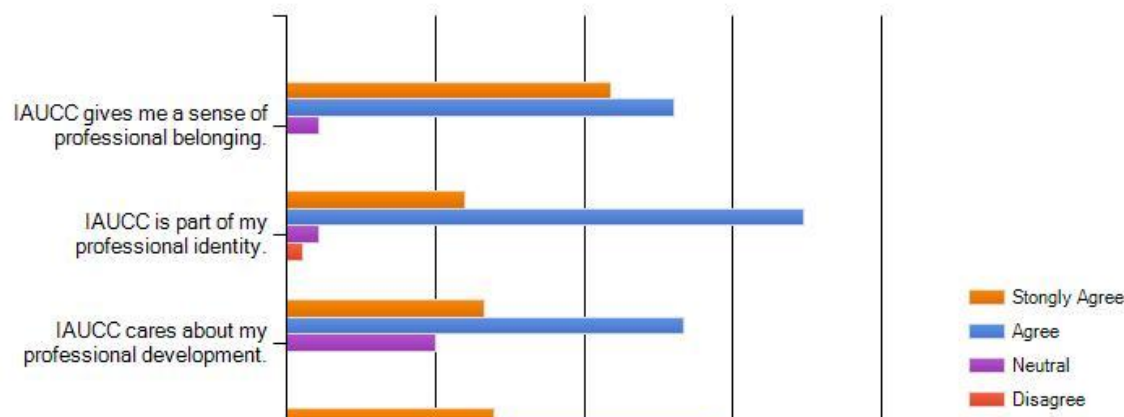
My working role is (tick as many as apply):



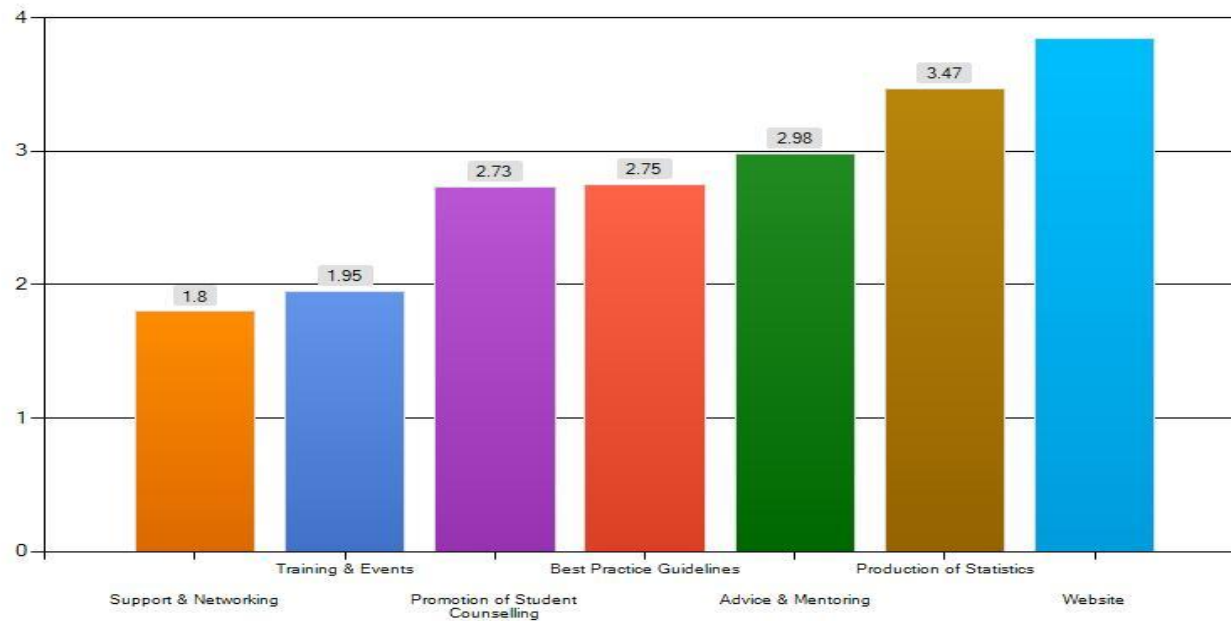
Results from this question reveal that 37% of members responding are either part-time employees or sessional workers. An equal 37% are full-time. Some respondents did not complete the ft/pt questions.

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Please indicate your level of agreement for each of the following statements.



In order of importance to you, how would you rate the functions/facilities of the IAUCC (1 = Most important)



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The first figure above reveals strong endorsement of IAUCC as an organization that is both part of the membership's professional identity and sense of belonging, (93% for each) as well as meeting the members' needs (85%).

The second figure ranks by importance members' priorities for IAUCC activities from left to right. Lower scores indicate a higher priority (e.g., closer to No. 1 priority). Thus, support & networking and training & events rank highest, while production of statistics and website rank lowest.

Top 5 IAUCC Website Wants:

104 Suggestions were made. The main categories are summarized below.

Item	Frequency
Events	15
Contacts of members	14
Useful links	11
Policies of IAUCC	8
Discussion forum	5
Repository of documents/presentations	5
What is IAUCC	5
Links to each service website	4
Statistics	4
Best practice guidelines	3
General Advice Sheets for staff who may have concerns about a student	3
Mission statement	3
Chat Room Photos of events updated	2

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Other items (endorsed only once):

Accessible - getting into links easily if one only has a minute to check the site

Articles

Book Reviews

Brief explanation of student counseling

Clear info generally

Communication with Colleges

Current concerns

Ethical Foundation

Goals of IAUCC

Info for non-members/institutions Re: student counselling, what to expect, what role involves

Member's area

News on the state of student counselling in Ireland

Photos of events updated

Position papers

Promotion of us as an organization

Self-help sheets to download

Service Offering

Shared email - notice board



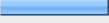
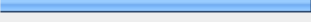
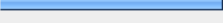
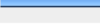
Suggestion Box

Training (more of 2 more central)

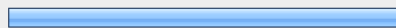
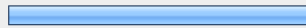
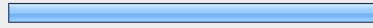
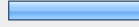
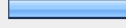
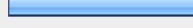
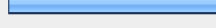
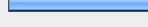
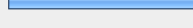
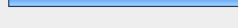
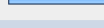
Update on developments in practice College-wide

Percentage of membership engaging in internal counselling activities:

Please indicate which of the following counselling activities you engage in terms of average hours per month (in term):

	Response Percent	Response Count
Individual Counselling 	91.7%	44
Group Therapy 	29.2%	14
Workshops 	47.9%	23
Support Groups 	25.0%	12
Drop-in / Emergency Appts 	72.9%	35
Consultations 	52.1%	25
Other: 	22.9%	11
	<i>answered question</i>	48
	<i>skipped question</i>	6

Percentage of membership engaging in other internal activities:

Please indicate which of the following internal activities you engage in terms of average hours per month (in term):			
		Response Percent	Response Count
Team/Staff Meetings		95.7%	44
Client preparation work		73.9%	34
Record Keeping		91.3%	42
Report Writing - Research†		32.6%	15
Report Writing - Submissions†		30.4%	14
Trainee Supervision		45.7%	21
Peer Supervision†		52.2%	24
Orientation / Induction		34.8%	16
†Talks / Seminars		45.7%	21
†Staff Development / Training		58.7%	27
Other		23.9%	11
<i>answered question</i>			46
<i>skipped question</i>			8

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Average hours per month spent on Internal Activities

INTERNAL:

Individual Counselling	66.1 hrs
Other	35.4 hrs
Record Keeping	12.2 hrs
Drop-In / Emergency Appts	11.2 hrs
Client preparation work	10.1 hrs
Consultations	8.2 hrs
Report Writing - Submissions	6.5 hrs
Team/Staff Meetings	6.0 hrs
Internal Other	5.6 hrs
Trainee Supervision	5.6 hrs
Report Writing - Research	5.3 hrs
Group Therapy	4.3 hrs
Support Groups	3.4 hrs
Workshops	3.2 hrs
Talks /Seminars	3.1 hrs
Staff Development / Training	3.1 hrs
Peer Supervision	3.1 hrs
Orientation / Induction	2.1 hrs

NB: Other category included work on specific projects/teams, e.g. online work, consultations with specific members of staff, committee meetings, etc.

Percentage of membership engaging in external activities:

Please indicate which external activities you engage in terms of average hours per month (in term):		
	Response Percent	Response Count
Supervision	97.6%	40
Conferences	51.2%	21
CPD Events	53.7%	22
Meetings IAUCC	46.3%	19
Meetings CSSI	7.3%	3
Meetings Other (specify)	22.0%	9
Other	17.1%	7
	<i>answered question</i>	41
	<i>skipped question</i>	13

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Average Hours per month spent on external activities:

External Other	4.6 hrs
Meetings Other (specify)	3.9 hrs
Supervision	3.2 hrs
CPD Events	2.9 hrs
Meetings IAUCC	2.2 hrs
Conferences	1.6 hrs
Meetings CSSI	0.3 hrs

NB: Other category included involvement with specific organisations and professional bodies, etc.

Appendix Two Executive Members 2010

Name	Executive Position	Institution
Ann-Marie Quigley	Chairperson	Waterford IT
Chuck Rashleigh	Secretary	Trinity College Dublin
Kathleen McNutt	Membership Secretary	NUI Maynooth
Paul Kelly	Treasurer	University College Dublin
Bea Gavin	Committee Member	NUI Galway
Marian Quinn	Committee Member	IT Sligo
Noreen Keane	Committee Member	Limerick IT
Renagh Linnane	Committee Member	Carlow IT
Pauline Clancy	Committee Member	Galway Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT)

Appendix Three

Strategic Challenges for IAUCC

