

Certificate in Personal and Professional Development

NFQ Level	Level 6
Duration	1 Year
Fees	This is a funded programme. A Registration Fee of €200 will apply to secure your place on the Certificate.
ECTS Credits	60
Awarding Body	Institute of Technology Carlow
Next Intake	Autumn 2020
Duration	November 2021 – October 2022
Application Deadline	13 th October 2021
Orientation	Wednesday, 3 rd November 2021 10am-12:30pm
Start Date	Wednesday, 3 rd November 2021
Delivery Model	Fully Online
Format	Every Wednesday and Friday 10:00am-12:30pm

Please note: information given is accurate at the time of publication but subject to revision. Programmes will only run where viable.

Programme Overview

The Certificate in Personal and Professional Development (NFQ Level 6; 60 ECTS Credits) is an innovative, blended online programme. The Certificate aims to develop awardees who are equipped with sufficient core academic competences and transferrable skills to enable them to adapt to the future world of work and lifelong learning. The Certificate is offered and validated under the linked partnership between An Cosán and the Institute of Technology Carlow. This programme forms part of the IT Carlow-An Cosán 'Higher Education Pathway for Non-Traditional Learners' project. We aim to create a new, innovative Higher Education pathway for non-traditional learners by drawing on international best practice in flexible learning, technology enhanced community education, and competence-based learning. This project is funded under the Higher Education System Innovation and Transformation Call from the Higher Education Authority.

Programme Aim

The Certificate in Personal and Professional Development aims to develop awardees who are equipped with sufficient core academic competences and transferrable skills to enable them to adapt to the future world of work and lifelong learning. Upon completion of the Certificate, learners will have acquired knowledge and understanding of the following competences: understanding adult learning and oneself as a learner, communications, digital skills linked to the EU Digcomp framework, critical and ethical thinking, quantitative reasoning, collaboration, enabling personal wellness, and foundational research skills. The Certificate will enable learners to recognise their prior

experiential learning, to apply their learning in new contexts, and to pursue professional advancement, further higher education, or vocationally specific certification.

Entry Requirements

Applicants must be 18 years+. Applicants should have completed the Leaving Certificate or a QQI (FETAC) Major Award at Level 5 in a related area. Other applicants will be considered on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the Institute of Technology Carlow policy on recognition of prior learning (RPL).

Applicants over the age of 23 are assessed as mature students. They may apply on the basis of age and experience.

Applicants under the age of 23 must meet IT Carlow's minimum entry criteria for the programme:

- QQI Level 5 full major award OR
- Leaving Certificate (5 subjects at Ordinary Level grade D3 or better; subjects required are English or Irish and Mathematics).

Applicants may be required to attend for an interview.

Delivery Format

The Certificate in Personal and Professional Development is being offered fully online for the 2020-2021 academic year. All modules will be delivered in online environments, through a combination of live and recorded lectures, online discussions and forums, as well as individual and group assignments. Teaching will be facilitated through An Cosán's and IT Carlow's online learning environment, Blackboard, the Zoom video platform, and other tools. In order to participate in the programme, students are required to have access to a desktop or laptop computer and a reliable internet connection.

Subject to public health advice, should the restrictions around in person delivery of teaching change, some sessions may take place in An Cosán Tallaght or in a blended mode combining in-class and online engagement. However, students who are unable to join face-to-face workshops will be able to complete their Certificate fully online.

The online programme is delivered by the same high quality and experienced staff who traditionally deliver in person and online education. Educators will provide feedback on your assignments and you will have access to staff via email or Zoom video calls to discuss your work. The above conditions are subject to government and public health advice regarding restrictions and social distancing measures and may be modified or adapted as the situation changes.

Each 10 ECTS Credits module on the Certificate in Personal and Professional Development will consist of 8 online sessions, 6 Wednesdays and 2 Saturdays (10am-12:30pm). Each 5 ECTS Credits module will consist of 5 online sessions on Friday mornings (10am-12:30pm). Additional tutorial sessions in the online classroom may be offered throughout the year to assist students with study skills and assignments.

The Certificate's **Orientation Day** will take place online on Wednesday 21st October (10am-12:30pm). The first module will begin on Wednesday 4th November (10am-12:30pm). Students will be introduced to one another, to course content, and to online learning. **Applications are due no later than Wednesday 14th October.**

Provisional Timetable

Module #	Title	Date for Face to Face workshops (attendance is required)		
		Start Date / Induction Day	Saturday Workshop	Saturday Workshop
Module 1	Foundations in Adult Learning	3 rd November 2021	6 ^h November 2021	27 th November 2021
Midterm Break 26th October – 30th October 2020				
Module 2	Enabling Wellbeing	12 th November 2020	NA	NA
Christmas Break 21st December 2020 – 5th January 2021				
Module 3	Learning to Collaborate	12 th January 2022	NA	NA
Module 4	Introduction to Research	21 st January 2022	NA	NA
Module 5	Communications	23 rd March 2022	NA	NA
Module 6	Essential IT Applications in a Changing World	1 st April 2022	NA	NA
Module 7	Critical and Ethical Thinking in a Changing World	Date TBC September, 2022	TBC	TBC
Module 8	Unpacking Everyday Maths	Date TBC September, 2022	NA	NA

*All 8 programmes above are included in the Certificate but the order in which they run may vary. Participants can take modules at their own pace over 1 to 2 years.

Module Descriptions & Outcomes

Foundations in Adult Learning | NFQ Level 6 | 10 ECTS Credits

This module outlines the principles of Adult Learning and the practice of analysing one's ideas and those of others to draw meaning from experiences.

On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:

- Discuss key concepts of adult learning and community education.
- Discuss key concepts of experiential and collaborative learning.
- Outline and discuss criteria for demonstrating learning, including outcomes-based criteria used to attain the programme award.
- Identify evidence of own prior learning in formal, non-formal, and informal contexts.
- Name key concepts associated with blended learning and demonstrate capacity to use ICT for learning and research
- Identify own educational and career goals and outline a plan to achieve them, including any digital competences required.

Communications | NFQ Level 6 | 10 ECTS Credits

This module develops the skills necessary for learners to become competent in the practice of effective oral and written communications in a variety of environments.

On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:

- Recognise the role of communication in human interaction in society
- Identify a variety of forms of communication, and explain their suitability for different audiences in a variety of social contexts
- Discuss the foundational concepts and practices involved in communication including written, verbal, and visual communication
- Discuss the nature of communication in a digital society including the role of digital tools and social media in communication
- Demonstrate their communication skills and identify effective approaches to enhancing such skills.

Essential IT Applications in a Changing World | NFQ Level 6 | 5 ECTS Credits

This module demonstrates the principles and practice of information technology and its application in evolving contexts.

On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:

- Discuss the role of information technology in society including everyday life, third level education, and professional contexts.
- Demonstrate and apply knowledge of information technology, applications and software essential to personal and professional development in a digital society
- Demonstrate and apply knowledge of online tools and practices essential to personal and professional development in a digital society

Unpacking Everyday Maths | NFQ Level 6 | 5 ECTS Credits

This module will demonstrate how mathematical symbols, concepts, and methods can be utilised to describe and solve complex problems.

On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:

- Recognise the role of maths, numeracy, and quantitative reasoning in everyday life
- Discuss the nature of data and identify a variety of forms of data presentation
- Discuss the nature of statistics and identify solutions to statistical problems
- Value the role of maths, numeracy and quantitative reasoning, having surfaced assumptions and challenged fears based on past negative experience

Critical and Ethical Thinking in a Changing World | NFQ Level 6 | 10 ECTS Credits

This module will explore what it means to be a critical thinker when interacting with all kinds of information, but particularly that designed to persuade. It will examine what it means to think ethically by allowing learners to utilise ethical theory within real life situations.

On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:

- Recognise and value the role of critical and ethical thinking in everyday life including digital society
- Explain the concept of critical thinking including its relationship to language, logic, and reasoning
- Identify methods to promote critical thinking
- Define what is meant by 'ethics' and distinguish between a variety of ethical frameworks
- Identify methods to promote ethical thought and action in response to contemporary ethical dilemmas.
- Recognise and value their own ethical viewpoint.

Learning to Collaborate | NFQ Level 6 | 10 ECTS Credits

This module will outline the principles and put into use the practice of collaborative learning in physical and virtual environments

On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:

- Recognise the role of collaboration and teamwork in society including workplace, community, learning and digital contexts.
- Outline and discuss key concepts of group dynamics and group development.
- Identify collaborative qualities and skills in both face-to-face and digital learning environments.
- Devise, deliver and evaluate a collaborative decision-making session.
- Discuss effective approaches to enhancing collaborative qualities and skills.

Enabling Wellbeing | NFQ Level 6 | 5 ECTS Credits

This module will show learners how to take a positive approach to health, wellbeing and resilience in an increasingly complex social world.

On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:

- Recognise the relationship between personal well-being, work, and stress in contemporary society
- Identify and discuss key factors contributing to personal well-being
- Identify and discuss key factors that undermine personal well-being
- Discuss effective approaches to enhancing well-being including in digital contexts

Introduction to Research | NFQ Level 6 | 5 ECTS Credits

This module will outline the processes involved in the composition of a successful research project and will instruct learners how to create an authoritative and persuasive paper or report according to the required conventions.

On successful completion of this module the learner should be able to:

- Discuss the nature of research and recognise its importance in society
- Describe the research process including associated research ethics and methods
- Research and write an academic assignment.
- Discuss effective approaches to enhancing research skills.

Who is this programme aimed at?

This Certificate is intended for non-traditional learners who have not previously had the opportunity to attend higher education, particularly mature learners, and those who have experienced socio-economic or other barriers to participation.

Examples include: people who are unemployed, people in employment but on low pay or precarious wage, early school leavers, lone parents, people who are unable to progress in their careers without a higher education, people coming up to retirement, and those in retirement, those intending to return to the labour force following a period engaged in fulltime caring roles.

It is ideally placed for learners who require flexible learning opportunities in order to manage their learning commitment with work, family and other life commitments.



Teaching, Learning and Assessment

Students will acquire in-depth knowledge and develop research and problem-solving skills through work and enquiry-based learning, more formally structured tuition, and self-directed learning. They will develop competencies in the following transferable skills: written and oral communication, critical thinking, digital literacy,

group collaboration, problem solving, planning & time management. A variety of assessment methods such as reflective journals, presentations, research projects, portfolios and assignments are used on the programme.

Learner Supports

At An Cosán, we support our learners fully so that they can achieve their full potential.

- Technology moderators provide technical support and encouragement to learners in advance of and during online sessions.
- Qualified tutors with in-depth classroom experience and subject matter expertise are readily available to discuss programme content.
- One-to-one online mentors are available throughout the programme.
- Learners are actively encouraged to support one another and build collaborative learning communities.

Time commitment

For each 10 ECTS Credit module (there are 8 modules in total 4 x 10 ECTS Credit modules and 4 x 5 ECTS Credit modules), you need to be available for 6 online sessions every Wednesday (2.5 hours per week) from 10-12:30pm and 2 online Saturday sessions (10-12:30pm).

Subject to public health guidelines, these Saturday sessions may be changed to **full day, face-to-face workshops** (10am-4pm).

For each 5 ECTS Credit module, you need to be available for 5 online sessions every Friday (2.5 hours per week) from 10-12:30pm. It is recommended that participants allocate a minimum of 4-6 hours per week for self-directed learning to study recommended course materials and to prepare assignments.

Registration and Deadline

We are currently receiving applications. Places are limited and will be allocated on a first come basis. **Deadline for Registration: Wednesday 13th October 2021**

Fees

This is a funded programme. A Registration Fee of €200 will apply to secure your place on the Certificate.

A registration fee of €65 will apply to learners who wish to register to individual minor awards.

Learners may register to the following modules as individual minor awards only:

- Foundations in Adult Learning - 10 Credits
- Learning to Collaborate - 10 Credits
- Communications - 10 Credits
- Critical and Ethical Thinking in a Changing World - 10 Credits

The 5 credit modules are only accredited as part of the Certificate (60 ECTS Credits). They are not accredited as minor awards and so cannot be offered as such.

Contact

For more information and to register a place contact:

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