

# **TRANSFER STUDENT PERSISTENCE AT ALGONQUIN COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA**

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## ABSTRACT

This report examines the persistence – or retention – of students who transfer from Algonquin College to the University of Ottawa or vice versa by comparing transfer student retention rates to students who are directly admitted at either institution on the basis of their high school record. After identifying the overall differences in the rates of each group at each institution, we use a logistic regression framework to examine the extent to which various student characteristics (age, sex, high school performance, etc.) explain these differences.

Algonquin College transfer students are considerably more likely to leave the University of Ottawa than our high school comparison group. The risk is especially pronounced for transfer students who begin their university studies on a part-time basis. We are not able to identify any clear reasons for the higher leaving rates based on the explanatory variables included in our models. Perhaps most notably, high school grades do not explain them. While the transfer effect disappears when entry age is taken into account, due to transfer students being older, on average, and leaving rates being generally higher in the estimated models, closer inspection reveals that the effects of age are quite different for the two groups, meaning that a different analytical approach is needed to identify the sources of the observed differences in retention rates between the high school entry and transfer groups.

In contrast, the University of Ottawa transfer students are no more likely to leave Algonquin College than the high school comparison group at that institution. Interestingly, they are *more* likely to leave, other factors held constant, when we take high school grades – which are higher for the transfer students – into account.