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Thank You

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Foreword

Dear Learner,

Congratulations on having taken the first step to entering the world of adult learning. The decision to return to learning is a significant one and we hope that this information booklet will help …

The wide variety of courses available along with different entry criteria and funding options can be overwhelming. This booklet aims to introduce all adult learners and potential adult learners to the options available to them in adult learning in a way that is comprehensive and easy to understand.

There is an extensive range of courses available for adults wishing to return to learning. With programmes from improving literacy skills to a third level degree, part time or full time, we are confident that there is something to suit everyone in their pursuit of lifelong learning.

Remember, this booklet is simply a starting point in your discovery of lifelong learning and we would encourage you to contact us in AONTAS if you have any further queries.

May we wish you every success in your journey through lifelong learning.

Editor

Jennifer Gunning

AONTAS Information Officer

AONTAS November 2007

DISCLAIMER

We have endeavoured to ensure that all information is correct and up to date. Nevertheless, course information, funding options and contact details change over time. For this reason we would welcome any new information that you might have.

Learners' Stories

Una Buckley

'How to walk out of one classroom and walk into another 34 years later!'

This is the story of my return to Formal Education after a very, very long absence. I hope it will give you the incentive to follow your dreams, remember dreams will always be dreams until you take action; only then can they come true.

'Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions.
Small people always do that, but the really great make you
Feel that you, too, can become great.'
Mark Twain

Introduction

I will start with a little background of how I got to this place in my life. Growing up when any one asked me "What do you want to be when you grow up"? I would always answer, "A Teacher". A couple of times I answered "An Air Hostess" but as I was petrified of flying (ok not flying. *.crashing)* at the time that would never have worked out!! So "Teacher" stayed with me for years. Unfortunately, my parents separated when I was 16 and as the eldest, I became the breadwinner of the family. I left school and for a while had three jobs, office junior, evenings working in a dry-cleaners and weekends baby-sitting. I tell you this not for any sympathy but as fact. This instilled in me a very strong work ethic. I also learned to depend on myself if I needed anything. So the years passed by, I met hubby – known as the luckiest man alive (by me anyway), settled down, bought a house, then a bigger one, had two fantastic children (both take after their Mother of course). Through all this I continued to work full time doing secretarial work. Considering I always hated typing it was funny to end up in an office. Teaching was never even thought of now. A dream long forgotten.

October 2006, a friend suggested doing some Meditation. I was totally sceptical. I read a small beginners handbook on Meditation. A part of it said "What were your dreams as a child and what happened to them". This really struck a cord with me. I started thinking what had happened to mine --- nothing, all forgotten. The more I thought of it…. I said to myself you have to do something about this. The thought would not go away. Then as if by fate I saw an advert in the Tallaght Echo for a course starting in January 2007 for a certificate in Adult and Community Education. I applied and was called for an interview.

Learners' Stories

The Interview

As I was not sure of the location of the Tallaght Partnership I did a reconnaissance drive the day before so I would not get lost. Hey I meant business. D-day arrived. Two very professional young women interviewed me. If you had added both their ages together they still would have been younger than me. I must be getting old, as the saying goes you know you are getting old when Gardaí start looking younger --- now interviewers as well!!! They explained that teaching Adults was totally different to teaching children. This was a mistake on my part as I had concentrated on the Community part of the advert. Thought I had blown it so with nothing to lose I gave my "I had a dream" story to them. They said they would let me know. No news, Christmas came and went. January 2nd 2007 post arrived --- praise the Lord --- Alleluia --- I had got a place on the course. I was so happy I danced around the hall.

First Night Nerves

One of my friends gave me a good luck card and presents of a very large student notebook, pens, pencils etc. Hubby asked "Was I going to be Teacher's Pet" and was I bringing an apple for the teacher? This has since become his weekly joke and he repeats it with great gusto every Tuesday. I borrowed my daughter's old school bag and packed everything I thought I would need. I hoped I would fit into the desk. I was in a time warp aka 1972 and envisaged my old classroom and expected the same in Tallaght. I was really nervous and was cursing ever getting a place on this so and so Course – the rejoicing had long since stopped. Now this was serious and actually happening. What had I got myself into? I hadn't been in a classroom for 34 years.

The Class

Walked in, first shock NO DESKS. Chairs are in a circle. The "Teachers" are sitting with the students. First exercise we have to speak to the person on our right and then after a few minutes introduce them to the class. I will always be grateful to Kate (on my right) we both admitted feeling nervous and this broke the ice. Everyone spoke and we all got to know each other a little bit. The three hours passed by in the blink of an eye. You know what? I loved every minute of it and I have loved every minute since. I have met wonderful people whom I would never have met other than through this course. We all enjoy the course. The weekly attendance speaks for itself.

I have learned that I am not at all politically correct. That in Adult Education Teacher or Tutor is not used "Facilitator" is the correct term. Lots of other examples that are really funny when discussed. Thanks Aoife, our right on radical who is like a breath of fresh air in the class. She questions everything; this leads to some heated discussions. We laugh a lot, an awful lot. We also work on and discuss all the items on our course. An assignment of 3000 words – Design your own Evening Course - had to be handed in by the 22nd May. What a feeling to complete it on time and hand it in. I am really proud of that.

The main thing I have learned from my course so far is that adults learn from each other. I always felt not quite good enough because I left school at 16. No matter how successful I have been. It does not matter when you leave school or what your background; you have so much to offer. *Your whole life experience is unique and has value.*

So feel the fear and do it anyway, Just do it, Bite the Bullet, Follow your Dreams, Live with Passion, Knowledge is Power

Learners' Stories

Can't think of any other sound bites so I will say to you that my return to Adult Education has been confidence building and really, really enjoyable, so much so I plan to continue with "Life Long Learning". I am a work in progress.

You never know if you decide to turn up to a class I could be the "Facilitator" sitting in the circle and you will know then that dreams really do come through.

Barbara Atai

'From Uganda to I.T.T'

In 2004 Barbara Atai (21) left her home in Uganda for social and political reasons. Upon arrival in Dublin Barbara knew her life was going to change immensely. Culturally Ireland was a huge change, however she felt fortunate that her first language was English which meant she wouldn't have to overcome any language barriers. Even though language was not a problem Barbara still felt a bit isolated which was mainly due to not having the confidence to mix with people and most of her time was being spent looking after her newly born twins. Life was hard for her and she was starting to feel depressed and lonely from not having much interaction with people other than her social worker.

For a long time Barbara moved from hostel to hostel in Dublin but with the support of her social worker she finally got moved to more permanent accommodation in Tallaght. While there she was informed of "Youth Horizons"; a community based charity which works directly with the students, encouraging attendance, assisting with non-educational needs and provides mentoring roles. The organisation also provides in-house counseling to youths in the surrounding areas that have fallen out of the formal education route and are overcoming a range of problems. This sounded very appealing to Barbara. The first thing Barbara wanted to do was a parenting course to help her with her newly born twins. Sr. Mairead Hughes the centre's Co-coordinator and founder encouraged her to get involved and partake in a class. Although Barbara had given up the idea of education she was given the support she required to advance and in turn she became more motivated to go further. It was after doing a parenting course that Barbara realized she wanted to go all the way. In Uganda Barbara had left school just before she was due to sit the equivalent to the Junior Certificate and found it very challenging to go back into an education system that's syllabus was very different to what she had been familiar with. However Barbara decided she wanted to sit the Leaving Certificate and found the intimate atmosphere in Youth Horizons to be supportive and eased her

integration into Irish society. Barbara started to make friends and she didn't have to worry about child minding as the centre provided a crèche which was free of charge to participants. Through grinds and with the help of other learners and tutors Barbara never felt left behind. Although the thought of doing the Leaving Certificate was overwhelming, she found the centre made every effort to cater to her needs and she even did a personal development course whilst studying at the centre which gave her the confidence to get involved in the community.

Barbara completed her Leaving Certificate in 2006 and was overjoyed with her fantastic results. It was a great achievement but Barbara didn't stop there. She went on to get a place in Tallaght I.T and is now in the second year of a Business Management Degree. Barbara is intent on completing the four year course and hopes to gain an Honors Degree with a view to gaining employment in the area of Human Resource Management or marketing. Barbara surprised her fellow students and tutors when she received her 1st year results as she came top of the class and received 100% in her Business Management exam. Although she did find the first year difficult; making the transition from a very intimate study setting to a campus, she found that the skills and confidence she gained from Youth Horizons provided the stepping stones she needed to progress. Barbara is a very determined young woman whose dreams are coming true. She is very grateful for the support she received throughout her journey and counts herself as fortunate for the opportunities that came her way. She was so impressed by the community in Jobstown that she has settled in a house only two doors away from Youth Horizons. Barbara feels much more assertive plus she now has gained some new qualifications and she would advise anyone who would like to learn new skills to go out and reach for the stars as they are there for the taking!

Jim Smith

Francis St. CEC

'Jim's Story'

Jim is an Adult Learner with Francis Street Community Education Centre. He has six children and comes from inner city Dublin. He is currently studying computers and is completing a FETAC Level 5 course with a view to going onto 3rd Level.

Jim left school at thirteen. At school Jim was in a class of approximately 50 students. As a schoolboy, he used to look after distribution of the milk and sandwiches and very often used these tasks as a means of getting out of class, especially when it came to reading things.

On leaving school he took up a series of manual jobs, all the time avoiding any jobs that required reading or writing. Initially he worked in a garage where he hoped he would get a trade as a panel

beater but things did not work out as he had hoped and Jim went to work in a shoe factory where he worked his way up to a senior position in manufacturing. On leaving that job Jim went to work in a car assembly plant for 14 / 15 years. From there Jim went to work with a large multinational company but a back injury forced him to leave this job in the late 1980s.

Keeping his literacy difficulties hidden Jim's way of keeping himself informed was by listening to the radio and watching television. While he was out of work he got involved in art classes through a home school liaison programme in his daughter's school. Through his initial involvement with these art classes Jim developed a love of art and has since completed a number of FETAC modules which include; appreciation of art, art history and drawing. As part of one of his FETAC modules he and his course colleagues attended classes during the summer months in the National College of Art and Design and he found going into such an environment an extremely nerve-wracking experience.

Gradually and with encouragement from his tutor Jim began getting one-to-one literacy tuition. He found the atmosphere relaxing and encouraging. His confidence was boosted and the informal setting really appealed to him. He was also made to feel very comfortable by his tutor.

Jim has gone on to create many impressive works of art and they are certainly works to be proud of; they represent the work of a creative and skilled mind and underline the old saying – 'it's never too late to learn'.

Mary Cahill

'If I did it, you can Mary!'

At aged 54 Mary Cahill's world fell apart as her marriage broke up but little did Mary know that such a sad experience would change her life so positively. Whilst in a courtroom going through a divorce Mary was approached by two retired teachers who spoke with her about getting involved in her community and building up both her skills and confidence. Mary had no idea what to think at this time as it was not only an emotional period but she had three children to think about. Nevertheless she was given the details of an Enterprise Centre who were looking to recruit a housekeeper. This sounded appealing to Mary as it would take her mind of her situation and allow her to gain some independence. She applied for the job and was successful.

Months went by and Mary was becoming her old self again and had made many friends. One afternoon Mary was talking to her manager who had become her confidant. She asked if Mary was interested in returning to education. Mary wasn't sure; after all it had been forty years since she was in the education system.

Learners' Stories

Like so many others of that generation Mary left school at fourteen to join the workforce. Mary came from a family of seven and there just wasn't enough money around to pump into further education on one child never mind all seven. Instead Mary went to Dublin to work with people with disabilities. However it was something Mary doesn't regret as she loved caring for people, especially for people who couldn't care for themselves. She really enjoyed working with the blind. However once she had her children she decided to give up work and raise her family. Caring was the only thing that appealed to her to study but she wasn't sure what was out there. She expressed her dilemma to her manager who later came back to her with news of a carers course being run by the local partnership. The course was also fully funded by Tallaght Equal which meant Mary didn't have to concern herself with fees.

Mary was so nervous but at the same time she knew it would be something she would enjoy and it had the added bonus of being run on her doorstep. She had never thought about gaining a qualification but if she got this she would gain a FETAC Level 5 Healthcare Support Certificate, something she would have never imagined could happen to her, especially at this stage in her life. Although she wanted to go through with this undertaking, the thoughts of doing exams terrified her, along with studying for exams and writing. She had many doubts, initially Mary had no confidence and feared sharing her weaknesses in front of other people but her fears were eased to a degree by the informal setting. It felt very different to the learning environment she remembered.

However, she soon realised that everyone on the course was in the same boat. Everybody had fears and frustrations but this only strengthened the bond between the learners. Each learner supported each other. Mary didn't find the course content too much of a struggle, even though she initially struggled with the vocabulary. She overcame this and found that the knowledge and experience she brought to the course was of real benefit to her. After all she was learning the systems and models of practice behind something she had been doing for most of her life. For the first part of the course Mary found herself dependent on her dictionary. However, it was something she took pleasure from as the benefits were evident in her assignments. She found the course challenging but couldn't believe how easy it was with support. As a mature student help was on hand every step of the way and everybody pulled each other through. Mary really enjoyed the practical side of the course and following a work placement in a home for the elderly she realised this was the area she wanted to build her career in.

Now Mary has her Certificate and is thinking of further study in the area of food hygiene. She describes the blood, sweat and tears as well worth it as she has that all important piece of paper which means everything to her and more importantly she gained in confidence and has the independence she hungered after. During the course Mary learned a lot about herself and how she portrayed herself to others. She learned how to cope and remembers the mantra that she whispered to herself when she found it difficult and was thinking of quitting; "Mary you can do it", "Mary you can do it". She says this is "her time" and she is so proud of her achievement.

How to get involved in Adult Learning

What is an Adult Learner?

We are all adult learners.

AONTAS believes that people learn continuously throughout their lives in formal or non-formal, or informal settings; at home, in the workplace, in the community or in learning centres and institutions.

No matter when – or at what level you finished your initial education, you have learned something new since. Learning can take place on a daily basis in many settings…

Examples of adult learners are people who;

- Decided to do a part-time course in a local community centre or group
- Left school at an early age but returned to learning to gain a formal qualification
- Are improving their reading and writing skills through one-to-one classes
- Undertook a course to learn how to use a computer
- Got a degree then decided to do an evening course
- Learn on the job in a training course
- Never had the chance to go to college after school so enrolled as a mature student
- Have updated their skills to improve their career or employment prospects
- Learn a new language or undertake a hobby course
- Participate in social or leisure courses
- Participate in active retirement activities

Have you done any of the above? If so, you are an adult learner! And you're in the company of hundreds of thousands of adults throughout Ireland because…

… We are all adult learners.

Remember it's never too late to learn! For more information about adult and community education visit our website www.aontas.com

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Qualifications

What is the National Qualifications Authority of Ireland?

The National Qualifications Authority of Ireland is a body of 14 members appointed by the Minister of Education and Science. The members are nominated by Government Ministers and national stakeholders in education and training. The Authority has three principal objectives:

- the establishment and maintenance of a framework of qualifications for the development, recognition and award of qualifications based on standards of knowledge, skill or competence to be acquired by learners
- the establishment and promotion of the maintenance and improvement of the standards of awards of the further and higher education and training sector, other than in the existing universities
- the promotion and facilitation of access, transfer and progression throughout the span of education and training provision.

What is the Higher Education and Training Awards Council?

HETAC (the Higher Education and Training Awards Council) was established by the Government on 11 June 2001, under the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999. HETAC is the qualifications awarding body for third-level education and training institutions outside the University sector other than the Dublin Institute of Technology. It is the legal successor to the National Council for Educational Awards (NCEA).

What is the Further Education and Training Awards Council?

The Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC) is the national awarding body for all further education and training in Ireland. FETAC is a statutory body established in June 2001 under the Qualifications (Education and Training) Act 1999.

What is the National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ)?

- The NFQ is a ten level system that incorporates awards made for all kinds of learning, large and small, whether it is gained in schools, the workplace, the community, training centres, colleges or universities.
- For each level of the NFQ, standards of knowledge, skill and competence have been set out, defining the outcomes to be achieved by a learner seeking to gain a qualification.

How does the National Framework of Qualifications work?

The National Framework of Qualifications has been built around an agreed structure, as a result of an extended consultative period with a range of stakeholders. The following points illustrate the central features of how it works:

- The Framework is comprised of levels, award-types and named-awards
- It has ten levels covering the very initial stages of learning to the most advanced

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Qualifications continued

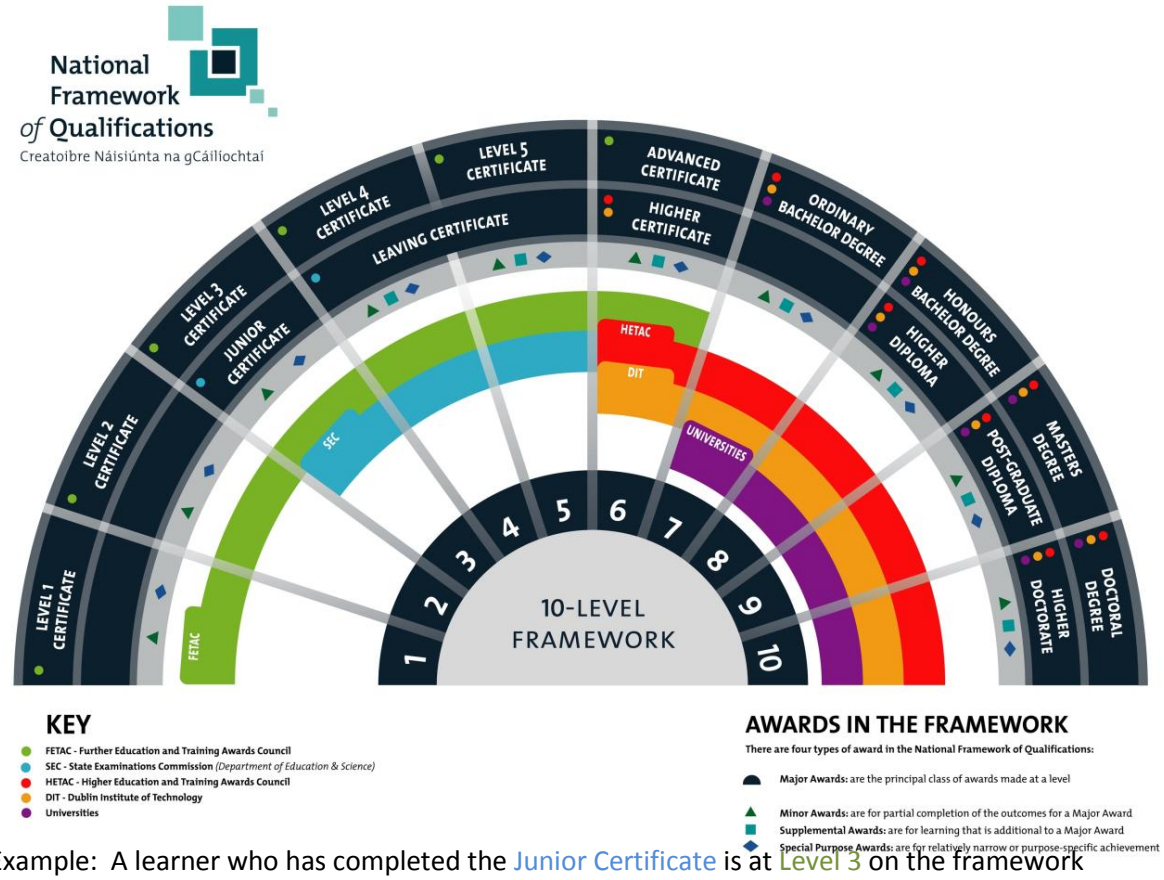
- Four classes of award-type have been determined for the Framework - major, minor, special-purpose and supplemental. This is to ensure that the Framework can capture all types and sizes of learning undertaken by a learner

What is Europass?

Europass aims to help individuals to have their skills and qualifications clearly and easily understood in Europe, thereby allowing learners and workers to have more options to move through Europe. Europass consists of five documents which help to describe learning achievements in a coherent manner. Included in the five documents are a Curriculum Vitae and a Language Passport. Europass also includes Supplements that explain in detail the meaning of the qualifications held by a learner.

What about awards from outside of Ireland – can they be recognised here?

The international dimension of the introduction of the NFQ is important. The introduction of the NFQ has aided the recognition of qualifications not only for holders of NFQ awards traveling abroad but also for those traveling to this country with awards made outside the State.



Example: A learner who has completed the Junior Certificate is at Level 3 on the framework

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Adult Education Guidance Initiative

Background

The White Paper on Adult Education-Learning for Life, July 2000 highlighted the need to establish a support service in guidance for adult learners. Up to 2000 there was no guidance and counselling service available for adults. The Adult Educational Guidance Initiative was established with the aim of providing a quality guidance service for adults.

So what is the Adult Education Guidance Initiative?

It consists of 38 guidance projects throughout the country with the aim of providing a quality adult educational guidance service to participants in VTOS, literacy and other adult and community education programmes nationwide. It's all about connecting adults with learning. If you or someone you know would like to become involved in adult learning contact your local Guidance Initiative. The service is free and is funded by the Department of Education and Science and forms part of the National Development Plan.

What services can adult learners avail of under this initiative?

The guidance projects offer one-to-one guidance sessions to adults thinking of returning to learning or continuing with their learning. The support service is free of charge. The guidance support looks at your choices and matches your interests and skills with possible learning options in a confidential and friendly atmosphere. Adult learners are also offered follow up support once their choices have been made. The provision of information is to a very high standard and the counsellors give information on the following;

- Community based courses
- Full time, part time and distance learning courses
- Career profiles
- Grants and other funding
- Support services

The guidance projects are also responsible for giving presentations and information sessions for groups interested in learning while building on links with the community, voluntary and statutory organisations.

To find out more information on The Adult Guidance Initiative, please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Adult Basic Education

Why choose an adult basic education course?

If you have difficulty with reading, writing and numbers, this can mean that tasks like filling in forms and helping children with their homework can prove to be very difficult. Courses organised by the Adult Literacy Service in each county are offered to adults who wish to improve their reading, writing, spelling, basic maths and computers. Courses can be on a one-to-one basis or as part of a small group.

What costs are involved?

These classes are provided free of charge and are very accessible as the majority of them are delivered in local outreach centres .This type of learning is 100% focused on the needs of the learner and allows learners to get advice on their education. The service is confidential.

Who provides this type of education?

The main providers of adult basic education (ABE) support in Ireland are Vocational Education Committees (VEC) Adult Literacy Services. There are about 126 Services throughout the country and each VEC employs an Adult Literacy Organiser (ALO) to organise Adult Basic Education support in their local area.

What is adult basic education?

A free and confidential Adult Basic Education service is available in approximately 126 Literacy Schemes throughout the country where you can avail of one-to-one or group tuition in a relaxed and informal atmosphere, or you can take up a course with a group of people in a similar situation. In this setting it's important that learners are made to feel at ease with the tutor and fellow learners and therefore it's essential that the lessons and setting don't have a formal school feel.

What are the benefits of taking a course like this?

All over Ireland, lots of people are returning to learning and improving their reading, writing and maths. They are people who want to catch up on what they missed at school, parents who want to help children with their homework and those who would simply like to write a letter home. Whatever the reason for going back to learning, the benefits are always the same. Not only do people improve their old skills, but they also gain the confidence to go on to learn new ones

What type of ABE support can adult learners get?

ABE support :

- is free and confidential;
- is offered one-to-one or in groups and has a non-school atmosphere
- focused on the needs of the learner; and
- allows learners to get advice on their educational needs.

How do you find one of these courses?

If you are interested, or know someone who could benefit from a course, contact your local Adult Literacy Organiser (ALO) in your nearest VEC. The important thing to remember is that it is never too late to return to learning and the benefits are great.

To find out more information on ABE, please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Second Chance and Further Education

Why choose a second chance or further education course?

- Perhaps you left school early;
- Maybe you never had a chance to do your Junior Certificate or Leaving Certificate;
- You may decide that you want to take up a new hobby or learn a new skill;
- Fed up of your current situation, you might decide that you want to retrain or upskill.

Presently there is a huge amount of opportunities for adults who feel they did not make full use of their first chance in education. Over recent years a range of programmes has been developed to facilitate adults who want to return to education. The aim of second chance and further education is to give adult learners a second-chance education in a non-threatening environment that is learner centred. All these programmes have a friendly and adult feel to them. Your needs are respected in a personalised and caring manner. All you need to do is pick up the phone and call your local VEC.

Where can you find a course?

Schools, Colleges and Community Groups around Ireland offer a wide variety of daytime, evening, full-time and part-time courses for adults. The programmes offered range from personal development through to courses which help you to develop a hobby or interest, right through to courses from which a Post Leaving Certificate qualification can be gained.

What type of second chance / further education courses are there?

Evening Courses / Day Courses

Evening courses are available in a wide range of subjects. There are many different providers of these courses; from your local library to the nearby secondary school. These courses offer a number of diverse learning opportunities for adults, from an art class to computers for beginners courses. Learning a new skill, furthering your career opportunities, meeting new people and satisfying your creative urges are all reasons to take part in a part-time course.

Post Leaving Certificate (PLC)

VECs through Colleges of Further Education throughout Ireland provide Post Leaving Certificate courses in a wide range of disciplines and subjects. These courses are offered to school leavers and adults who wish to return to education. The courses are designed to prepare students for work by giving them specific skills and training and also act as a stepping-stone to other third level qualifications at ITs, universities or other colleges. The entry requirements for a mature student entering a further education course usually include either the standard Leaving Certificate or an equivalent qualification or experiential learning. Mature students will in most cases be required to attend an interview before their place is confirmed on the course. This is a chance for a prospective student to show their interest in the subject area and the skills they already hold. In the interview he/she will also be informed of exactly how much commitment is required as this is often just as significant as exam results. Post Leaving Certificates (PLCs) are overseen by the FETAC awards scheme.

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Second Chance and Further Education continued

Travellers Training Centres

Throughout the country there are a number of Traveller Training Centres that cater for the educational , training and personal development needs of the Traveller community. Courses on offer range from basic education to Leaving Certificate and FETAC accredited courses.

Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)

What is VTOS?

VTOS consists of a range of courses designed to meet the education and training needs of unemployed people. VTOS exists to provide education and training opportunities for unemployed people and aims to prepare people to gain employment or pursue further studies with a view to gaining paid employment. Currently there are over 5,000 places available on VTOS. Participation in VTOS is in two modes :

1) as a 'core' VTOS student participating in a VTOS Centre or Adult Education Centre
2) as a 'dispersed' VTOS student usually attending a Post-Leaving Certificate course in a Further Education College. These courses take place throughout Ireland and the VECs run them in over one hundred colleges/ centres throughout Ireland.

Why do a VTOS course?

VTOS programmes offer participants an opportunity to raise their education level. Participants can gain certification within the National Framework of Qualifications, developing their knowledge of a subject area and skills relevant to the workplace. Participants also have the possibility of progressing to further education or training leading to employment. VTOS courses offer a wide choice of subjects and learning activities which include Junior Certificate, Leaving Certificate and a range of FETAC/NCVA Foundation, Level 1, Level 2 and Level 3 qualifications.

Who fits the criteria for a VTOS course?

- Individuals aged 21 or over **and**
- are in receipt of unemployment assistance or unemployment benefit or signing for credits for at least six months **or**
- in receipt of a one-parent family payment, disability allowance, disability benefit* or invalidity pension for at least six months **or**
- are a dependent spouse of an eligible person for at least six months **or**
- in receipt of blind person's pension, deserted wife's allowance/benefit, widow/widowers contributory/non-contributory pension or prisoner's wife's allowance for at least six months. Conditions may apply in the case of blind person's pension, deserted wife's allowance/benefit, widow/widowers, contributory/non-contributory pension or prisoner's wife's allowance. Periods spent on FÁS training courses, Community Employment Schemes, Job Initiative, Youthreach programmes and time in prison can count towards the qualifying period

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Second Chance and Further Education continued

Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS)

*It is important to note that people on Disability Benefit must firstly contact their local Social Welfare Office about exemption/entitlement to continuation of their Disability Benefit payment.

Are there any additional benefits in doing a VTOS course?

- If you work part-time or casually during your studies it will not affect your payment.
- You will no longer have to "sign on".
- Travel and meal allowance are paid at FÁS rates

A bonus payment is also payable if you have been in receipt of certain eligible social welfare payments for at least one year directly before you join VTOS. However conditions may apply.

How much does it cost to do a VTOS course?

All VTOS courses are provided free of charge. Although if you are currently getting unemployment assistance or unemployment benefit, you will instead get a training allowance at a rate equivalent to the maximum rate of unemployment benefit. If you are getting a one-parent family payment or an eligible disability payment, you will get a payment equivalent to the maximum rate of your current social welfare payment. You will continue to receive it and all other payments from the Department of Social & Family Affairs. You will also receive a small lunch allowance and, depending on the distance between your home and the VTOS centre, you may be entitled to a travel allowance. Participants will be given books and materials free of charge and individuals who have childcare fees may be supported.

How much commitment is required?

Generally, students will have 30 hours course attendance per week (e.g. 6 hours per day for 5 days). The course length may vary however some courses can last up to two years. If you would like to find out more information about VTOS or find a course in your local area contact your local VEC.

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Second Chance and Further Education continued

Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)

What is the Back to Education Initiative?

The Back To Education Initiative provides part-time Further Education programmes for young people and adults. The aim is to give people an opportunity to combine a return to learning with family, work and other responsibilities.

What is the aim of BTEI?

- To increase the involvement and participation of young people and adults with less than upper secondary education; providing them with a range of flexible learning opportunities for example; if you haven't completed the Junior Certificate or Leaving Certificate

- To have principles and values such as; Learner Centeredness, Equality, Accessibility & Inclusiveness, Recognising & Accommodating Diversity, Innovation, Local Consultation and Quality Assurance.

- To target the individuals and groups that experience specific barriers to participation in education and are more difficult to engage in the formal learning process.

What subjects can you do on a BTEI course?

BTEI offers a wide range of subjects. These range from Junior Certificate and Leaving Certificate subjects such as; English and Maths. Basic Adult Education courses can be taken in a range of subjects. Courses run under BTEI include; personal development, catering, tourism, communication, arts & crafts, tourism, sport & leisure, to name but a few which are certified by FETAC (Further Education And Training Awards Council).

What are the benefits of taking part in a BTEI programme?

- Learners can continue their learning
- Learners have the opportunity to gain a qualification
- BTEI allows learners to develop new skills, build on existing skills and gain in confidence
- Pursue New Employment Options

Where are these courses delivered?

BTEI Programmes are delivered at various locations throughout Ireland; however those wishing to take part in a programme should contact their local VEC to find out where courses are being delivered in their locality.

Is it expensive to do a course?

Individuals will have different entitlements. Those in receipt of unemployment payments or means-tested social welfare benefits, and holders of medical cards, and their dependants, are entitled to free tuition. Other unwaged people with less than upper second level education will be entitled to a reduction in fees. Everyone else will be charged a participation fee.

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Second Chance and Further Education continued

Back to Education Initiative (BTEI)

In April 2007 Minister for Lifelong Learning, Sean Haughey T.D announced that fees for the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) part time programme would be eliminated for participants with less than upper second level education (i.e. Junior Certificate or equivalent or less).
Effectively, this means that people in low paid or part time work who left school early will now be able to access BTEI part time courses free of charge from 1 September 2007.
AONTAS has demanded that BTEI continues to receive increased investment. AONTAS believe that people earning less than €35,000 per annum should not have to pay any course fees to participate in BTEI.

Will you get paid while participating in a BTEI course?

Generally no, except for those students eligible for full-time Youthreach and Traveller Training Programmes who don't have an underlying social welfare payment. They will receive pro-rata training allowance from the Department of Education and Science, depending on the number of sessions they attend. However exemptions may be made where under other circumstances people may also be eligible to be paid. Therefore it is recommended that prospective students contact their local social welfare office to see if they are entitled to payment.

For people in receipt of social welfare payments, continued entitlement to benefit is subject to satisfying the Department of Social and Family Affairs as to their continued eligibility for the schemes. It is best to discuss individual circumstances with the social welfare office.

Will you gain a qualification upon completing a BTEI course?

All course providers are required to offer national certification. However in some cases the adult literacy and basic education courses may not be in a position to offer this during the first phase of the programme. It is not compulsory for participants to avail of certification. Learners can choose to pursue certification at a later stage when they feel comfortable and ready to do so.

To find out more information on Second Chance and Further Education, please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Community Education

"Through my involvement with the women's group, I formed many friendships and went on to participate in a number of courses that ranged from developing my hobbies to gaining a qualification. I gained self confidence, became more self assured; developing my skills and career prospects whilst even gaining a qualification!"

Community Education learner

What is Community Education?

Generally we think of adult education as providing courses in certain locations and encouraging individuals to take part. Community education is almost the reverse of this. Community education generally takes place outside institutions and responds to the needs of the community. It is education in the community, with the community and by the community. It involves targeting groups/communities, identifying their specific educational needs and designing courses around those needs in a collaborative manner. It adopts a person centred approach, a stark contrast to traditional education where all power and knowledge is centred around the teacher. It takes into account the life experiences of the participants as a starting point and thus empowers participants. Community education groups are local, self-managed, voluntary organisations and are supported through a range of agencies and government departments for their education and social inclusion work. Community education has a two-fold interconnected aim for the participants

- The personal acquisition of skills, knowledge and competences
- Social and community empowerment and action

Who participates in Community Education?

Community education can be interest based that is people who share a common interest or activity. Many people of different ages and backgrounds get involved in community education. Basically anybody can get involved in community education and this is true especially of community, voluntary groups and local interest groups. Examples include women's groups; men's groups; traveller groups; community arts groups; people with disabilities; older people in the community and refugee groups.

Learning in Ireland has changed a lot over the years and the old notion that education stops when you leave school is no longer valid today. Learning is now seen as a lifelong process that we engage in differently at different stages in our lives. People return to learning for various reasons. Some return to gain a qualification that they didn't previously have an opportunity to pursue whilst others return to build on their skills. For many, they simply return for social contact and to broaden their experiences. However people engage with community education because they are committed to their local communities and are interested in its development. These participants believe that adult learning is about sharing and reflecting on experiences with a view to making a change in their lives and the community. The education is enjoyable and relevant to the learners and is responsive to community priorities.

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Community Education continued

The motivation for learning may change over time as the community develops but once the education is rooted in the community it will allow this change to happen organically.

This type of education is about purposeful learning and education, designed to bring about change as well as personal development. The education provision tends to place more emphasis on non-formal learning (planned and non-accredited) than formal. Group work is a core element of developing community education.

How can I find a course?

Throughout the country, there are a wide range of community groups offering courses at various levels to various groups. Some community education courses are accredited by various institutions, such as UCD, NUIM and Waterford Institute of Technology. Not all community groups are affiliated to the VECs, so keep an eye on local newspapers, newsletter and community notice boards. There are 33 Vocational Education Committees located throughout the country and each of these have a Community Education Facilitator (CEF). This national team comprises of 37 CEFs who offer services to community groups that have an interest in community education and promoting the development and nurturing of new community-based learning groups.

To find out more information on Community Education please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Apprenticeships and Training

Apprenticeships allow an individual to gain work experience and training with a view to obtaining a "trade" or becoming a qualified craftsperson. The main craft trades have been designated by FÁS and come within the scope of the Statutory Apprenticeship system, which is organised in Ireland by FÁS in co-operation with the Department of Education and Science, employers and unions. During the apprenticeship your employer provides you with on the job training and work experience. You will also obtain off- the job training in a local FÁS job training centre or educational institution.

Why choose an Apprenticeship?

- Apprenticeship is an excellent opportunity to acquire the necessary skills, knowledge, competencies, experience and qualifications to build a successful career;
- Apprenticeship training is relevant and tailored to the needs of industry;
- Apprentices are paid as they progress through their apprenticeships;
- On completion of an apprenticeship, an apprentice will become a craftsperson in the chosen occupation and hold a national and internationally recognised qualification.

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Apprenticeships and Training continued

Who can apply?

- To obtain an apprenticeship you must be over 16
- Have obtained at least a grade D in any 5 subjects in the Junior Certificate (or equivalent grades in approved examinations), and
- You must obtain a job as an apprentice with a suitable employer, who can offer you an apprenticeship in your chosen occupation, and
- Your employer must register you with FAS as an apprentice at the start of your apprenticeship

However if you do not meet these requirements there are a number of ways in which it is still possible to qualify for an apprenticeship

- You can satisfactorily complete a preparation and training course approved by FAS and are successful at an assessment interview.
- You may qualify if you are over 25 years of age, have a minimum of 3 years work experience relevant to your chosen occupation and are successful at assessment interview.

What qualification will you receive upon completion of an Apprenticeship?

On successful completion of an apprenticeship, a FETAC Advanced Certificate is awarded; this is recognised internationally as the requirement for craftsperson status.

Will you receive any payments over the training period?

Apprentices are paid the agreed Industrial Apprentice Wage Rate by the employer (the actual rate paid may vary depending on the occupation and employer). Generally, rates are based on the year and increase during the apprenticeship; details should be checked with the prospective employer.

To find out more information on Apprenticeships and Training please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Foundation/Access Courses

What is a Foundation/Access course?

Foundation/Access courses have been established in many third level institutions to prepare mature students for the challenges of third level education. Foundation / Access courses are primarily aimed at adults who have been away from formal education for a number of years and would like to improve their skills, confidence and knowledge in order to access a third level course. Depending on the learners' requirements courses can be full or part time, usually over one year. Some Foundation / Access courses prepare the learner for specific courses such as Engineering or Science while others provide a general preparation for courses in Humanities and Social Science.

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Foundation/Access Courses continued

What third level institutions offer Foundation/Access courses?

- Athlone Institute of Technology: Foundation Certificate
- Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology: Foundation Course
- Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology: FETAC Foundation Course
- Institute of Technology Blanchardstown: Foundation Course
- Institute of Technology Tipperary: The Highway Programme
- Institute of Technology Tralee: Foundation Certificate
- Institute of Technology Waterford: Access Programme
- Letterkenny Institute of Technology: Foundation Certificate
- Mary Immaculate College Limerick: Adult Education Access Programmes
- NUI Galway: Access Course Mature Students
- NUI Galway and Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology
- NUI Maynooth: Science and Engineering Foundation Year
- NUI Maynooth: Return to Learning
- St Angela's College Sligo: Access Course
- Trinity College: Trinity Access Programme (TAP)
- University of Limerick: Mature Student Access Certificate Course
- University College Dublin: Access/Foundation Course

To find out more information on Foundation/Access Courses please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Higher / Third Level Education

The decision to return to third level education after a break from formal learning or entering it for the first time as a mature student is a significant one. Mature students bring life experience and determination with them. There is a wide range of options open to learners wishing to return to third level education - the higher or third level education system in Ireland is broad, encompassing universities, institutes of technology, colleges of education and private, independent colleges.

What higher / third level institutions are there in Ireland?

Universities

There are seven Universities in Ireland, three in Dublin and one each in Galway, Cork, Kildare and Limerick. Irish Universities offer degrees at Bachelors, Masters and Doctorate levels and undergraduate and postgraduate diplomas in a wide range of disciplines. University courses are much more classroom and lecture theatre based than courses in other institutions usually with heavier emphasis on theory. Universities award their own degrees. There is also a Higher Education Authority (HEA) to oversee the work of the universities on behalf of the Department of Education & Science.

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Higher / Third Level Education continued

Institutes of Technology

There are 14 institutes of technology in Ireland offering programmes at degree, national diploma and national certificate level in a wide variety of subjects. Many also offer postgraduate and degree programmes. The qualification system within the ITs allow students to initially take certain higher certificate courses, which on average last for two years. The student can then gain admission to ordinary degree and subsequent honour degree courses. The advantage of this "ladder system" means that students can achieve a qualification within a relatively short time. There is also the option of entering the job market after each step, and returning to study at a later date. It is also possible to enter a degree programme without first taking a certificate course. The Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) monitors quality standards in the ITs and validates qualifications right up to Doctorate level. Qualifications awarded by ITs are internationally recognised and many also have courses leading directly to professional examinations.

Other Higher Education Institutions

Other third level institutes provide courses in very specific subject areas such as Art, Business or Theology. They too are state funded and often have links with one of the universities. There are also a number of private institutions around the country that offer third level courses. 'Private' colleges are so called because the Irish Government and the HEA do not oversee all their courses or pay the tuition fees for students, as they do in other third level institutions. Qualifications at private colleges are validated in a number of ways. Many of the programmes offered by these colleges are supervised by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC) and some have links with UK universities and/or professional associations through which the courses on offered are accredited.

How do you apply?

The Central Applications Office (CAO) manages entry to undergraduate courses at Irish universities. Most Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) require you to apply though the CAO, some colleges require you to apply directly and others may require you to do both. Many HEIs also require prospective students to attend an interview. Each HEI has an admissions office that is happy to answer any questions you may have. Application deadlines can vary too though the common deadline for application through the CAO is 1st February.

What supports are available?

Learners entering higher or third level education for the first time will enter at undergraduate level. Courses offered in HEIs are either at certificate, diploma or degree level. If this is your first time to enter third level study, you may want to consider a Foundation/Access course to improve your skills and confidence before pursuing a degree programme.

Most Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have a dedicated Mature Student / Access Officer who will be able to advise you about supports and services post-entry. A mature student is any learner who is 23 years old or older on the 1st January of the year they are applying for the course in the approved HEI.

How to get involved in Adult Learning

Higher / Third Level Education continued

Pre- entry Mature Student / Access Officers can answer any questions you might have and will be happy to help you make an informed decision. Full course details are available from each individual institution either from their website and their annual prospectus.

To find out more information on Apprenticeships and Training please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Distance Education

What is Distance Education?

Distance Education is learning which is not linked to a physical location at fixed times throughout the academic year. It is becoming a growing feature of the Irish Education System. Open Learning, On-Line Learning and Distance Learning all qualify as types of Distance Education. This invariably involves learning at a distance from the tutor, with the help of packaged learning materials. Programmes and entry requirements often parallel those delivered by more traditional methods. Students usually work in isolation from other students and from their tutors, but receive telephone or web-based guidance and support. Students and their teachers might or might not meet on occasional weekends or for summer schools. Generally Distance Education programmes are based on lifestyles and are chosen as an alternative to attending traditional classes.

Why choose Distance Education?

- Personal commitments mean you don't have time to attend classes or lectures
- The course you are interested in is only offered at a time when you are at work
- You live too far or don't have transport to get to classes or lectures
- No organisation locally offers the course you want to study

What are the advantages of this type of learning?

- You don't need to travel long distances to a college and can save money and time on travel
- Study can be done at your own pace
- You can combine study with domestic and work commitments

What are the disadvantages of this type of learning?

- Very little social contact
- Students need to be very disciplined and take responsibility for allocating the appropriate amount of time to their studies
- Distance Learning does not qualify for free fees although some courses do qualify for tax relief

How to get Involved in Adult Learning

Distance Education continued

What are the entry requirements?

They vary depending on the organisation concerned. Many web-based E-learning organisations base their entry requirements solely on interest, while others base entry on standard criteria. Check with the relevant institution for entry requirements

How are distance courses assessed?

Assessment varies from institution to institutions. Many are assessed on a continuous assessment basis with no exams. Some are assessed partly by exam and partly by coursework. Again, check with the relevant institution for entry requirements.

Can you get exemptions for previous qualifications?

You may get exemption for previous certified study or work related learning within a subject area specific to your proposed course of study. However it is recommended that prospective students discuss any prior learning and/or qualifications gained with the provider to see if they are eligible for any exemptions.

Types of Learning that qualify as Distance Education include:

Open Learning

This is a learning opportunity designed to meet a student's individual needs in terms of times, location, pace of learning and entry requirements. Delivery may involve a variety of media, classes, tapes, videos and Internet.

For further details contact your local library, listed under your local authority in the phone book or contact:

Address: The Library Council
53/54 Upper Mount Street
Dublin 2
Phone: 01- 6761963
Email: info@librarycouncil.ie
Website: www.librarycouncil.ie

On-Line Learning

This is where the whole programme is delivered over the Internet. While it is a Distance Education model, isolation is reduced by internet-facilitated communication between students and between students and their teachers. At present, on-line learning is largely an electronic version of current distance learning techniques - notes are posted on the web, assignments are e-mailed between students and tutors, students set up chat rooms between each other etc.
NALA provides a number of Distance Education supports so that learners have the opportunity to brush up on their English or Maths in the privacy of their own home. This involves a series of TV programmes, titled Read Write Now and The Really Useful Guide to Words and Numbers, which are accompanied by a free workbook for learners. DVDs of the TV series and workbooks are available from the freephone support line at **1800 20 20 65**.

How to get Involved in Adult Learning

Distance Education continued

You can also follow their TV series or if you have access to the internet you could look at www.literacytools.ie. This website is for adults who would like to improve their spelling, reading and number skills using the Internet.

FAS Net College

This provides a range of E-learning courses, aimed at employers, employees and unemployed people. These courses fall into the category of Business, Office Applications, Web Design / Programming, Technical Support Courses, Soft Skills / Personal Development Courses and Apprenticeships. Courses cost from €40 to €180. Exam fees are not covered in the course prices.
The courses are delivered entirely over the Internet and participants have access to the courses for 6 months once they have registered with FAS Net. Many of the courses are certified by relevant bodies.

For further information contact:

Address: FAS e-College
Wyattville Road
Loughlinstown
Dun Laoghaire
Co. Dublin
Phone: 01-204 3600 /204 3752
E-mail: ecollegeinfo@fas.ie
Website: www.ecollege.ie

The National College of Ireland

This college offers a number of online courses such as the NCI Certificate in Electronic Commerce for Managers, the NCI Certificate in Managing Teams and the NCI Course in Motivation and Leadership.

For further information contact:

Address: National College of Ireland
IFSC Mayor Street
Dublin 1
Phone: 1850 221721
Email: info@ncirl.ie
Website: www.ncirl.ie

How to get Involved in Adult Learning

Distance Education continued

Open University

The Open University is one of the biggest providers of Distance Education. The Open University offers more than 360 undergraduate and post graduate courses in Arts, Modern Languages, Social Sciences, Health and Social Care, Science, Maths, Computing, Technology, Business and Management, Education and Law. The average time taken for a degree is six years.

For further information contact:

Address: Open University in Ire. Enquiry & Advice Centre
Holbrook House
Holles Street,Dublin 2
Phone: 01 678 5399
E-mail: Ireland@open.ac.uk
Website: www.open.ac.uk

Oscail

Oscail is the National Distance Education Centre of Ireland. It is based on the DCU campus. It offers an opportunity to receive an Irish university qualification, through Distance Learning. Oscail offers face-to-face tutorial support and support through email and telephone. No previous qualifications are required for undergraduate programmes for those over 23. All programmes are accredited by DCU. In addition the Diploma in Arts is accredited by NUI Galway, NUI Maynooth, University College Cork, Trinity College and University of Limerick.

For further information contact:

Address: Oscail, The National Distance Ed. Centre
Dublin City University
Dublin 9
Phone: 01-7005924
Email: oscail.student@dcu.ie
Website: www.oscail.ie

National College of Ireland

This college runs a BA in Human Resource Management by distance learning
For further information contact:
Address: National College of Ireland
IFSC Mayor Street
Dublin 1
Phone: 1850 221721
Email: info@ncirl.ie
Website: www.ncirl.ie

How to get Involved in Adult Learning

Distance Education continued

University College Dublin (UCD)

This University delivers a Bachelor of Business Studies through distance learning.
For further information contact:

Address: Linda Dowling
Centre of Distance Learning
Quinn School of Business
University College Dublin
Belfield, Dublin 4
Phone: 01-716 4749
Email: Linda.dowling@ucd.ie
Website: www.ucd.ie/quinnschool

Kilroy's College

This college provides many courses in home study. A free guide to study courses offered by Kilroy's College is available for download on the college website. A tutorial system is available for students.
For further information contact:

Address: Kilroy's College
Wentworth House
Grand Canal Street
Dublin 2
Phone: 01-6620538
E-mail: homestudy@kilroyscollege.ie
Website: www.kilroyscollege.ie

Atlantic University Alliance

AUA aims to pool the individual expertise and resources of National University of Ireland, Galway, University College Cork and University of Limerick and make them available to local industry in the west, mid-west, and south of Ireland. The AUA provides distance learning and there is a mixture of online and face to face education. Courses provided are an MSc, in Technology Management and Postgraduate Diploma in Quality and Lean Systems, as well as a modular diploma and degree programme in Science and Technology studies. For further information visit: www.aua.ie

Hibernia College

This college provides both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes and is accredited by HETAC. The course content is delivered in a mixture of online and face to face tutorials. The degrees are similar in price to universities. Courses include; H.Dip in Primary Education, MSc in Pharmaceutical Medicine, MA in Public Administration, MA in Hospitality Management, Law Society Entrance, BA in Criminal Justice. Hibernia also offers a range of 12-week courses.
For further information contact:
Phone: 01-6610168
Website: www.hiberniacollege.net

Financial Supports

Funding: AONTAS Policy

AONTAS has been lobbying for years for better financial supports for Irelands 300,000 adult learners. In January 2007, AONTAS launched the 'Demand Your Right to Learn' campaign. Under this campaign AONTAS made 10 key demands, asking the government of Ireland to improve funding, structures and supports for adult learners. The campaign has had two major successes to date in relation to funding:

1. Minister for Lifelong Learning, Sean Haughey announced on 11th April 2007 that fees for the Back to Education Initiative (BTEI) part time programme would be eliminated for participants with less the upper second level education (i.e. Junior Certificate or equivalent or less).

   Effectively, this means that people in low paid or part time work who left school early will now be able to access BTEI part time courses free of charge from 1st September 2007.

   AONTAS has demanded that BTEI continues to receive increased investment. AONTAS believe that people earning less than €35,000 per annum should not have to pay any course fees to participate in BTEI.

2. The abolition of part time fees has long been a priority for AONTAS. By abolishing part time fees learners will have the opportunity to return to learning without incurring undue financial hardship.

   At the Fianna Fail Ard Fheis in March, an Taoiseach Bertie Ahern TD, promised means tested free fees for part time learners in higher education. While this would go some way to relieving financial hardship for some learners, AONTAS is demanding a further commitment from government to remove fees for all adult learners engaging in part time third level education.

Information on funding and grants can often be confusing and constantly changing. This section of the booklet aims to provide up to date and easy to understand information on financial supports for adult learners.

Free Fees Initiative

What is the Free Fees Initiative?

Under the free fees initiative, the DES meets the tuition fees of eligible students who are attending full-time undergraduate courses (other than Third Level Training certificate and diploma courses in the Institutes of Technology where no tuition fees are payable). Such courses must generally be of at least two years duration and at approved colleges. These colleges include the publicly funded colleges and a number of non-publicly funded religious colleges which are approved for the purposes of the Higher Education Grants Scheme and which are part of the CAO system of entry.

Financial Supports

Free Fees Initiative Continued

Who is eligible for Free Fees?

(a) Students who are first-time undergraduates, and

(b) Students who hold E.U. Nationality or Official Refugee Status

(c) and have been ordinarily resident in an E.U. Member State for at least three of the five years preceding their entry to an approved course.

Students who are repeating a year at the same level are generally not eligible under the Initiative. The Free Fees Initiative does not cover the charge payable by students to the colleges towards the cost of registration, examination and student services.

To find out more information on the Free Fees Initiative please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Higher Education Grants Scheme

Who can apply for a Higher Education Grant?

You can apply for the Higher Education Grants Scheme if you are a student undertaking an approved full-time undergraduate course of at least 2 years in duration or a full-time postgraduate course.

Who is eligible to apply?

You must meet a number of criteria to qualify for the grant including academic attainment. This grant is also means tested. Further details in relation to the process of means testing are available from www.education.ie

The scheme applies to you if you:

- Are starting an approved course for the first time in the academic year in question.
- Mature students should be entering college for the first time to complete an undergraduate level course or re-entering college to take up/ finish a postgraduate level course for the first time. Applicants may already hold a postgraduate qualification and are re-entering to progress to a further postgraduate course which signifies progression.
- Have previously attended an approved course but due to circumstances may not have successfully completed the course and are returning following a break of at least 5 years in order to pursue an approved course at the same level. In this case, you will be considered a *Second Chance Student*.

Financial Supports

Higher Education Grants Scheme continued

To be eligible for a grant under this scheme, you must meet specific criteria in relation to the following areas:

Residence: Your parents or guardians or, you yourself if you are an independent mature candidate (see below), must have been ordinarily resident in the administrative area of the local authority from 1 October prior to applying for the grant. The local authority has *discretion* to waive this requirement in *exceptional circumstances*.

Age: You must be at least 17 years of age on 1 January of the year following your application.

Nationality: In order to get a maintenance grant you must:

- Be a national of an EU member state or an EEA member state or Switzerland or
- Have refugee status or
- Have been granted humanitarian leave to remain in Ireland (foreign nationals granted leave to remain under the Irish Born Child scheme –IBC/05 are not eligible) or
- Have permission to remain in Ireland by virtue of marriage to an Irish national living here or be the child of such a person or
- Have permission to remain in Ireland by virtue of marriage to a national of another EU member state who is living in Ireland or be the child of such a person

What courses are approved under this scheme?

The courses approved under this scheme are:

(a) Full-time undergraduate courses of not less than 2 years duration or full-time postgraduate courses of not less than 1 year duration taken in one of the approved institutions

(b) Full-time undergraduate courses of not less than 2 years duration taken in a publicly funded university or third-level institution in another EU member state, with the exception of the following:

- Courses provided in a college that are offered in private commercial third-level colleges in the state and that are validated by that college
- Courses in colleges akin to private commercial colleges in Ireland

(c) A full-time undergraduate course of a minimum duration of 1 year in one of the approved institutions which represents progression from a FETAC Level 5 qualification and that leads to the award of a qualification of third-level standard following a terminal examination

(d) A full-time undergraduate course of a minimum duration of 1 year in one of the approved institutions which represents progression from a Level 7 (Ordinary Bachelor Degree or National Diploma) course to an *add-on* Level 8 (Honours Bachelor Degree) course

Financial Supports

Higher Education Grants Scheme continued

Independent mature candidates

Candidates who were ordinarily resident with their parents from October 1st of the year preceding the year of application are considered dependent on their parents and their income is assessed together with their parents' income(s). Independent mature candidates are candidates aged over 23 who live separately from their parents from October 1 of the year preceding the year of application. They are assessed on their own income.

Further information about grants can be obtained from the Student Support Unit of the Department of Education and Science. For more information visit www.education.ie
Students applying for the Higher Education Grant should apply to their local authority office not later than 31st August of the year you are applying for the grant.

To find out more information on the Free Fees Initiative please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Third Level Maintenance Grants Scheme for Trainees

What is the Third Level Maintenance Grants Scheme for Trainees?

The Third Level Maintenance Grants Scheme for Trainees scheme covers a series of one, two and three-year courses leading to qualifications at Level 6 (Higher Certificate) and at Level 7 (Ordinary Bachelor Degree) in Institutes of Technology. It is open to candidates who require higher level initial education and training to improve their employment prospects and who are entering approved Middle Level Technician or Higher Technical Business Skills courses for the first time in the academic year in question.

Is it open to mature students?

Yes the scheme is also open to mature candidates who are re-entering in order to complete a course as mentioned above.

Maintenance Grants Scheme for Students attending PLC Courses

The Maintenance Grants Scheme for Students attending Post Leaving Certificate Courses is open to candidates who are entering approved Post Leaving Certificate courses for the first time in the academic year in question.

Who is eligible?

The eligibility conditions are generally the same as those for the Higher Education Grants Scheme. You must be at least 16 years of age at the start of the course. Grants are available for full-time approved Post Leaving Certificate courses of at least one year duration at approved Post Leaving Certificate centres.

Financial Supports

Maintenance Grants Scheme for Students attending PLC Courses continued

How do you know if a centre is approved under this scheme?

A full list of approved centres is available from your local vocational education committee (VEC). The courses this applies to are:

- Full-time third-level courses
- Recognised PLC courses, student nurse training or student Garda training
- CERT courses of at least one year's duration
- Full-time Teagasc courses in agricultural colleges
- Recognised full-time further education courses of at least one year's duration in Northern Ireland

When do you apply for this grant?

Application forms and rates for the maintenance grant are generally available by the end of June of the year you are applying for the grant.

What are the ordinary maintenance grant rates for 2007/2008?

Below is a diagram which indicates the current maintenance grant rates. Students should note that the adjacent rate of maintenance grant applies to students who live 24 kilometres or less from the college they plan to attend. The non-adjacent rate applies to everyone else, including all mature students both dependent and independent.

Important points to note: This current academic year, where two or more children (or the candidate's parent) are pursuing the courses listed above, the reckonable income limits may be increased by approximately €4,000 and where there are two such children it may be increased by approximately €9,000 i.e. increments of €4,000 per child.

Rates	**Non-Adjacent Rate**	**Adjacent Rate**
Full Maintenance	€3,420	€1,370
Part maintenance (75%)	€2,565	€1,030
Part maintenance (50%)	€1,710	€685
Part maintenance (25%)	€855	€345

Financial Supports

Maintenance Grants Scheme for Students attending PLC Courses continued

How do you apply ?

There is an official application form for each of these grant schemes. The form is available from your local Vocational Education Committee (VEC) or your local authority, depending on the grant you are applying for and it covers both the ordinary and special rates of maintenance grant. There is a sample application form and accompanying notes on the website of the Department of Education and Science.

Students who are applying for the Vocational Education Committee's Scholarship, the Third Level Maintenance Grant for Trainees or the Post-Leaving Certificate Maintenance Grant should apply to their local VEC.

The Special Rates of Maintenance Grants (The "Top Up" Grant)

What is the "Top Up" Grant?

The **Special Rates of Maintenance Grant** known as the "Top-Up" Grant was introduced in 2000/01. It is aimed at tackling low participation rates by disadvantaged students in further and higher education.

What are the rates for 2007/2008?

To find out the most up to date exact full rates for the "Top Up" Grant contact your local VEC or County Council.

Who is eligible for the "Top-Up" Grant ?

- the child dependants of claimants of specified long-term social welfare payments, FIS, or any of the designated programmes (e.g. FÁS training programme);
- Students who were assessed on their own income, or that of their partner/spouse, where the income includes one of the specified long-term social welfare payments, FIS, or any of the designated programmes (e.g. FÁS training programme).
- Criteria of eligibility regarding a person's income may vary. Therefore applicants should check with their local VEC or County Council to see if they are entitled to a top up grant.

How does a student apply for this grant?

A student is required to complete just one application form from which they can be assessed for both the ordinary and "top-up" grant.

To find out more information on all Maintenance Grants please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Financial Supports

The Vocational Education Committees Scholarship Scheme

The Vocational Education Committees Scholarship Scheme applies to candidates who satisfy the criteria for the Higher Education Grants Scheme, in addition candidates who have satisfactorily completed 2 years of a Level 7 (Ordinary Bachelor Degree or National Diploma) course and have gained admission through exemption to year two of a Level 8 (Honours Bachelor Degree) course.

The eligibility conditions are generally the same as those for the Higher Education Grants Scheme.

Approved courses include:

(a) Full-time courses at the colleges of the National University of Ireland; Trinity College Dublin; Dublin City University; the University of Limerick; Queens University, Belfast or the University of Ulster where the student progresses to the university course by completing a course at Level 6 (National Certificate) or Level 7 (National Diploma)

(b) Full-time approved undergraduate and postgraduate courses at approved institutions

(c) BTEC Higher National Diploma (HND) courses in certain colleges of further education and colleges of further and higher education in Northern Ireland

(d) Full-time approved undergraduate courses in third-level institutions in EU member states, on the same basis as the Higher Education Grants Scheme, in the case of students who have been awarded a National Certificate or a National Diploma

What is the value of the grant?

The value of this grant is the same as the ordinary maintenance grant.

When should you apply for this grant?

Generally application forms for this grant must be received by your local Vocational Educational Committee no later than the end of August but once again it is advisable to check the dates with you local VEC prior to making an application.

To find out more information on The Vocational Education Committee Scholarship Scheme please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Financial Supports

Financial Assistance for Postgraduate Study

Can students get a grant for postgraduate study in Ireland or outside Ireland?

Financial assistance towards the cost of maintenance and fees for post-graduate study in respect of approved courses provided at approved 3rd level colleges/institutions in Ireland is available.

Who is eligible to get a grant for postgraduate study?

- You may be eligible to receive grant assistance for more than one postgraduate qualification once you are progressing to a further postgraduate course at a higher level than that already attained.
- The course being chosen should show a clear progression from any previous postgraduate study.
- Students seeking funding at postgraduate level are limited to funding for a maximum of four years study in all.

What if a student doesn't qualify for a grant?

Students should note that there is no funding available in respect of postgraduate study outside of Ireland. If you do not qualify for a grant you may be eligible for tax relief at the standard rate of tax on fees paid. Section 21 of the Finance Act provides for tax relief on fees for part-time and full-time postgraduate students in publicly funded colleges and private colleges in Ireland.

Who should students contact for further information?

Contact your local tax office for details or see http://www.revenue.ie/

Are there any other sources of funding available?

There are also a number of scholarships and fellowships for study abroad that are awarded annually by foreign governments to Irish students who are engaged in, or have completed a course of a third-level education.

Who do students contact for more information in relation to studying in the U.K?

Students seeking information on fees, courses, application procedures and scholarships at postgraduate level etc., in the UK should access the BRITISH COUNCIL Ireland website: www.britishcouncil.org/ireland/

The Back to Education Allowance (BTEA) facilitates a postgraduate option. However this option is only available to those who wish to pursue the following;

- A postgraduate course of study that leads to a Higher Diploma (H Dip. Qualification, or
- A Graduate Diploma in Education (Primary Teaching)

Financial Supports

Financial Assistance for Postgraduate Study continued

However if you already hold a third level undergraduate qualification, a BTEA application to pursue an equivalent third level undergraduate qualification will only be permitted in very special circumstances.

Other types of postgraduate qualification are recognised for BTEA reasons. The BTEA will not be awarded to people who are already in receipt of a postgraduate qualification. Students; who were on the BTEA undergraduate option before January 2003, will not be affected by this change.

To find out more information on Financial Assistance for Postgraduate Study Scheme please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

The Student Assistance Fund

The purpose of the Student Assistance Fund is to assist students in a sensitive and sympathetic manner that might otherwise, due to financial reasons experience serious hardship or be unable to continue their third-level studies.

Who can apply for The Student Assistance Fund?

Students can apply who are experiencing a particular or unexpected hardship during their course of study.

Where do students apply?

Students can apply to their local Higher Education Institution to either the Access Office or Student Services Office within their institution.

When do students apply?

Generally students can apply at any time during the academic term, however it is advisable for students to contact the fund administrator within the institution they are attending; as some institutions have closing dates.

How much will students receive?

The Student Assistance Fund is given to the institutions on a per-capita basis to each publicly funded higher education institution, which means that each institution will receive a limited amount of funding depending on how many students are attending. The amount you receive will depend entirely on your circumstances. It is important for students to remember that their application is treated in a confidential, discretionary manner.

To find out more information on The Student Assistance Fund please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Financial Supports

The Back to Education Allowance

What is the Back to Education Allowance?

The Back to Education Allowance is administered by the Department of Social and Family Affairs. It is a scheme which allows you to hold onto your social welfare payment whilst returning to approved full-time second level and third level courses.

What are the options available?

The 1st option available is the Second Level Option; this allows you to attend a second level course of education at any community, comprehensive, secondary or vocational school. However the course must be full-time with progression to a certificate recognised by the Department of Education & Science or approved by the Further Education and Training Awards Council (FETAC), e.g. Junior Cert., Leaving Cert., Post Leaving Cert. or a City and Guilds Certificate. There are a number of other Second Level BTEA options available which include Certain City and Guilds courses, Foundation/ Access courses at Universities or Institutions of Technology and Business & Technology Education Council (BTEC) courses

The 2nd option available is the Third Level Option; this allows you to attend a third level course of education at any university; third level college or institution. Once again in this case the course must but be a full-time day course of study which is approved by one of the following;

- The Department of Education & Science Higher Education Grants Scheme
- The Vocational Education Committee's Grants Scheme, or
- The Third Level Maintenance Grant Scheme for Trainees, or
- If it is recognised by the Higher Education and Training Awards Council (HETAC)

Who can apply?

- Learners who are aged 21 or over (24 for post-graduate course) and,
- Who are in receipt of the following payments for at least 6 months (156 days) for the **Second Level Option** and 12 months (312 days) in the case of those pursuing the Third Level Option: JA, JB, One Parent Family, Farm Assist, Deserted Wife's Allowance/Benefit,
    - Widow's/Widower's contributory or non-contributory pension, Prisoners' Wife's Allowance or Carers Allowance (having finished caring responsibilities); or
- Aged 18 or over and getting one of the following payments for at least 6 months (156 days) for **Second Level Option** and 12 months (312 days) for **Third Level Option:** Blind Pension, Invalidity Pension or Incapacity Supplement, Disability Allowance; or
- Aged between 18 and 20 and out of formal education for two years and who is in receipt of the following payments for at least 6 month (156 days) for **Second Level Option** (SLO) and 12 months (312 days) for Third Level Option: JB, JA or One- Parent Family; or getting the Illness Benefit for three years or more.

Financial Supports

The Back to Education Allowance continued

- If an applicant spent time on a VTOS, Youthreach, C.E, Back to Work Allowance, FAS Job Initiative or Revenue Job Assist it can count towards the 6 months qualifying period.
- You can also access this scheme if you have been receiving an unemployment payment immediately before applying for the Back to Education Allowance.
- If an applicant has spent time on Illness Benefit this can be used to make up the six months qualifying period, however the applicant has to be on one of the relevant payments; as mentioned above for more than three months (78 days) before beginning the course.
- If an applicant spent time in prison this can also be used to make up the six months qualifying period.

Additional Information:

Your BTEA is not affected by any Maintenance Grants you may receive.
If you work part-time or casually it will not affect you BTEA payment.
For further information on special provisions refer to the Back to Education section of:
www.welfare.ie

How do you apply for this grant?

If you would like to apply for the BTEA or would like more information on the Back to Education Initiative there are a number of people who can help you. These include the following;

- The Adult Education Officer in your local Vocational Education Committee (VEC)
- Contact a member of staff in your Local Employment Service (LES)
- The Education Co-ordinator in your local Area Based Partnership
- Contact a member of staff in the Department of Social and Family Affairs

To find out more information on The Back to Education Allowance please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Additional Supports & Scholarships

Tax Relief

Tax relief for can be claimed on tuition fees up to a maximum fee limit of roughly €5000. Students can claim up to 20% of course fees back through tax relief however students are advised to contact their local tax office in relation to this as the course must be ran from or in conjunction with an approved institutions . To get a full list of approved courses for the 2007 scheme for claiming tax relief students should visit www.revenue.ie

Financial Supports

Additional Supports & Scholarships continued

The Millennium Partnership Fund for Disadvantage

A bit of background……

Under the Operational Programme for local Urban and Rural Development 1994-1999, 38 Area Based Partnership companies involving a partnership of statutory and voluntary agencies were established in areas of disadvantage. This changed to become the Local Development Social Inclusion Programme (LDSIP) under the National Development Plan 2000-2006. The LDSIP is a series of measures designed to tackle social exclusion, improve employment prospects and deliver a more sustainable economy. Each partnership company supports a range of education, training and support services to designated areas of disadvantage. The LDSIP is delivered through 38 Partnerships and 33 Community Groups. The LDSIP proposed under the NDP specifically names education and training as one of the key actions.

The Partnerships work together with people who live in the local areas, community groups and statutory agencies to address issues such as early school leaving, unemployment, active citizenship, families with difficulties, and community childcare. The key approach of any Partnership is to identify new ways to deal with issues by getting all relevant parties in discussion. Often the objective is to mainstream successful projects and make them the responsibility of the appropriate public service provider. The Partnership's role is one of linking, coordinating and providing a neutral space for organisations to work together.

Areas of work often include;

- Community Development
- Families and Children
- Young people and education
- Services to the Unemployed
- Effective Organisation;

The following disadvantaged individuals and communities are specifically named amongst the target groups of the LDSIP:

- The long-term unemployed
- Disadvantaged women
- Travellers
- Disadvantaged communities living in isolated rural areas or deprived urban areas.
- Older people
- Disabled people
- Homeless people
- Ex-prisoners and ex-offenders
- Low-income farm households
- Asylum seekers and refugees
- Substance misusers
- Lone parents
- The underemployed
- Young people at risk

Financial Supports

Additional Supports & Scholarships continued

The Millennium Partnership Fund for Disadvantage

What is the Millennium Partnership for Disadvantage?

Access to Third Level Education was announced by the Minister for Education & Science in September 2000. Pobal has managed the fund to date in collaboration with the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education. The Millennium Partnership Fund is available to students from Pobal-funded Partnership and Community Partnership areas to support their retention and participation in further and/or higher education. Students who are in need of additional assistance in completing further and/or higher education studies may apply to the Partnership or Community Partnership in the area where they have been awarded a Local Authority or VEC grant. The following supports are generally available under the Fund but it is advisable to check with the local group for confirmation:

- Financial supports to meet participation costs
- Provision of Information e.g. guidance and mentoring
- Study supports including tuition and study skills.

Enquiries regarding criteria, closing dates and applications for the fund should be made to your local Partnership or Community Partnership at the start of the academic year in question. Applications should be made in August / September. Students must be living within the Partnership area to which they are applying. Eligibility for such assistance is based on certain criteria which can differ from one Partnership to the next. You should normally apply for assistance from this fund for a specific outgoing e.g. course fees, transport, child care. It is possible to get assistance from this fund if you are in receipt of other funding however there is no guarantee you will get this every year.

For further information on who to contact please refer to the contacts section for Educational Co-ordinator within Partnerships.

Bank of Ireland Millennium Scholars Trust

What is it?

Established to mark the year 2000, the Bank of Ireland Millennium Scholars Trust will provide up to 60 scholarships each year of the first decade of the new millennium. Bank of Ireland has allocated €12.5 million to the Trust. Over a ten-year period, the Trust will facilitate a broad range of third-level educational opportunities for people from diverse backgrounds who have in common the potential and motivation to succeed in their chosen field of study. The Trust is applied to the creation of scholarships. These scholarships fund people with talent and ability who, because of economic circumstances or other barriers such as disability, early school leaving, drug abuse etc. are prevented from reaching their full potential.

What would a scholarship award cover?

The Bank of Ireland Millennium Scholars Trust will award funding towards educational and living costs, substantially relieving those who are awarded a scholarship of the costs of participating in higher education.

Financial Supports

Additional Supports & Scholarships continued

Bank of Ireland Millennium Scholars Trust

Who can apply?

Applications are welcomed from individuals who due to circumstances including low earnings are prevented from reaching their educational potential. These candidates will be identified as people having the ability, interest and motivation to participate successfully in third-level education but who wouldn't be able to reach their full potential and progress without financial aid and other supports. Applicants must be over 16 years of age at the time the course of interest begins, however there is no upper age limit on applicant's age. Candidates will be selected from a number of categories which indicate the desired profile of applicants. These are as follows;

- **Third-level Entry -** Students in their final year of secondary education, mature students and candidates for third-level from other progression routes.
- **Current Third-level -** Students currently in third-level education who would be unlikely to continue with their undergraduate courses without the financial aid of the Scholars Trust.

Scholarships are generally awarded to first time entrants to third level. However it is important to note that the Scholars Trust does not usually fund individuals who have already demonstrated their ability to access further education by holding a Level 7 award (Ordinary Bachelor Degree) or higher.

- **Creative/Performing Arts -** Candidates who display exceptional ability in the arts who face significant obstacles to developing their potential through further study or training. Scholarships in this category are awarded for Degree / Initial Professional Training and for Advanced Studies / Specialised Professional. In general, where the opportunity is abroad, these awards should be part of the higher education system of the country in question.

It is important to note that there are conditions attached to the award of scholarships, however these will be made clear to applicants if they are successful in their application.

How do you apply?

To be eligible to apply for a scholarship candidates must be proposed by a recognised Nominating Body. The Trust is administered by the National College of Ireland (NCI) on behalf of the Bank of
Ireland. Closing date for nominations is usually March of each year. Nominating Bodies comprise of a range of educational, cultural and voluntary organisations and include groups which work with
people who are socially disadvantaged or those with disabilities. Nearly 900 organisations are registered with the Trust including secondary schools, third level institutions, youth and community groups, arts and cultural organisations, Local Development Companies and disability group.

Financial Supports

Additional Supports & Scholarships continued

Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA) Third Level Higher Education Scheme

What is the Scheme?

In 1997 a report published by the ESRI highlighted the fact that the number of individuals going onto third level education from the Dublin Dockland area was remarkably low. In direct response to this The Docklands Authority decided to provide a variety of scholarships with a view to improving the standards of education in the area. These scholarships aim to encourage, assist and support individuals in the locality to pursue their educational potential.

How much financial support is available?

Scholarships for full-time study offer prospective learners over one thousand euro per annum for students on degree courses. Funding is also available for students on Diploma or Certificate courses, although this amount is substantially less. The bursary is to help with the costs of books, materials and the many other associated costs of further education.

However the good news for adult learners who don't wish to pursue a full-time course is that The Dockland Authority in conjunction with the IFSC Dublin Inner City Trust, has introduced a Third Level Scholarship Programme for Docklanders taking part time certified courses. Again this scholarship offers a substantial amount per year for those on degree courses and also for those on Diploma and Certificate courses. This support will cover the cost of tuition fees, books, tutorials, field trips and other academic activities.

Who can you apply?

Firstly the scheme is **only** open to residents living in the Dublin Docklands catchment and immediate hinterland area. Applicants who intend to pursue fulltime education must have obtained a place on one of the approved courses on the basis of Leaving Certificate results obtained in the year of entry. The criteria for selection will be academic achievement, financial circumstances and motivation. Over the years applications have increased and therefore deadlines of application must be adhered to.

If you wish to participate in this programme you must contact the Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA) for an application form. Applicant should once again check closing dates with the DDDA prior to making an application. Applicants must also be available to attend interview.

SIPTU Scholarships for Members

What is SIPTU?

SIPTU stands for The Services, Industrial, Professional and Technical Union (SIPTU). This union represents over 200,000 Irish workers from almost every category of employment across practically every sector of the Irish economy. They provide the expertise, experience and back-up services necessary to assist workers in their dealings with employers, government and industrial relations institutions.

Financial Supports

Additional Supports & Scholarships continued

SIPTU Scholarships for Members

What financial support do they provide?

Through their educational and development support scheme, they provide support for members to take part in further education as to expand their employment and promotion prospects while at the same time contributing to the development of the Union. The scheme tries to improve the skills of Union representatives and members so they can participate more effectively in workplace union organisation and representation. SIPTU also encourages the study of key issues in trade unionism, equality, industrial relations and the wider labour movement. The scheme has a number of elements that supports adults in education. A large sum of money is allocated to this fund each year. It involves up to ten awards every year, each award is worth an allocated amount of financial support for each year of study up to a maximum of four years. These awards are made to Union members who are involved in studying or researching a subject related to trade union issues and industrial relations at National Certificate, Diploma, Degree, Post Graduate Diploma or Post- Graduate Degree level in a recognized third-level educational institution. SIPTU also supports mature students who are studying for the Leaving Certificate provided they meet the required earnings criteria. Financial support is available to help with the costs of books and materials.

Who is eligible to apply?

This support is only open to members of SIPTU. All applicants must have at least one full years membership of the Union and be in benefit by the time the application and the payments are made. The closing date for application is generally the end of May prior to the academic year for which the scholarship is required; however applicants are advised to check dates with SIPTU. If you would like further information regarding the scholarships or to find out where you local branch is contact:

St. Vincent De Paul Education Grant

The Saint Vincent De Paul (SVP) is Ireland's largest volunteer organisation, with a custom of supporting the poorest members of our society. SVP are motivated in what they do by their belief that they can make a difference to the lives of thousands of people in Ireland who are prevented from participating fully in the economic and social life of their own communities. The SVP believes that providing people with access to education is one way of making sure that people don't get stuck in a cycle of poverty. The SVP scheme provides a support to adult learners wishing to go back to education through their Education Grant.Their emphasis is on giving people from disadvantaged backgrounds the opportunity to either stay on or return to learning so that they have a better chance of being able to find employment and support themselves and their families. SVP take a very practical approach to dealing with applications. Each application is dealt with on an individual basis and the merit of the application. The SVP in Ireland is divided into 13 Administrative Regions and the criteria for application varies from region to region. Their education grant provides help with childcare costs which can be a major obstacle for many adult learners wishing to return to adult education. It can also cover a number of outgoings for example; books, materials and transport.

Financial Supports

Additional Supports & Scholarships continued

St. Vincent De Paul Education Grant

Over the years SVP have helped learners complete a wide variety of courses that led to employment for those availing of the grant. Learners have completed courses in counselling, photography, complementary therapy, graphic design, fitness training and computer studies. The assistance that SVP provides can support learners to complete their education.

The Nova Fund

What is NOVA?

NOVA stands for the National Office for Victims of Abuse. It was established as part of the overall Government Strategy to support persons whom as children were abused while living under the care of the State. The Departments of Education and Science and Health and Children fund the office in full and it conducts its work with the support of the South Western Area Health Board.

What services does NOVA provide?

Along with helping people to make an application to the Commission to Inquire into Child Abuse or the Redress Board NOVA will assist you in a number of ways. Staff will help people in accessing their records in the Department of Education and Science, for example, or any other public body or organisation that would hold records on them. NOVA will also provide information and referral service to those wishing to gain access to reading and writing services, health services, the National Counselling Services, education and other appropriate social services.

What Educational Services do they provide?

NOVA provides people with wide-ranging educational programmes covering reading, writing, maths, aromatherapy, home skills, art therapy, drama therapy, music therapy, singing and computer classes. Learners can get assistance to go on other courses that aren't part of the NOVA educational programme and NOVA has a full time Education Facilitator, who is available to assist learners access a course of their choice.

Will funding be made available to access the course of your choice?

To date €12.7m has been made available under the terms of that deal to provide educational programmes to Former Residents and their families. This fund is being administered through NOVA. Application forms are available from the office and you, your spouse and your children may qualify for funding under the Criteria for Eligibility that has been set down by the Committee.

To find out more information on all Additional Supports and Scholarships please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

HOW TO?

What is the how to section?

Every year the AONTAS Information Referral Service provides both direct and referral information on adult education issues to individuals and groups. This section deals with the most frequently asked individual queries in relation to career paths advice. It aims to provide detailed information to the learner that will point them in the right direction on their lifelong learning journey.

How to repeat the Leaving Certificate?

Why repeat the Leaving Certificate?

Students may repeat the Leaving Certificate for a number of reasons including:

- To obtain points required for entry to a Degree course at University, or Certificate / Diploma / Degree course at the Institutes of Technology.
- To obtain the leaving Certificate standard required for entry to a PLC course.
- To obtain the full Leaving Certificate standard required for entry to and promotion in many careers

How do you go about selecting a course?

Both City and County VECs offer repeat Leaving Certificate courses in a number of their colleges throughout the country. Alternatively, repeat Leaving Certificate courses are offered in a number of private colleges. Enrolment and advice on subject choices normally take place from the beginning of August to mid September each year, depending on the college. Entry onto a course may be subject to an interview and you may be asked to meet with a Guidance Counsellor from the college. To find out more about gaining access to a repeat Leaving Certificate Course contact the college directly.

How much does it cost to repeat the Leaving Certificate?

It varies. The cost of doing a repeat Leaving Certificate course through a VEC College is approximately €200. However students should check with their local VEC to see what exact costs are involved. The cost of doing a repeat Leaving Certificate course in one of the private colleges is considerably higher.

What funding is available for people participating in repeat Leaving Certificate courses?

In the case of a VEC, repeat Leaving Certificate course participants can apply for a place on the VTOS scheme if they have been in receipt of a social welfare payment for six months prior to applying for the course, and if they are aged over 21 years. Under the VTOS scheme participants retain their social welfare allowance and the course fees are paid for. Books and course material are provided by the school or centre. However, it should be noted that there are long waiting lists for people waiting to get onto the VTOS schemes. For further details on the VTOS scheme ask at your chosen VEC college. The Back to Education Allowance (BTEA) is available to unemployed people, lone parents and people with a disability who are getting certain payments from the Department of Social and Family Affairs. It is not an unemployment payment. Payment is not means tested and participants get the same rate as the current unemployment rate. **For further information on the BTEA please refer to page 40.**

HOW TO?

How to repeat the Leaving Certificate? ...Continued

How long does it take to repeat the Leaving Certificate?

It varies. Full-time repeat Leaving Certificate courses are normally offered over a one year period and part-time repeat Leaving Certificate courses are normally offered over a two year period.

What subjects can you study with a repeat Leaving Certificate course?

Most colleges offer a broad range of subjects both at higher and ordinary level. Availability of subjects at respective levels is however normally subject to demand.

To find out more information on Repeating the Leaving Certificate please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

How to make an application through the CAO?

What is the CAO?

The CAO is the office appointed by the Higher Education Institutions with the task of processing centrally all applications to their first year undergraduate/diploma/certificate courses. In Ireland you apply for almost all full-time undergraduate courses (Higher Certificates (Level 6), Ordinary Bachelor's degrees (Level 7) and Honors' Bachelor's degrees (Level 8)) in the universities and Institutes of Technology through the Central Applications Office (CAO). The CAO provides an applications pack with a handbook that lists all the courses on offer and gives information on how to apply. Decisions on offers of places are normally made in August and September, after the results of the Leaving Certificate have been announced. A student must also have the particular academic entry requirements (also called matriculation requirements) for the course he/she wants to take.

What are the rules for application?

Students who have taken the Leaving Certificate examination are allocated points for the results they get in their six best subjects, at a single sitting of the Leaving Certificate. The points awarded depend on the level of achievement in the subject. The number of entry-level points needed for any course depends on the number of places and the number of applicants for those places so the entry level varies from year to year. However students must keep in mind that higher points are awarded for Higher-Level papers than for Ordinary-Level papers.

What are the academic entry requirements for universities?

The minimum entry requirement for the University of Limerick and the universities that are part of the National University of Ireland (NUI) six subjects, including Irish, English and a third language. However in two of these subjects, students must have obtained a Grade C at Higher Level. Students applying to Dublin City University must have six Leaving Certificate subjects, with a Grade C on two Higher-Level papers and a pass in maths and either Irish or English.
Those applying to Trinity College Dublin need a maximum of six subjects, with a Grade C on three Higher Level papers and a pass in maths, English and another language.

HOW TO?

How to make an application through the CAO? …Continued

What are the academic requirements for level 6, 7 and 8 courses in institutes of technology?

Generally students will be required to achieve five Grade D's, including maths and Irish/English, for level 6 and 7 (Higher Certificate and Ordinary Degree) courses. For Level 8 (Honours Degree) courses students are required to have obtained a minimum of Grade C in two subjects at Higher Level and a Grade D in four other subjects which must include maths and Irish/English.

What are the entry requirements for colleges of education?

There are several Colleges of Education for primary school teachers in Ireland; these colleges offer three year full time courses which lead to Bachelors of Education. Colleges of education require a minimum of three Grade Cs on Higher Level papers, including Irish and three Grade Ds, including English and maths. Although proficiency in the Irish language is currently an entry requirement for courses in primary teacher education, accommodations can be made in certain instances. Teachers of second level education generally take a university degree followed by a one year Higher Diploma in Education, though there are a number of Colleges of Education for secondary teachers offering teaching qualifications in specific subjects.

Are PLC courses administered through the CAO?

No, there is no central applications body for Post-Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses. Students must apply directly to the individual colleges.

What is the criteria for mature student applications?

Generally mature applicants should be over the age of 23 years before the start of January for admission the following Autumn and they must apply by the 1st of February. However, some HEIs may have a different age requirement, different definitions of mature applicants, etc., and some will consider applications received after February 2007.Certain restrictions may apply in the case of Mature Applicants. Therefore these applicants **MUST** contact the Admissions Office or Mature Students Officer of the appropriate Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) well in advance of the closing date for applications. Mature applicants who are applying for nursing/midwifery, using **mature applicant course codes,** must apply for these courses through CAO by the beginning of February also. Mature applicants may be required to apply directly to a HEI rather than or in conjunction with making an application. Therefore it is necessary that a prospective student researches what is the application procedure for the HEI of their interest before submission of applications. Mature applicants applying to: NUI Maynooth ,Pontifical University Maynooth and Trinity College must submit the normal application to CAO by the closing date of as specified by the CAO. In addition, they must also submit to the appropriate HEI, generally by the 1st of February**,** a separate Form which is available from the Admissions Office of the HEI. It is important to note that Individual HEIs may have restrictions on Late Applications and Changes of Mind.

Mature applicants should make enquiries from the appropriate Admissions Office or Mature Students Officer **BEFORE** submitting a Late Application or Change of Mind.

HOW TO?

How to make an application through the CAO? …Continued

What dates should you make a note of?

- The closing date for applications from Irish and other European Union nationals is normally the 1st of February each year.
- March/April is usually the months where interviews and portfolio presentations take place but these are only for restricted courses.
- You can submit a "Change of Mind" form to amend your choice of courses from 1st of May until the 1st of July.
- The 1st of August is when Round Zero offers are made by the CAO; this round only applies to mature students, deferred students and reserved places etc.
- August 15th is generally when the Leaving Certificate results come out. This is shortly followed by rounds of offers. Round One offers are made by the CAO on August 20th. The closing date for acceptance of offers from this round is usually August 28th. This is generally followed by several rounds of offers from mid to late August. Generally the closing the date for acceptance of offers falls the last week in August.

Students should check the exact dates for the above well in advance to making an application with the CAO.

What is a late application?

Late Applications are those which are received after the closing date usually the 1st of February. Late Applications will be accepted up to close of business generally on the 1st May, subject to the exceptions and restrictions mentioned below. However please bear in mind that there is a late application fee**.**

- Late Application may **NOT** be made for Restricted-Application Courses. For further information regarding this please make sure you refer to the warning section of the CAO handbook.
- It is also important to note that Mature Applicant Course Codes which are entered on a Late Application are invalid choices and will **NOT** be considered.
- In addition, individual HEIs may have further restrictions on Late Applications - for example, some HEIs may not consider Late Applications from certain categories of applicant.

Mature applicants in particular should make enquiries from the appropriate Admissions Office BEFORE submitting a Late Application

How do you apply?

For all participating Higher Level Institutions application can be made in paper and online via the CAO. Remember to check the closing date for application relevant to the year you are applying. The application fee whether online or paper has a fee attached, however if you apply online before mid January you may get a discount on this fee. During the year a number of colleges hold open days for students to get a feel of the college they wish to apply to. For further information on open days visit the career events section of www.qualifax.ie

To find out more information on applying for a third level course through the CAO please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

HOW TO?

How to become an adult education / literacy tutor?

In Ireland the VECs and FÁS are the main providers of adult education locally. These are also two of the most well known employers in this area. However recruitment processes for those interested in gaining employment in this area can vary from institution to institution. Therefore potential tutors need to contact them directly to find out about their recruitment processes. Generally there is no hard and fast ways of becoming an adult education tutor. On average most adult education tutors are secondary school teachers. Although it is advisable it is not essential for every adult education tutor to hold a qualification in this area. Most tutors come with an experiential background and have developed their skills through their work. However often tutors can have a variety of qualifications and experiences. There is no set pattern in qualifications.

Community groups such as Meitheal often offer courses independently of VECs & FAS so if you are interested in this field it is recommended that you keep an eye on local community notice-boards to see who is offering what and where. Potential adult education tutors can benefit from gaining certification in facilitation. Groups such as Meitheal deliver courses at various levels in this area. Activelink is an online network for Irish non-profit organisations. Their website www.activelink.ie offers information on training and employment opportunities for those interested in a career in the adult education sector.

It can be advisable but not always necessary to have a qualification in adult education if thinking about teaching adults – UCD, NUIM and UCC all offer certificates and diplomas in adult education, community education and community development. Many of these colleges also offer courses through outreach centres in local communities where students can gain a qualification almost on their doorstep and often these courses are partially funded by the institution offering the qualification or in partnership with another group or institution.

If an adult wants to specialise in teaching literacy there are a number of routes available to them. The National Adult Literacy Agency (NALA) is an independent membership organisation, concerned with developing policy, advocacy, research and offering advisory services in adult literacy work in Ireland.

Adult literacy tutors are people who want to work with adults who have literacy difficulties. To be a tutor it is not necessary that you be a teacher, have a degree or have even finished second level education. Although experience can be of benefit to the student, it is not a requirement for the course as full training is given by NALA. Students will however need to have excellent communication skills, strong literacy skills, be good listeners and have the ability to be discreet. It is essential that tutors provide training in complete confidence.

After completing training with NALA, the tutor and student are matched to start one-to-one sessions. Tutors will be required to meet with the students at an agreed place and time. It is essential that a tutor offer positive encouragement to their student. Being a tutor is a commitment and therefore it is strongly recommended that you have good planning and organisational skills.

HOW TO?

How to become an adult education / literacy tutor? …Continued

How do you find a course to gain a qualification in this area?

NALA in conjunction with Waterford IT (WIT) have developed and managed a Literacy Development Centre.

They offer courses that are designed in the ACCS (Accumulation of Credits and Certification of Subjects) mode and are available on a nationwide basis and as standalone modules. All of these courses are accredited by WIT.

Courses offered in this area are;

- NALA offer a National Certificate in Literacy Development
- NALA offer a B.A (Hons) in Adult Education
- Literacy Tutor courses

To find out more information on becoming an adult education/literacy tutor please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

How to become a Teacher's Assistant?

What is a Teacher's Assistant?

A teacher's assistant assists teachers with classroom activities and learning, generally in primary or secondary school.

What work is involved in becoming a special needs Teacher's Assistant?

If you are interested in becoming a special needs teaching assistant this work involves working with children who may have physical, visual, hearing or behavioural, emotional, or learning difficulties and who therefore have special educational needs.

Special needs teaching assistants may use a number of different aids and teaching methods for example; special equipment, sign language, and Braille. Increasingly the role of the Special Needs Teaching Assistant is to help those with emotional/physical problems to achieve their potential whilst in education.

What does a Teacher's Assistant do?

Teaching assistants help the teachers with classroom activities and learning usually in primary and secondary schools. Teacher's assistants generally work in small groups with the pupils and often on a one-to-one basis. In working closely with the children/ teenagers they assist the teacher by encouraging the students to develop self-confidence, independence and help them to reach their full potential.

Different duties can be involved for example; watching children at playground time, supervising children and encouraging appropriate behaviour.

How to become a Teacher's Assistant? …Continued

Whilst you may be working with a child on a one-to-one basis in this situation you may also be involved in a team.

What qualities should a prospective Teacher's Assistant possess?

Teacher's assistants should be able to maintain order in the classroom, be patient, reliable and sympathetic. Most importantly teacher's assistants must be able to work in a confidential environment. Other useful skills involve being alert, the ability to remain calm, common sense, computer skills, sense of humour and tolerance.

What qualifications do you need to become a Teacher's Assistant?

Previous experience of working with children is essential and maturity is also an advantage. However some employers ask employees to have a formal qualification such as a FETAC certificate in Childcare. Prospective students should note that entry to a FETAC course for mature students does not require formal academic qualifications and is by interview.

So how do you become a Teacher's Assistant?

It is advised that before taking up a course in this area, that prospective students gain some form of experience of working with children. Prior work or voluntary experience can also provide students with the skills needed to be utilised in the future and this also adds to an individual's CV. Individuals can however apply directly to a School of their choice for this position. Many schools provide in- house training. Formal training in areas such as first aid and health and safety can support an individual's application.

To find out more information on becoming a Teacher's Assistant please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

How to become a counsellor?

What is a Counsellor?

A Counsellor helps their clients to explore and gain an understanding of their personal problems. They give their clients an opportunity to come to terms with their problems and to work through them, by offering time, support and attention in complete confidence.

What work is involved in being a Counsellor?

Counsellors usually work on a one-to-one basis and they usually work on average a 37 hour week. They may work in a specialist area for example; marriage guidance or bereavement. However many counsellors choose to specialise in person centred counselling, cognitive behaviour therapy or psychodynamic counselling. Counsellors may choose to work on a voluntary basis, in private practice or freelance.

HOW TO?

How to become a Counsellor? …Continued

What skills are required to be a Counsellor?

There are many important personal qualities required for this area of work which include; excellent listening skills, the ability to provide encouragement and support, discretion, tactfulness, and the ability to sympathise. The ability to maintain confidentiality is a crucial skill that a Counsellor should possess. This job requires very strong communication skills and Counsellors need to have a non-judgemental attitude. This position can be very demanding and sometime stressful.

How do you go about becoming a Counsellor?

Entry to this position is very competitive in Ireland and even though currently no formal educational qualifications are essential. The Irish Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (IACP) has strict ethical guidelines for training for its members and many employers will ask for IACP accreditation.

There are different levels of entry to this job which include;

- Degree level – psychology/ sociology or social work provide useful knowledge required for this type of job. A degree is very useful but not essential
- Postgraduate qualifications in counselling are available
- For adult learners very often life experience, maturity and personal qualities can be more important than formal educational qualifications
- Work experience- as entry to this job is competitive it's important you try gain some experience in the field. This would include anything that involves dealing with the public and using the core skills required for the job. Work experience in the caring profession is of benefit

This can be a very challenging job and although you might be interested in this career you should research what work is involved in being a Counsellor. Voluntary experience is certainly worthwile doing to give you an insight into this area whilst also gaining some experience. You may also want to do an introductory course in ounselling; this also provides a taster to learners of the work that is involved. These courses usually last 8-12 weeks and are offered on part-time/evening basis throughout the country.

To apply for IACP accreditation applicants must join as an associate member and then take a core counselling course which must be at least 2 years duration full or part time. Also an applicant must complete 450 hours of supervision and training of individual client work. The applicant must also be in ongoing supervision in Ireland with the supervisor for one year before the application to IACP.

What can a Counsellor expect to earn?

This job is particularly suitable to part-time work as it is flexible but pay can be low. Therefore it is often necessary to have a second job or income.

To find out more information on becoming a Counsellor please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

HOW TO?

How to become a TEFL tutor?

What is a TEFL tutor?

TEFL tutors teach English to foreign students, either in Ireland or overseas. The emphasis is on reading, conversational, writing and listening skills. This work can be very interesting as a TEFL teacher gets to meet students from a wide variety of backgrounds and cultures.

What job opportunities can arise from completing this course?

As English is increasingly the dominant language of international trade there is a constant demand for teachers of English. Holders of a TEFL qualification can gain employment in many different areas;

- teaching short refresher courses for a local VEC
- teaching short informal English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) courses
- giving private tuition or one to one tuition to a student(s)
- teaching business English that people may require for their jobs.
- teaching in a summer camp or college

What skills are required to pursue a course or career in this area?

Many different skills are required for this type of work which include; patience, excellent communication skills, excellent organisational skills, a good sense of humour, imagination and creativity. Although a foreign language is not a requirement it can often prove to be very useful. As the ages of the learners and the levels of English within a group may vary a TEFL tutor must be able to adapt teaching methods to suit the age and the ability of the group. To teach business English a good understanding of business terminology is essential.

Regulations to teach English vary from country to country, however to teach in Ireland the Department of Education & Science requires the teacher to have a primary degree plus have successfully completed a TEFL course of not less than 70 hours duration.

Currently there are 2 recognised certificates for initial TEFL qualifications on offer by course providers in Ireland.

Certificate in Teaching English as a Foreign Language – This is a full initial TEFL Qualification. All successful students who are awarded this certificate are eligible to work in all Department of Education and Science recognised schools in Ireland. Students are generally required to have a Level 7 Qualification i.e. Ordinary Degree.

The lengths of courses can but the average is generally 115 hours and this will include students gaining practical teaching experience. Courses are offered on a full-time and part-time basis including evenings and weekends. Fees vary from institution to institution and therefore it is recommended that students fully research where they are going to study and obtain all information directly from the institution.

HOW TO?

How to become a TEFL tutor?...Continued

Certificate for Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Secondary Level Students - This is a Preparatory TEFL Qualification aimed at State Qualified Teachers.

It is also open to teachers in their final year of training and all successful students who obtain this qualification are eligible to work in Junior English Language Teaching (Secondary School) sector and in the summer school sector in Ireland. Students are required to have completed or are in the process of completing a H.Dip in Education or alternatively are in their final year of a B.Ed course. Successful completion of both of these is required before students are eligible to teach on Junior courses in recognized English Language Training organisations. These courses are much shorter in length and last approx. 1 week

How can you find a TEFL course?

Courses are delivered on a part-time, evening , distance and weekend basis. However for current listings of recognised courses information is available on the ACELS website: www.acels.ie

To find out more information on how to become a TEFL tutor the CAO please refer to the Contacts section of this booklet

Contacts

By Section…

How to get involved in Adult Learning Contacts			
Adult Basic Education			
Organisation	**Website**	**E-mail**	**Phone**
NALA - National Adult Literacy Agency	www.nala.ie www.literacytools.ie	literacy@nala.ie	01 8554332 or 1800 20 20 65
Adult Literacy Organiser	Contacts details available on page 65 of this booklet		
Adult Guidance Project	Contacts details available on page 73 of this booklet		
Qualifications			
NQAI	www.nqai.ie	info@nqai.ie	01 8871500
FETAC	www.fetac.ie	Information@fetac.ie	01 8659500
HETAC	www.hetac.ie	info@hetac.ie	01 6314537
Department of Education and Science	www.education.ie	info@education.gov.ie	01 8896400
Second and Further Chance Education			
Learning Ireland	www.daycourses.ie	info@learningireland.ie	01 2844738
Learning Ireland	www.nightcourses.ie	info@learningireland.ie	01 2844738
Qualifax	www.qualifax.ie	areddy@qualifax.ie	059 972 0924
VTOS	www.vtos.ie	Online Contact Form	01 4020427
FAS	www.fas.ie	info@fas.ie	01 6070500
Teagasc	www.teagasc.ie	Eric.donald@teagasc.ie	059 9170200
Local Adult Education Officer	Contacts details available on page 62 of this booklet		
Local Adult Guidance Project	Contacts details available on page 73 of this booklet		
Local Education Coordinator	Contacts details available on page 78 of this booklet		
Community Education			
Meitheal	www.meitheal.ie	info@meitheal.ie	01 6719803
Active Link	www.activelink.ie	info@activelink.ie	N/A
Local Community Education Facilitator	Contacts details available on page 76 of this booklet		
Apprenticeships and Training			
Teagasc	www.teagasc.ie	Eric.donald@teagasc.ie	059 9170200
FAS	www.fas.ie	info@fas.ie	01 6070500
Higher and Third Level Education			
Irish Council for International Studies	www.icosirl.ie	office@icosirl.ie	01 6682320
HETAC	www.hetac.ie	info@hetac.ie	01 6314537

Organisation	Website	E-mail	Phone
Qualifax	www.qualifax.ie	areddy@qualifax.ie	059 972 0924
AHEAD - Association for Higher Education Access and Disability	www.ahead.ie	ahead@ahead.ie	01 7164396
Careers 4 Graduates	www.careers4graduates.org	N/A	N/A
Career Directions	www.careerdirections.ie	N/A	
Central Applications Office	www.cao.ie	Online Contact Form	091 509 800
Access Officers	Contacts details available on page 59 of this booklet		

Financial Supports

Organisation	Website	E-mail	Phone
Department of Education and Science	www.education.ie	info@education.gov.ie	01 8896400
Bank of Ireland Millennium Scholars Trust Office	www.ncirl.ie	info@ncirl.ie	01 4498500
Dublin Docklands Development Authority	www.dublindocklands.ie	shickey@dublindocklands.ie	01 8183353
SIPTU	www.siptu.ie	info@siptu.ie	01 8586300
St Vincent de Paul	www.svp.ie	info@svp.ie	01 838 6990
The Education Finance Board	www.educationfinanceboard.com	info@educationfinanceboard.com	01 8745708
INOU	www.inou.ie	info@inou.ie	01 8560088
Local Education Coordinator	Contacts details available on page 78 of this booklet		
Access Officer	Contacts details available on page 59 of this booklet		

How to?

Organisation	Website	E-mail	Phone
Local Adult Guidance Project	Contacts details available on page 73of this booklet		
Adult Education Officer	Contacts details available on page 62 of this booklet		
Local Community Education Facilitator	Contact details available on page 76 of this booklet		
Central Applications Office	www.cao.ie	Online Contact Form	091 509 800

Contacts

Access Officers

Most Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have an Access Officer, who will be able to tell you what supports and services are available to you after you enter the institution. The Access Officer is normally the first port of call for mature students, and can offer guidance and assistance if a student is experiencing any difficulty. Support is also available for people with physical or learning disabilities. Access Officers can also be called Mature Student Officer or Disability Support Officer. If you or someone you know needs assistance and guidance while attending higher education, contact the Access Officer in your college.

COUNTY	ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Antrim	Open University (Belfast)	Mature Student Officer	Ph: 080-1232 245025 Email: www.open.ac.uk
	University of Ulster (Belfast)	Mature Student Officer	Ph: 080-1265 44141 Email: k.may@ulster.ac.uk
	Queens University (Belfast)	Mature Student Officer	Ph: 028-9097 5081 Email: admissions@qub.ac.uk
Carlow	Institute of Technology Carlow (Wexford Campus)	Joe Collins	Ph: 053-22992 Email: collinsj@itcarlow.ie
	Institute of Technology Carlow	Ashling Mc Hugh	Ph: 059-9176229 Email: aisling.mchugh@itcarlow.ie
Clare	Shannon College of Hotel Management	Caroline Egan	Ph: 061-712523 Email:carolineegan@shannoncollege.com
Cork	UCC	Carmel Quinlan	Ph: 021-4903678 Email: cquinlan@ucc.ie
	CIT	Deirdre Creedon	Ph: 021-4326564 Email: dcreedon@cit.ie
Donegal	Letterkenny Institute of Technology	Brian McGonagle	Ph: 074-9186170 Email: brian.mcgonagle@lyit.ie
Dublin	Institute of Technology Blanchardstown	Adrienne Harding	Ph: 01-8851022 Email: adrienne.harding@itb.ie
	National College of Ireland	Niamh McAuley	Ph: 01-4060500 nmcauley@ncirl.ie
	DIT College of Technology	Susan Hawkins	Ph: 01-4023000 Email: susan.hawkins@dit.ie
	Open University	Rosemary Hamilton	Ph: 01-6785399 Email: www.open.ac.uk
	Royal College of Surgeons Ireland	Celeste Golder	Ph: 01-4022228 Email: cgolden@rcsi.ie

	Royal Irish Academy of Music	Francis Hogan	Ph: 01-6764412 Email: info@riam.ie
	Higher Education Authority	Brian Johnston	Ph: 01-2317100 Email: access@hea.ie
	National College of Art & Design	Fiona McTernan	Ph: 01-6711377 Email: mcternanf@ncad.ie
	St. Patrick's College	Cora Creegan	Ph: 0504-2120 Email: cora.cregan@spd.dcu.ie
	Dublin City University	Colette Keogh	Ph: 01-7006040 Email: colette.keogh@dcu.ie
	All Hallows College	Georgina Roberts	Ph: 01-8373745 Email: info@allhallows.ie
	Milltown Institute of Theology and Philosophy	Sorcha Woods	Ph: 01-2698388 Email: info@milltown-institute.ie
	University College Dublin	Ronan Murphy	Ph: 01-7168264 Email: ronan.murphy@ucd.ie
	Mater Dei Institute of Education	Maire Garvey	Ph: 01-8040069 Email: maire.garvey@materdei.dcu.ie
	Institute of Technology Tallaght	Maggie Ryan	Ph: 01-4042173 Email: maggie.ryan@it-tallaght.ie
	American College	Anna-Marie Fergus	Ph: 01-6768939 Email: afergus@amcd.ie
	Trinity Access Programme	Irena Boydell	Ph: 01-6082752 Email: iboydell@tcd.ie
	Dublin Institute of Technology	Dolores McManus	Ph: 0877983194/01- 4023000 Email: dolores.mcmanus@dit.ie
	Dun Laoghaire Institute of Art, Design and Technology	Patricia Byrne	Ph: 01-2144628 Email: patricia.byrne@iadt.ie
Galway	NUI Galway	Imelda Byrne	Ph: 091-524411 Ext: 3553 Email: Imelda.byrne@nuigalway.ie
	Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology	Deirdre O'Connor	Ph: 091-742129 Email: deirdre.oconnor@gmit.ie
	N.U.I. Galway	Mary Liddy	Ph: 091-524411 ext 3553 or 091-750489 Email:mary.liddy@nuigalway.ie
Kerry	Tralee Institute of Technology	Valerie Moore	Ph: 066-7191682 Email: valerie.moore@ittralee.ie
Kildare	Pontifical University/ NUI Maynooth	Emer Sheerin	Ph: 01-7084519 Email: emer.sheerin@nuim.ie
Limerick	Mary Immaculate	Anne Marie	Ph: 061-20492

	College of Education	Hannon	Email: anne.marie.hannon@mic.ul.ie
	University of Limerick	Noreen Coveney O Beirne	Ph: 061-213104 Email: noreen.coveney@ul.ie
	Limerick Institute of Technology	Linda Barry	Ph: 061-208103 Email: linda.barry@lit.ie
Louth	Dundalk DIT	Eileen McMahon	Ph: 042-9370541 Email: eileen.mcmahon@dkit.ie
Sligo	Institute of Technology Sligo	Catherine McNelis	Ph: 071-9155381 Email: access@itsligo.ie
	St Angela's College	Karen Kennedy	Ph: 071-43580 Email: acep@stacs.edu.ie
Tipperary	Tipperary Institute	Carolann Bargary	Ph: 0504-28066 Email: cbargary@tippinst.ie
	St. Patrick's College	Cora Creegan	Ph: 0504-21201 Email: cora.cregan@spd.dcu.ie
Waterford	W.I.T.	Michael Lanigan	Ph: 051-302762 Email: nlennon@wit.ie
Westmeath	Athlone Institute of Technology	Marie McManamon	Ph: 090-6424593 Email: access@ait.ie

Contacts

Adult Education Officer

Every VEC operates an Adult Learning or Adult Education Programme, which is co-ordinated by an **Adult Education Officer (AEO).** If you or someone you know would like more information on adult education courses in your area, contact the AEO in your local VEC.

COUNTY	ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Carlow	Co Carlow VEC	Marian Duffy	Ph: 059-9138568 Email: mduffy@carlowvec.ie
Cavan	Co Cavan VEC	Fiona Maloney	Ph: 049-4361881 Email: fionamaloney@cavanvec.ie
Cork	Cork City VEC	Brian Bermingham	Ph: 021-4273377 Email: aeo@eircom.net
	North Cork Adult Education Services	Maureen Condon	Ph: 025-42945 Email: mcondonvec@eircom.net
	Cork City VEC	Tony Geary	Ph: 021-4273377 Email: ccvec@eircom.net
	East Cork VEC Adult Education Service	Nuala Glanton	Ph: 022-50982 Email: nglantonvec@eircom.net
	West Cork Adult Education Service	Vincent Ahern	Ph: 028-21537 Email: vahern@eircom.net
	City of Cork VEC	Tom Daly	Ph: 021-4273377 Email: vtsu@corkvec.ie
Clare	Co Clare VEC	Sean Conlon	Ph: 065-6824819 Email: clonaded@iol.ie
Donegal	Co Donegal VEC	Crona Gallagher	Ph: 074-9161570 Email: cronagallagher@donegalvec.ie
Dublin	County Dublin VEC (North County)	AEO	Ph: 01-8408946 Email: adulteducationswords@eircom.net
	Dun Laoghaire VEC	Deirdre Keyes	Ph: 01-2147200 Email: dkeyes@dlvec.ie
	County Dublin VEC (West County)	Michael McLoughlin	Ph: 01-6283910 Email: mmclvec@eircom.net
	Vocational Education Committee Dublin City	Bernadette Sproule	Ph: 01-8720576 Email: bernadette.sproule@parnell.cdvec.ie
	Parnell Adult Learning Centre	Leonora O'Reilly	Ph: 01-8781088 Email: leonora.oreilly@parnell.cdvec.ie
	City of Dublin VEC(North West City)	Kevin Smullen	Ph: 01-8342448 Email: kevin.smullen@ide.cdvec.ie

	City of Dublin VEC(South West City)	Liz O'Sullivan	Ph: 01-4535487 Email: liz.osullivan@cdu.cdvec.ie
	County Dublin VEC(North West County)	Marie Griffin Sean Purcell	Ph: 01-4529600 Email: d.oreagan@codubvec.ie
	County Dublin VEC(South County)	Patricia Doran	Ph: 01-2989283 Email: adulteducate@eircom.net
	City of Dublin VEC (North Central City)	Celia Rafferty	Ph: 01-8486734 Email: info@cdcfe.cdvec.ie
	County Dublin VEC(South West County)	Fred Goulding	Ph: 01-4515733 Email: fred.goulding@taladed.ie
	City of Dublin VEC (South East City)	Cathie Hogan	Ph: 01-6676267 Email: cathie.hogan@ringtec.cdvec.ie
Galway	Galway County VEC	Sean MacLochlainn	Ph: 091-866912 Email: adultedoughterard@eircom.net
	Galway City VEC	Fiona O'Loughlin	Ph: 091-567194 Email: fiona.oloughlin@cgvec.ie
	Galway County VEC	Eithne Nic Dhonnchadha	Ph: 091-874260 Email: cogalwayvec@eircom.net
Kerry	Kerry Adult Education Service (Central)	Jim Enright	Ph: 066-7121488 Email: jenright@cokerryed.ie
	Kerry Adult Education Service (North)	Michelle Ann Houlihan	Ph: 066-7121488 Email: mhoulihan@cokerryed.ie
	Kerry Adult Education Service (South)	Shivaun Shanahan	Ph: 066-7121488 Email: sshanahan@cokerryed.ie
Kildare	Co Kildare VEC	Noel Dalton	Ph: 045-897291 Email: ndalton@eircom.net
Kilkenny	County Kilkenny VEC	Eileen Curtis	Ph: 056-7765103 Email: eileenccurtis@eircom.net
Laois	County Laois VEC	Joe Cunningham	Ph: 057-8621352 Email: joecunningham@laoiosvec.ie
Leitrim	County Leitrim VEC	Donall O'Scolai	Ph: 071-9621397 Email: aded.leitrim@indigo.ie
Limerick	County Limerick VEC	Eimear Brophy	Ph: 061-442100 Email: ebrophy@limerickvec.ie
	City of Limerick VEC	Mary Hamilton	Ph: 061-315358 Email: mary.hamilton@clvec.ie
Longford	County Longford VEC	Mary Farrell	Ph: 043-45474 Email: ctcld@iol.ie
Louth	Co Louth VEC	Sadie Ward-McDermott	Ph: 042-9334047 Email:colouthvec@eircom.net
Mayo	County Mayo VEC	Pat Stanton	Ph: 094-9023159

			Email: prstanton@eircom.ie
Meath	County Meath VEC	Christy Duffy	Ph: 0876241272 Email: Christy.duffy@meathvec.ie
Monaghan	County Monaghan VEC	Fiona McGrath	Ph: 047-30888 Email: fmcgrath@monaghanvec.ie
Offaly	County Offaly VEC	Tony Dalton	Ph: 057-9321406 Email: tdalton@offalyvecaded.ie
Roscommon	County Roscommon VEC	Tom Costello	Ph: 090-6626151 Email: 090-6626151
Sligo	Co Sligo VEC	Michael Burke	Ph: 071-9142438 Email: mburke@sligovec.ie
	Co Sligo VEC	Leo Regan	Ph: 071-9147304 Email: leoregan@eircom.net
Tipperary	Tipperary South VEC	Eileen Condon	Ph: 052-26269 Email: econdon@tippsouthvec.ie
	County Tipperary VEC (North)	Antoinette Coffey	Ph: 067-31845 Email: antoinettecoffey@lllvec.ie
Waterford	City of Waterford VEC	Michael Kirwan	Ph: 051-873195 Email: mkirwanaeo@eircom.net or
	County Waterford VEC	Mary Walsh	Ph: 058-48950 Email: mwalsh@wd-vec.ie
Westmeath	Westmeath VEC	Shane Brennan	Ph: 044-79040 Email: midlandsarts@eircom.net
	County Westmeath VEC	Rina McKenna	Ph: 090-6474080 Email: eao@westmeathvec.ie
Wexford	County Wexford VEC	Eilis Leddy	Ph: 053-9123799 Email: eilisleddy@cowexfordvec.ie
Wicklow	Co Wicklow VEC	Brian MacDiarmada	Ph: 0404-60522 Email: bmacdiarmada@wicklowvec.ie

Contacts

Adult Literacy Organiser

Every VEC operates an Adult Literacy Service, which is managed by an **Adult Literacy Organiser (ALO)**. The ALO meets with potential learners at an arranged time to discuss what they would like to learn, to ascertain their literacy level and to give them more information about the literacy centre. If you or someone you know would like to improve literacy skills, contact the ALO in your local VEC.

COUNTY	ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Carlow	Carlow Adult Learning Centre	Tara Kelly	Ph: 059-9135544 Email: calcadmin@eircom.net
Cavan	Cavan Adult Learning Centre	Siobhan McEntee Carmel Lee	Ph: 049-4361881 Email: siobhan@calc.ie/ carmel@calc.ie
Clare	Co Clare Reading & Writing Scheme	Moira Greene/ Loretta Hughes	Ph: 065-6824819 Email: info@clareadulteducation.org
Cork	Beara Adult Literacy Scheme	Ann Black	Ph: 027-70292/0868239147 Email: blackseapointlodge@eircom.net
	Kanturk Adult Literacy Scheme	Mary Healy	Ph: 0863019375 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	Macroom Adult Literacy Scheme	Shelia Scully	Ph: 026-42167/086-8239097 Email: macroomalc@eircom.net
	Mahon Spell it Write	Helen Broughal	Ph: 0868577820 Email: srcentre@eircom.net/ mcalo@eircom.net
	Mallow Return to Education Centre	Celine Gyves	Ph: 022-51958/0868337674 Email: celinegyves@eircom.net
	Midleton Adult Literacy Scheme	Geraldine Murphy	Ph: 021-4621567/0868238769 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	Mitchelstown Adult Lit. Assoc.	Ina Keating	Ph: 0868238733 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	Read Write Now / Ballyphehane	Cathy Kelly	Ph: 021-4319085 / 0876849150 Email: readwritenowcork@yahoo.co.uk
	Kinsale Read & Write Group	Eithne Woulf	Ph: 021-4772275 Email: kinsalefurthered@eircom.net
	Write Together Group	Marie Dorgan	Ph: 021-4307969 Email: writetogether@eircom.net
	Write On-Mayfield ALS	Mary Chambers	Ph: 021-4500434 Email: mcalo@eircom.net
	Return to Education	Dorothy	Ph: 023-56957/0868239149

	Centre	Beamish	Email: dwayals@eircom.net
	North Cork Adult Learning Scheme	Eilish Roche	Ph: 022-51958 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	Duhallow Adult Literacy Scheme	Eansie Twomey	Ph: 0879170654 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	Cork Traveller Adult Literacy Scheme	Mary O'Sullivan/ Sandra Brett	Ph: 0863053229 Email: shabrett@hotmail.com
	Schull Adult Literacy Group	Mary Arundel	Ph: 028-28213 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	Bandon Adult Literacy Group	Margueritte O'Connor	Ph:023-42870/0868239089 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	A.B.L.E.S.	Ciaran Lynch	Ph: 021-4553180 Email: ableslit@eircom.net
	Youghal Adult Literacy Scheme	Juliette Murphy	Ph: 024-93674/0868238747 Email: julettem@eircom.net
	Upton Literacy Scheme	Marguerite O'Connor	Ph: 023-56957/0868337704 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	Altrusa/VEC Adult Literacy Scheme	Mary Ryder/ Brid Murphy/ Jean O'Leary	Ph: 021-4270088 Email: altrusa@ccoc.ie
	West Cork-South Adult Learning Service	Eleanor Cahan	Ph: 028-21011/ 23502 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	Ballincollig Adult Literacy Group	Philip Mortell	Ph: 0868808057 Email: marphilmortell@yahoo.com
	Bantry Adult Literacy Scheme	Irene O'Driscoll	Ph: 027-53970/0868239140 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	Bishopstown Adult Literacy Group	Betty O'Driscoll	Ph: 021-4544684/0876751689 Email: odriscollmarden@eircom.net
	Skibbereen Adult Basic Education Centre	Eleanor Cahan	Ph: 028-23502 Email: eleanorcalnanlit@eircom.net
	Carrigtohill Adult Literacy Scheme	James Ginn	Ph: 021-4883482 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	Cobh Read and Write Centre	Fionnula Hegarty	Ph: 021-4855472 or 021-4812485 Email: fionnuala.hegarty@gmail.com
	Farranree Literacy Scheme	Mary Mathews	Ph: 021-4301030/0877913427 Email: info@cocorkvec.ie
	East Cork Adult Learning Centre	Marian O'Mahoney	Ph: 025-33225/0868212257 Email: eastcorkal@eircom.net
	Gaeltacht Adult Literacy Scheme	Helen McHugh/ Dolores Mhic Geidigh	Ph: 074-9180871 Email: adultlearnergortahork@donegalvec.ie
	Raphoe Adult Literacy	Amanda Slevin	Ph: 074-9173795

	Scheme		Email: amandaslevin@donegalvec.ie
	Inishowen Adult Literacy Group	Joyce Burns	Ph: 074-9329774 Email: joyceburns@donegalvec.ie
	Ballyshannon Adult Literacy	Adele Davin	Ph: 071-9851276 Email: info@donegalvec.ie
Donegal	Letterkenny Adult Literacy School	Brid McIntyre	Ph: 074-9161600/0861740683 Email: bridmcintyre@donegalvec.ie
		Martina Needham	Ph: 074-9721705 Email: info@donegalvec.ie
Dublin	Parish of the Travelling People	Maria Culbert	Ph: 01-868 4305 Email: adultlearning@eircom.net
	Fingal (North) Adult Literacy Scheme	Gillian Cox	Ph: 01-8417763 Email: balbrigganoffice@fingaladulteducation.ie
	Cabra Adult Literacy Scheme	Susan Neill/ Mary McDermott	Ph: 01-8746700/0861709792 Email: mary.mcdermott@parnell.cdvec.ie
	Dublin Adult Learning Centre	Mary Maher	Ph: 01-878 7266 Email: info@dalc.ie
	Larkin Community College	Marie Casey	Ph: 01-817 1990 Email: larkinrw@eircom.net
	SIPTU Adult English Scheme	Katherine Dowds	Ph: 01-858 6311 Email: basicenglish@siptu.ie
	P.A.L.C.	Mary McDermott	Ph: 0861709792 Email: ceo@cdvec .ie
	Ballyfermot Literacy Scheme	Susan Walsh	Ph: 01-6239716 Email: susan.walsh@kylemore.cdvec.ie
	Ballymun Adult Read & Write Scheme Ltd	Mary Love	Ph: 01-862 2402 Email: barws@eircom.net
	Finglas Reading & Writing Scheme	Cora Rafter	Ph: 01-834 0893/8361666 Email: cora.rafter@eoin.cdvec.ie
	Crumlin College	Frances Ward	Ph: 01-454 7054 Email: fward@crumlincollege.ie
	T.A.R.G.E.T Donaghmede	Brenda Kellett	Ph:01-8671967/087904723 Email: info@targeteducation.net
	Dundrum Adult Literacy Scheme	Michelle Donovan	Ph: 01-296 4321 Email: adult.learning@sdalc.codubvec.ie
	A.B.L.E	Margaret O'Leary/ Sharon Hennessy	Ph: 01-821 2600 Email: ab_le@eircom.net
	Northside R & W Centre	Patricia Ayton	Ph: 01-848 7172/8481337 Email: pat.ayton@cdc.cdvec.ie

	Clondalkin Adult Education Centre	Ann McCann	Ph: 01-467 0043 Email: aesclondalkin@eircom.net
	Co Co-ordinator of Inservice & Tutor Training	Geraldine Condron	Ph: 01-4529600 Email: info@codubvec.ie
	B.E.S.T	Gail Roantree	Ph: 01-414 7187 Email: groantree@talad.ie
	Co Dublin VEC	Rosemarie McGill	Ph: 01-452 9600 Ex 173 Email: r.mcgill@codubvec.ie
	Ringsend Literacy Scheme	Kathleen Ingoldsby	Ph: 01-668 4571 Email: kathleen.ingoldsby@ringtec.cdvec.ie
	KLEAR Reading & Writing Group	Rose Brownen	Ph: 01-803 6238 Email: kleared@eircom.com
	Rathmines Adult Literacy Scheme	Kathleen Ingoldsby	Ph: 01-668 4571 Email: kathleen.ingoldsby@ringtec.cdvec.ie
	D8 Community Education Centre	Marie Mulvihill	Ph: 01-542 4130/ 087 904 6204 Email: info@d8cec.com
	Inchicore Adult Literacy Scheme	Margo Kelly	Ph: 01-453 5358 Email: enquiries@inchicore.cdvec.ie
	Warrenmount Centre	Pauline McGaley	Ph: 01-4542622 Email: pmcgaley@iol.ie
	Liberties Adult Literacy Scheme	Elizabeth O'Byrne	Ph: 01-454 0759 Email: elizabeth.o'byrne@liberities.cdvec.ie
	Dun Laoghaire Adult Learning Centre	Aedin O'Toole	Ph: 01-285 5633 Email: info@dlalcentre.ie
	Lucan Adult Basic Education Centre	Una Dwyer	Ph: 01-628 0029 Email: alo2@eircom.net
	Choices Adult Learning Centre	Clodagh Lynan	Ph: 01-282 0110 Email: info@choicesalc.ie
Galway	Ionad Foghlama larthar na Gail	Neasa de Bhailis-Ui Mhaile	Ph: 091-506060 Email: ndebhailis@eircom.net
	East Galway/ Loughrea Adult Literacy Scheme	Shelia Donnellan	Ph: 091-847850 Email: loughrealiteracy@eircom.net
	West Galway/Clifden & Moycullen Literacy Scheme	Teresa Gilligan	Ph: 091-555877 / 095-22699 - Clifden Email: westlit@eircom.net
	Galway Adult Basic Education Scheme	Kieran Harrington	Ph: 091-567660 Email: kieran.harrington@cgvec.ie
	Tuam Adult Literacy	Catherine	Ph: 093-26609

	Centre	McDonagh	Email: tuamliteracy@eircom.net
Kerry	Killarney Adult Literacy Scheme	Mary Concannon	Ph: 064-36990 Email: maryconcannon@eircom.net
	South Kerry Learning Scheme	Katherine O'Sullivan	Ph: 066-9473166 Email: kesabekos@eircom.net
	Adult Literacy & Basic Education Service	Maggie O'Sullivan	Ph: 064-42728 Email: returntolearning@gmail.com
	Tralee Adult Literacy Service	Maeve Tuohy	Ph: 066-7124114 Email: kesabemt@eircom.net
	Kilorglin Adult Education Service	Jenny O'Reilly	Ph: 066-9790765 Email: kals@tinet.ie
	Listowel Adult Literacy Scheme	Mary Pierse	Ph: 068-23866 Email: kesmp@eircom.net
	Dingle Adult Literacy Scheme	Bill McConnell	Ph: 066-9150933 Email: info@cokerryed.ie
	Kerry Adult Learning Service	Maeve Tuohy	Ph: 066-7124114 Email: kesabemt@eircom.net
Kildare	Leixlip Adult Learning Centre	Mary Faughnan	Ph: 01-6246528 Email: alac@eircom.net
	Kildare Adult Literacy Centre	Mary Murphy	Ph: 045-522003 Email: adultkildare@eircom.net
	Athy Learning Centre	Mary Murphy	Ph: 059-8632460 Email: adultkildare@eircom.net
	Naas Adult Basic Education	Pat Bennett	Ph: 045-866314 Email: pbennett@abce.ie
Kilkenny	Wordaid - Kilkenny	Mary Buckley	Ph: 056-7763149 Email: marywordaid@eircom.net
Laois	Laois Adult Literacy Scheme	Germaine Cahill	Ph: 057-86661338 Email: adlit@eircom.net
Leitrim	Co Leitrim Education for Adults Program	Anne Bohan	Ph: 071-9621366/ Manorhamilton 071-9855355 Email: annebohan@eircom.net
Limerick	Co Limerick Adult Literacy Scheme	Gretta Vaughan	Ph: 061-442100 Email: adliteracy@limerickvec.ie
	Killmallock Learner Resources	Marie Garvey	Ph: 063-20246 Email: admin@coliosaef.ie
	Limerick Adult Basic Education Support Group	Eithne Cunneen	Ph: 061-312164 Email: alss@clvec.ie
	Newcastlewest Literacy Group	Agnes Normoyle	Ph: 061-20246 Email: alscncw@eircom.net
Longford	Longford Adult Literacy Scheme	Frances Stephenson	Ph: 043-45609 / 043-86211 / 0906-438009

			Email: francesstephenson@eircom.net
	Granard Adult Learning Scheme	Frances Stephenson	Ph:043-86211 Email: admin@longfordvec.ie
Louth	Dundalk Adult Literacy Scheme	Mary Hessian	Ph:042-9353593 Email: basicedlouthvec@eircom.net
	Drogheda Adult Literacy Scheme	Maria Morgan	Ph: 041-9830870 / 041-9845465 Email: luals@eircom.net
Mayo	Ballinrobe Adult Literacy Scheme	Nicholas O'Kelly	Ph: 094-9542288 Email: nicholasokelly2@eircom.net
	Belmullet Adult Learning Centre	Rosario Cooney	Ph: 097-82981 Email: adlitbml@eircom.net
	Ballina Adult Learning Centre	Marian Cusack	Ph: 096-71652 Email: adlitballina@eircom.net
	Castlebar Adult Learning Centre	Phyllis Carney	Ph: 094-9038038 Email: adlitcastlebar@eircom.net
	Ballina Adult Basic Education & Literacy Scheme	Noelle Staunton	Ph: 094-9253837 Email: returntolearn@eircom.net
Meath	Laytown Adult Literacy Scheme	Lena O'Neill	Ph: 041-9828289 Email: education@meathvec.ie
	Kells Adult Literacy Scheme	Eileen McCarthy	Ph: 046-9249406 Email: education@meathvec.ie
	Trim Adult Learning Centre	Mary Lucy Ennis	Ph: 046-9438513 Email: marylucyennis@eircom.net
	Dunshaughlin/Dunboyne Adult Literacy Scheme	Noreen Browne	Ph: 01-8259386 Email: literacy@eircom.net
	Ashbourne/Ratoath Adult Literacy Scheme	Noreen Browne	Ph: 01-8259386 Email: literacy@eircom.net
	Navan Adult Literacy Scheme	Marie Condon	Ph: 046-9068205 Email: education@meathvec.ie
	Co Meath Adult Literacy Scheme	Marie Condon	Ph: 046-9068205 Email: education@meathvec.ie
Monaghan	Monaghan Adult Literacy Scheme	Mary Connolly Helen Fitzpatrick Angela Mc Crossan	Ph: 047-30888 Email: educ@monaghanvec.ie
Offaly	Offaly Reading & Writing Scheme	Mary McLoughlin	Ph: 057-9352280 Email: adultlc@eircom.net
Roscommon	Ballaghaderreen Adult Literacy Scheme	Margaret Fawcett	Ph: 094-9861565 Email: margaretfawcett411@hotmail.com
	Roscommon Adult Literacy Scheme	Briege Fullam	Ph: 090-6627886/087-989286/087-6177758

			Email: fullambriege@hotmail.com
Sligo	Co Sligo Adult Education Scheme	Cathy Powell	Ph: 071-9138416 Email: cpowell@sligovec.ie
Tipperary	Co Tipperary NR Adult Literacy Scheme	Dorothy Brislane	Ph: 067-34621 Email: ntippals@eircom.net
	Co Tipperary SR Adult Literacy Scheme	Mary Roche	Ph: 052-27543 Email: mroche@tippsouthvec.ie
Waterford	Tramore Adult Education Centre	Nicola McCarthy-Hanlon	Ph: 058-75757 Email: nicola@wd_vec.ie
	Waterford (City) Adult Literacy Scheme	Joanne Gereghty	Ph: 051-854444 Email: adultliteracy@eircom.net/ adultlearning@eircom.net
Westmeath	NorthWestmeath Literary Scheme	Helen Donnelly	Ph: 044-9342111 Email: adultliteracynth@westmeathvec.ie
	South Westmeath Literacy Scheme	Joan Slevin	Ph: 090-6497003 Email: adultliteracysth@westmeathvec.ie
Wexford	Co Wexford VEC Adult Literacy Programme	Frances Ryan	Ph: 051-425118 Email: frances@adlitwexvec.com
Wicklow	Arklow Literacy Group	Mary McCall	Ph: 0402-91573 Email: arklow@wicklowlearners.ie
	Wicklow Adult Learning Centre	Róisín Hutchinson	Ph: 0404-68010 Freephone: 1800 474767 Email: wicklow@wicklowlearners.ie
	Bray Adult Literacy & Learning Programme	Niamh Maguire	Ph: 01-276 1350 Email: bray@wicklowlearners.ie
	Blessington Literacy Scheme	Noelle O'Dwyer	Ph: 045-891512 Email: blessington@wicklowlearners.ie
	Carnew Literacy Scheme	Mary Jordan	Ph: 053-9426568 Email: carnew@wicklowlearners.ie
	Baltinglass Adult Learning Centre	Anette Mangan	Ph: 059-6482642 /086-8462771 Email: baltinglass@wicklowlearners.ie

Contacts

Adult Education Guidance Initiative

The Adult Educational Guidance Initiative consists of 38 guidance projects throughout the country with the aim of providing a quality adult educational guidance service to participants in VTOS, literacy and other adult and community education programmes nationwide. It's all about connecting adults with learning. If you or someone you know would like to become involved in adult learning, contact your local Adult Education Guidance Initiative.

COUNTY	ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Carlow	Co Carlow Adult Educational Guidance Service	Maria King	Ph: 059-9133123 Email: carlowadultguidance@eircom.net/ aegsdnce@eircom.net
Cavan	Co Cavan Adult Educational Guidance and Information Service		Ph: 049-4377001 Email: cavanaegis@cavanvec.ie
Clare	Clare Adult Learners Guidance Service	Jacinta Davenport	Ph: 065-6824819 Email: jacinta@clareguidance.ie
Cork	City of Cork Adult Educational Guidance Service	Andrea McCarthy	Ph: 021-4273377 Email: mailto:guidanceinfo@corkvec.ie
	West Cork Adult Guidance Service	John Murphy	Ph: 028-21011 Email: info@wcaded.ie
Donegal	Donegal Adult Learner Guidance Service	Sean Debney	Ph: 074-9178088 Email: adultguidance@donegalvec.ie
Dublin	City of Dublin VEC	Mary Stokes	Ph: 01-8787495 Email: dicaegs@eircom.net
	City of Dublin VEC - Cabra / Finglas Adult Educational Guidance Service	Karen Granville	Ph: 01-8342333 Email: general.enquiries@ide.cdvec.ie
	City of Dublin VEC - Coolock Adult Educational Guidance Service	Tina Dowling	Ph: 01-8674188 Email: aegsdnce@eircom.net
	City of Dublin South West Adult Educational Guidance Service	Anne Smyth	Ph: 01-4540662 ext 119 Email: aegs@ccfe.cdvec.ie
	Discover Guidance Dun Laoghaire	Deirdre Johnston	Ph: 01-2365190/ 01-6639211 Email: una@discoverguidance.ie

	Adult Educational Guidance Service		
	Fingal Adult Guidance Service	Eithne Doherty	Ph: 01-8706016 Email: fingalguidance@eircom.net
	West Co Dublin Adult Educational Service	Patrick Stewart	Ph: 01-6100812 Email: patrickstewart@edu.codubvec.ie
	Tallaght Adult Educational Service	Caroline Duffy	Ph: 01-4515733 Email: caroline@taladed.ie
Galway	Galway City Adult Learner Guidance Service	Jill Farrell	Ph: 091-768596 Email: siobhan.fahy@cgvec.ie
	Co Galway Adult Educational Guidance Service	Tadhg Crowley	Ph: 091-866912/ 0879250849 Email: adultedoughterard@eircom.net
Kerry	Kerry Adult Guidance Service	Rico Stein	Ph: 066-7121488 Email: guidance@cokerryed.ie
Kildare	Adult Education Information Resource Service	Angela Doherty	Ph: 045-448512 Email: aeirc@eircom.net
Kilkenny	Co Kilkenny Adult Guidance Service	Bernadette O'Rourke	Ph: 056-7764448 Email: kilkennyadultgidance@eircom.net
Laois	Adult Educational Guidance & Information Service	Carmel Hoolan	Ph: 057-8672963 Email: laoisaegis@eircom.net
Limerick	Co Limerick Adult Educational Guidance Service	Jim Quinlan	Ph: 069-62667 Email: jquinlanvec@eircom.net
	City of Limerick Adult Educational Guidance Service	Emma Maher	Ph: 061-310880 Email: guidanceinfo@clvec.ie
Longford	Co Longford Adult Educational Guidance Service	Mary Farrell	Ph: 043-48177 Email: claegs@eircom.net
Mayo	Mayo Adult Educational Guidance Initiative		Ph: 094-9251928 Email: maegi@eircom.net
Meath	Co Meath Adult Educational Guidance Service	Michael O'Shea	Ph: 046-9068248 Email: maegs@meathvec.ie
Monaghan	Monaghan VEC	Liz Glennon	Ph: 047-30800 Email: marieclerkin@monaghanvec.ie
Offaly	Adult Educational	Catherine Gavigan	Ph: 057 -9327104 Email: cgavigan@offalyaegi.com

	Service		
Roscommon	Roscommon Adult Learner's Information Service (RAL LES)	Josephine Kenny	Ph: 090-662 8220/ 090 6634189 Email: ralies@eircom.net
Sligo	Sligo Adult Guidance in Education (SAGE)	Josephine McGread	Ph: 071-913 8411 Email: jmcgread@sligovec.ie
Tipperary	South Tipperary Adult Guidance Service	Tom Ryan	Ph: 052-34105 Email: mcampion@tippsouthvec.ie
	North Tipperary Adult Guidance Service	John Grace	Ph: 067-31845 Email: john.grace@ntags.ie
Waterford	REGSA (Guidance Project)	Peter Lucey	Ph: 051-302287 Email: shealy@wit.ie
Westmeath	Westmeath Adult Educational Guidance Service North	Caroline Sheridan	Ph: 044-9342111 Email: adultguidanceservicenth@westmeathvec.ie
	Westmeath Adult Educational Guidance Service South	Majella Macken	Ph: 090-647 4080 Email: adultguidanceservicesth@westmeathvec.ie
Wexford	Co Wexford Adult Educational Guidance Service	Grace Finlay	Ph: 053-9123799 Email: gracefinlay@cowexfordvec.ie
Wicklow	Bray Adult Guidance Service	Catherine Green	Ph: 01-2764638 Email: catherine@wags.ie
	Co Wicklow Adult Guidance Service	Catherine Green	Ph: 0404-64026 Email: info@wags.ie

Contacts

Community Education Facilitators

Every VEC operates a community education programme, which is managed by the **Community Education Facilitator (CEF).** Community Education is local to the participants; the group can control what, when, where and how the learning takes place, barriers to participation are recognised and supports can be put in place to try and overcome them and the previous experience of the participants is taken as the basis for further learning. If you or someone you know would like to become involved in community education, contact the CEF in your local VEC.

COUNTY	ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Carlow	Carlow VEC	Fiona Dunne	Ph: 059-9138585 Email: fdunne@carlowvec.ie
Cavan	Cavan VEC	Gemma Brady	Ph: 049-437 7562 Email: cef@cavanvec.ie
Clare	Clare VEC	Aobhan Haverty	Ph: 065-6824819 Email: cef@clareadulteducation.org
Cork	Cork City VEC	Denis Barrett	Ph: 021-4315052 Email: ccvec@eircom.net
	Cork Co VEC	Lena Cronin	Ph: 021-4800930 Email: lcronin@cocorkvec.ie
Donegal	Donegal VEC	Maeve McGarvey	Ph: 074-9725522 Email: mmcgarveycomed@eircom.net
Dublin	West Dublin Co VEC	Siobhan Lynch	Ph: 01-6283557 Email: slynchvec@eircom.net
	Blanchardstown & Fingal VEC Office	Seamus Hughes	Ph: 01-8408946 Email: hughessj@eircom.net
	Dun Laoghaire VEC	Barbara Hammond	Ph: 01-2147200 Email: bhammond@dlvec.ie
	Dublin Co VEC South	Eileen Uhlemann	Ph: 01-2964332 Email: michelle@taladed.ie
	Dublin Co VEC South West	Michelle Donovan	Ph: 01-4515733 Email: michelle@taladed.ie
	Dublin City VEC	Pat Morrissey	Ph: 01-06680614 Email: pat.morrissey@cdvec.ie
	Dublin City VEC	Helen Geoghegan	Ph: 01-6680614 Email: helen.geoghegan@cdvec.ie
Galway	Co. Galway VEC	CEF	Ph: 091-874260 Email: enquiries@cogalvec.ie
	Galway City VEC	Donal Walsh	Ph: 091-567194 Email: donal.walsh@cgvec.ie
Kerry	Kerry Educational Service	Michelle Ann Houlihan	Ph: 066-7121488 Email: kescedmah@eircom.net
Kildare	Kildare VEC	Susan Cullinane	Ph: 045-881863 Email: scullinane@abce.ie
Kilkenny	Kilkenny VEC	Martha Bolger	Ph: 056-7786896 Email: tiscoffin@eircom.net
Laois	Laois VEC	Teresa McEvoy	Ph: 0502-61890

			Email: termc@eircom.net
Leitrim	Leitrim VEC	Paul Hamilton	Ph: 071-9621397 Email: aded.leitrim@indigo.ie
Limerick	Limerick City VEC	Mary Flannery	Ph: 061-419933 Email: maryflannery@clvec.ie
	Limerick Co VEC	CEF	Ph: 061-442100 Email: bcullen@limerickvec.ie
Longford	Longford VEC	Mary Toher	Ph: 043-42227 Email: ceflongford@eircom.net
Louth	Co. Louth VEC	Sinead Fearron	Ph: 042-9353591 Email: communityedlouthvec@eircom.net
Mayo	Mayo VEC	Pauline McDermott	Ph: 094-9023159 Email: communityedmayo@eircom.net
Meath	Meath VEC	Shauna O'Reilly	Ph: 046-9068222 Email: shauna.oreilly@meathvec.ie
Monaghan	Monaghan VEC	Deirdre McHugh	Ph: 047-30888 Email: dmchugh@monaghanvec.ie
Offaly	Offaly VEC	Tony Dalton	Ph: 0506-21406 Email: tony@offalyvec.ie
Roscommon	Co Roscommon VEC	Ann McNamara	Ph: 090-6630581 Email: annmcnamararosvec@eircom.net
Sligo	Sligo Co VEC	Mary Brodie	Ph: 071-9138310 Email: mbrodie@sligovec.ie
Tipperary	Tipperary NR VEC	Deborah Ryan / Brian Donnelly	Ph: 067-31845 Email: dryantippnorthvec@eircom.net
	Tipperary SR VEC	Veronica Crowe	Ph: 052-26269 Email: veronicacrowe@eircom.net
Waterford	Adult Education Centre	Helen Rafferty	Ph: 051-874007 Email: hrafferty@waterford.vec
	Waterford Co VEC	Aine Whelan	Ph: 058-45757 Email: awhelan@wd-vec.ie
Westmeath	Adult Education Centre	Nuala O Brien	Ph: 044-9342111 Email: nualaobrien@iol.ie
Wexford	Wexford VEC	Fran Kennedy	Ph: 053-9123799 Email: frankennedy@cowexfordvec.ie
Wicklow	Co Wicklow VEC	Brenda Delaney	Ph: 0404-68010 Email: wicklowce@eircom.net

Contacts

Partnership Education Co-ordinators

There are 38 area based partnerships in Ireland, who work to promote social inclusion through the development of disadvantaged areas and communities. Most area based partnerships have **Partnership Education Co-ordinators** who promote the participation of adults education, promote access to third level education, develop policies to prevent early school leaving and provide funding for students pursuing basic, second chance and further education. If you or someone you know needs funding information or wishes to take part in a course run by your local partnership, contact the Partnership Education Co-ordinator in your local partnership.

COUNTY	ORGANISATION	NAME	CONTACT DETAILS
Cavan	County Cavan Partnership	Eimear Ryan	Ph: 049-4331209 Email: education@cavpart.ie
Cork	Comhair Chathair Chorcai	Mary Lenihan	Ph: 021-4302310 Email: mlenihan@partnershipcork.ie
Donegal	Donegal Local Development Company	Susan Kierce-Marsh	Ph: 074-9127056 Email: skiercemarsh@dldc.org
	Pairtiocht Gaeltacht Thir Chonaill MFG Teo.	Feardorcha O'Colla	Ph: 074-9732017 Email: oigemfg@eircom.net
	Inishowen Partnership	Denise McCool	Ph: 074-9362218/ 074-9363408 Email: denise@inishpar.ie
Dublin	Pavee Point	Jane Rooney	Ph: 01-8780255 ext108 Email: education@pavee.iol.ie
	Ballymun Partnership Ltd.	Colma Nic Lughadh	Ph: 01-8423612 Email: coma@ballymun.org
	Finglas/Cabra Partnership	Maeve McDermott	Ph: 01-8361666 Email: mmcdermott@fcp.ie
	Canal Communities Partnership	Lucy Harrington	Ph: 01-4564220/ 01 4584842 Email:education@canalpartnershop.com
	Dublin Inner City Partnership	Molly O'Duffy	Ph: 01-8721321 Email: moduffy@dicp.ie
	Tallaght Partnership	Deborah Brock	Ph: 01-4664280 Email: Deborah.brock@tallpart.com
	Clondalkin Partnership	David Duffy	Ph: 01-4508784 Email: d.duffy@clondalkinpartnership.ie
	Northside Partnership	Noel Kelly	Ph: 01-8485660 Email: noel.kelly@northsidepartnership.ie
	Blanchardstown Area Partnership	Catherine Durkin	Ph: 01-8209550 Email: cdurkin@bap.ie
	Ballyfermot Partnership	Caroline Cooke	Ph: 01-6207169 Email: ccooke@ballyfermotpartnership.ie
	Southside Partnership	Aileen O'Brien	Ph: 01-2301011 Email: aileen.obrien@sspship.ie

Galway	Cumas Teo, Páirtíocht Chonamara	Caitriona NiGhriellais	Ph: 091-574353 Email: cnigh@eircom.net
	Galway City Partnership	Seamus Morrissey	Ph: 091-773466 Email: seamus@gcp.ie
	Galway Rural Development Company	Bernie Harte	Ph: 091 844335 Email: bernieharte@grd.ie
Kerry	Partnership Tra Li	Seamus O'Donnell	Ph: 066-7180190 Email: sodonnell@partnershiptrali.com
	South Kerry Development Partnership	Mary Lyne	Ph: 066-9472724 Email: mlyne@skdp.net
Leitrim	Co Leitrim Partnership Board	Paul Hamilton	Ph: 078-41740 Email: clpdr@eircom.net
Limerick	Paul Partnership Limerick	Yvonne Lane	Ph: 061-419388/400333 Email: ylane@paulpartnership.ie
	West Limerick Resources Ltd.	Adrianne O'Connell	Ph: 069-62222 Email: info@wlr.ie
Longford	Longford Community Resources Ltd.	Pat Deegan	Ph: 043-45555 Email: manager@lcrl.ie
Louth	Drogheda Partnership Company	Mary-Ann McGlynn	Ph: 041-9842088 Email: info@droghedapartnership.ie
	Dundalk Employment Partnership Ltd.	Sinead Delany	Ph: 042-9330288 Email: sdelany@dep.ie
Mayo	Meitheal Mhaigheo	Siobhan Carney	Ph: 094-9256745 Email:meithealm@eircom.net/ scarney@o2.ie
Monaghan	Monaghan Partnership Board	Shauna Farrell	Ph: 042-9749500 Email: sfarrell@monaghanpartnership.com
Offaly	OAK Partnership (North Offaly)	Karina Curley	Ph: 046-9732688 Email: karina@oakpartnership.com
Roscommon	Roscommon County Partnership	Mary Farrell	Ph:094-9621337/090-6627424 Email: roscommonptnship@eircom.net
Sligo	Sligo Leader Partnership Co	Geraldine Bruce	Ph: 071-9141138 Email:gbruce@sligoleader.com/ info@sligoleader.com
Waterford	Waterford Area Partnership	Maria Lindell	Ph: 051-841740 Email: mlindell@waterfordareapart.ie
	Waterford Leader Partnership Ltd	James Taffe	Ph: 058-54646 Email: wlpl@eircom.net
Westmeath	Westmeath Community Development Ltd.	Caroline Lambden	Ph: 044-48571 Email: carolineeducation@eircom.net
Wexford	County Wexford Partnership Ltd	Don Murphy	Ph: 054-37033 Email: don@wexfordpartnership.ie
	Wexford Area Partnership	Melani Ni Dhinn	Ph: 053-9123994 Email: melnidhuinn@eircom.net
Wicklow	Bray Partnership	Jennifer Darcy	Ph: 01-2868266 Email: jennifer@braypartnership.ie

Useful Publications

THE MATURE STUDENT DIRECTORY- published by NIMSO (Network of Mature Student Officers) This booklet is a one stop shop of information for any adult wishing to return to education. As a limited number of these booklets went to print availability is scarce. However this publication can be downloaded from http://www.tcd.ie/Trinity_Access/access_policy/

CAREER CHOICE GUIDE – Information on careers, skills required,qualifications and training needed to get "that job". Available in all good bookshops.

CDVEC GUIDE TO COURSES- Contact the City of Dublin VEC or your local Vocational Education Committee or the local Adult Education Organiser. Some other VECs also publish **A GUIDE TO COURSES** giving details of courses (in their areas) under the various schemes. This information is also available directly from schools and colleges.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR FURTHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION -Available from Dept. of Education & Science, includes an explanation of the Grants System (relevant for those interested in taking a PLC course) and gives a list of VECs with addresses and phone numbers.

GUIDE TO PRIVATE COLLEGES IN IRELAND - Published by Best Guides this booklet is available in bookshops. They give information on grants as well as information on courses, entry requirements, points and career opportunities

GUIDE TO POSTGRADUATE STUDY IN IRELAND -(available from newsagents / bookstores) is a useful reference guide to the vast range of taught and research based postgraduate options available. Further details may be obtained by contacting the Admissions Offices of the individual institutions to request a prospectus.

WOLFHOUND GUIDE TO EVENING CLASSES AND **DUBLIN'S EVENING CLASSES**- Both of these are available in your local newsagent, bookstore and Eason's.

WORKING FOR WORK – This book is available from INOU (The Irish National Organisation of Unemployed) gives information on education / training options for unemployed, as well as other useful information.

THE NATIONAL GUIDE TO 3RD LEVEL EDUCATION – Contains all the information you need to choose a college or career in Ireland. Available annually in September in all good bookshops.

THE 2007/2008 NATIONAL GUIDE TO NIGHTCOURSES – Guide to education & leisure courses by night. Available in all good bookshops.

Glossary of Terms

Access Programme: specifically targeted programmes and courses for mature students who come from backgrounds that are under-represented at 3rd level institutions.

Assessment: evaluation of a student's potential/or performance by whatever means the Faculty Board/ Admissions Board has determined.

Bachelor's Degree: a fist degree, usually termed undergraduate degree. It normally requires at least three years of full-time study.

CAO (Central Applications Office): the office delegated by the Higher Education Institutions with the task of processing centrally all applications to their first year undergraduate degree. It normally requires at least three years full-time study.

Certificate: a qualification at a non-degree level, usually after one year of study.

Diploma: a qualification at the undergraduate or non-degree level, usually after two years of study

Distance Learning: opportunities to follow a course primarily from one's home environment or local community. Classes can sometimes be taken at week-ends, or part-time and may involve online, televised, or on campus lectures.

FEI: Further Education Institute.

Failte Ireland: State Tourism Training Agency.

FÁS: Ireland's national training and employment authority

HEI: Higher Education Institution.

Honours Degree: a degree programme in which a student takes a more intensive concentration in their major study area (as opposed to an ordinary degree)

NALA: National Adult Literacy Agency

Postgraduate: a person who has obtained a bachelors degree.

Post-graduate study: a course of study further to a degree.

Return to Learning Courses: this offers preparation before you take up a third level or long-tem course. Many universities/Institutes of Technology offer access or foundation courses and from these there can be a progression option into further third level courses. VECs sometimes run return to learning courses.

Teagasc: The Irish Agricultural and Food Development Authority. It provides research, advisory and training services.

VEC: Vocational Education Committee.

VTOS: This is for people who wish to undertake a course for up to two years leading to the Junior or Leaving Certificate, PLC courses or City and Guilds Certs. It is administered by the Department of Education and Science through the VECs.

Undergraduate student: a student who is studying / reading for a Bachelor's degree in any subject area or discipline at a 3rd level institution.