Programme Prospectus

2018-2019

Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Cheatharlach

INSTITUTE *of*
TECHNOLOGY
CARLOW

At the Heart of South Leinster

An Cosán Virtual Community College

For thirty years, An Cosán has been delivering lifelong learning in Tallaght West, teaching from early years to adulthood in communities that struggle with injustice and inequality. An Cosán is now developing a national profile through its innovative and award-winning **Virtual Community College (VCC).** VCC is reducing the digital divide, supporting learners to develop their skills through using 21st century teaching and learning technologies, and offering additional supports to learners to enable them to achieve their full potential.

Our Education Model

An Cosán VCC is at the forefront of educational technology in Ireland. Working in partnership with IT Carlow, we use a blended model of online, live lectures with offline activities, assignments and face-to-face workshops.

Today's learners can access a wide variety of educational options. At VCC, we ensure that our learners have access to technologies and teaching methods that enable them to engage and learn effectively. Learners can access presentations, class recordings, and coursework around their own schedule and at a pace that suits them.

VCC's model of community education builds on foundational concepts of inclusion, participation, capacity building, and social action. Our programmes actively encourage learners' networking and collaborating to achieve both personal and social transformation.

Our Community Partners

VCC partners with community education organisations to support learners to access blended online learning programmes. Hospitality, providing 'a place of heart and home', is integral to our ethos, recognising that learners' basic needs must be met before they can excel in their studies. Centres provide facilities where students can access the technology required to engage in blended online learning and create collaborative peer learning communities.

VCC has established partnerships with a growing number of community groups around the country to share knowledge and experience and to bring community education, particularly higher education programmes, to communities experiencing injustice and inequality.

We see these partnerships as mutually beneficial. Partnerships create valuable, supportive education experiences for students; they also provide a range of e-learning tools and resources to community education organisations and tutors. Moreover, as knowledge and skills develop, community partnerships will allow quality programmes and best practice emerging at a local level to be mainstreamed nationally.

Learner Supports

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

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

Programme Fees and Bursary

- Unaccredited programmes (6 week)   €200
- Accredited programmes (10 week)   €300
- Certificate programmes (1 year)   €1,800

The course fee includes a **non-refundable** deposit of €50 payable to secure a place. Please note that 50% of the fees must be paid upfront with the balance to be paid before the course finishes. Bursaries and phased payment options available for individual learners.

Learners can access a small bursary/scholarship fund, if required. To apply for a bursary email bursary@ancosanvcc.com for further information.

Where possible, all bursary requests should be accompanied by a note from an organisation, a tutor or mentor with a reference and recommendation for a bursary. All bursaries awarded are partial bursaries.

Format

Each unaccredited and accredited programme begins with an 'Induction Day', or six-hour face-to-face workshop, which introduces students to the course content, the technology, as well as one another. This is followed by weekly live online sessions using a variety of interactive tools. Learners access readings, watch videos, and undertake assignments in their own time and at a pace that suits them. We also offer tutorial sessions in the virtual classroom to help learners with their study skills and assignments. **Unaccredited programmes** involve an Induction Day and five virtual classroom sessions. **Accredited programmes** involve an Induction Day and eight virtual classroom sessions. Mid-way through accredited programmes, we offer learners a second face-to-face workshop.

Unaccredited	Accredited	Description
Induction Day	Induction Day	6-hour face-to-face workshop, including technology induction
5 Online Sessions	4 Online Sessions	1-hour online technology refresher 2-hour synchronous teaching per week
-	Workshop	6-hour face-to-face workshop
-	4 Online Sessions	2-hour synchronous teaching per week

Programmes Offered

Introductory Programmes
Unaccredited | 6 weeks | €200

An Cosán VCC provides the following unaccredited, blended learning programmes:

- Introduction to Community Development (Unaccredited)
- Introduction to Community Drugs Work (Unaccredited)
- Introduction to Community Leadership (Unaccredited)
- Introduction to Gender Studies (Unaccredited)
- Introduction to Climate Change (Unaccredited)

Higher Education
Programmes | QQI Level 6 & 7 | 10 Credits | 10 weeks | €300

An Cosán VCC and IT Carlow provide the following accredited, blended learning programmes:

- Learning to Learn at Third Level
- Citizenship and Social Action
- Community Leadership
- Introduction to Social Enterprise Development
- Community Development
- Group Work and Facilitation Skills
- Social Analysis

Certificates
6 Programmes | QQI Level 6 | Minor Award | 60 Credits | 1 - 2 year | €1,800

An Cosán VCC and IT Carlow offer 1 - 2 year long accredited Certificates in the following:

- Certificate in Leadership and Community Development
- Certificate in Applied Addiction Studies and Community Development
- Certificate in Leadership and Social Enterprise

Continuous Professional Development
Special Purpose Award | QQI Level 7 | 10 credits | 10 weeks | €300

An Cosán VCC and IT Carlow provide the following 10-week accredited, blended learning programmes relevant to continuous professional development:

- Transformative Community Education
- Technology Enhanced Learning

Introductory Programmes
Unaccredited | 6 weeks | €200

An Cosán VCC's unaccredited programmes provide a supportive, fun, and collaborative virtual learning environment in which we encourage learners to participate actively in their own development.

Introduction to Community Development (Unaccredited)

The **Introduction to Community Development** programme introduces learners to the core concepts of community development and social action. We will use animation, video, and music to examine key themes such as power and democracy in society, the role of the state, the ethics of community development, and digital citizenship. We draw on case studies and learners' own experiences to discuss key issues facing their communities, including youth visibility, identity politics, and community empowerment. Learners will identify practical approaches and strategies to support their community's development.

Introduction to Community Drugs Work (Unaccredited)

The **Introduction to Community Drugs Work** programme explores the causes, course, and consequences of drug addiction and how they relate to the individual, the family, the community, and society. Addiction issues related to diverse populations are presented, and the connections between local and global contexts in relation to drug use will also be explored. Learners will identify practical approaches and strategies to support community drugs work. We will examine case studies and contemporary response alternatives regarding intervention, treatment, education, and prevention.

Introduction to Community Leadership (Unaccredited)

The **Introduction to Community Leadership** programme will explore the role of leadership in the community. Learners will investigate a model of grassroots community leadership in practice, nationally and globally. Learners will also examine the concept of leadership and analyse different leadership styles and qualities. Learners will identify their own leadership skills as well as identify strategies and practices fitting to community leadership development. Learners will also explore the contribution of technology to community leadership. We will draw on case studies and learners' own experiences to discuss key issues facing their communities, including inequality, discrimination, and community empowerment. We will use animation, video, and music to examine key themes such as power and democracy in our community, the role of the state, and digital citizenship.

Introduction to Gender Studies (Unaccredited)

The **Introduction to Gender Studies** programme introduces learners to critical questions about the meanings of gender in society. We introduce foundational ideas, including how gender is socially constructed, how gender structures our ways of being and thinking, and how the personal is political. Participants will apply these insights to a variety of contemporary social, political and economic problems. Key themes for collective inquiry and discussion include the difference between sex and gender, identity, gender inequality, cultural assumptions, media representations, and feminism in the 21st century. An Introduction to Gender Studies will enrich learners' self-understanding, enhance their understanding of the world, and facilitate their advancing gender equality.

Introduction to Climate Change (Unaccredited)

The **Introduction to Climate Change** programme introduces learners to climate justice, one of the defining issues of our times. Participants will learn the foundations of environmentalism and apply these insights to a variety of contemporary political and ecological problems. Key themes for discussion include understanding nature and climate change, the role of capitalism, technology and agriculture, and the emergence of sustainable alternatives. We will examine national and international case studies of community-led movements and projects for climate justice. An Introduction to Climate Justice will enrich learners' understanding of the world while developing visionary ideas to change it.

Higher Education
Programmes | QQI Level 6 & 7 | 10 Credits | 10 weeks |

An Cosán VCC and IT Carlow provide the following 10-week accredited, blended learning programmes.

Learning to Learn at Third Level   (QQI Level 6)

The **Learning to Learn at Third Level** programme is designed to support learners to develop skills and confidence in preparing for education at third level. Students will explore a range of different learning styles and will be introduced to academic reading and writing; reading techniques and strategies; planning, structuring, writing assignments and using academic conventions. The module will also introduce learners to key ideas in social studies.

Citizenship and Social Action   (QQI Level 7)

The **Citizenship and Social Action** programme will explore theoretical concepts of democracy, citizenship and social action. Students will also analyse specific case studies in relation to citizenship, social action and democratic participation in the age of the internet. Alongside this, they will investigate and identify strategies and practical approaches to support digital citizenship. Finally, learners will examine the Irish and European Union policy frameworks with regard to citizenship and participation.

Community Leadership   (QQI Level 7)

The **Community Leadership** programme will explore the role of leadership in the community sector. Learners will investigate a model of grassroots community leadership in practice, nationally and globally. Learners will also examine the concept of leadership within the context of social activism and analyse different leadership styles and qualities. Learners will identify their own leadership skills and style and identify strategies and practices fitting to community leadership development. Learners will also explore the contribution of technology to community leadership.

Introduction to Social Enterprise Development (QQI Level 6)

The **Introduction to Social Enterprise Development** programme is designed to support learners to develop skills and confidence in creating social enterprises. Learners will explore key theories and concepts, examine the role of social enterprise in the community, and undertake a basic analysis of local community needs. Learners will gain a better understanding of business planning and funding, as well as key governance and management issues. Learners will also plan their future progression paths as social entrepreneurs.

Community Development (QQI Level 6)

The **Community Development** programme explores the key principles and practices of community development. It provides an overview of the historical and contemporary infrastructure of the community and voluntary sector in Ireland. Learners will assess diverse community development case studies and approaches, exploring their implications within local communities and wider Irish society. Learners' own participation in the community development process will be examined throughout and consideration given to assessing their practice and approaches through the lens of community development theory.

Group Work and Facilitation Skills (QQI Level 6)

The **Group Work and Facilitation Skills** programme will develop learners' understanding of group dynamics, of the principles underpinning facilitation styles and interventions, and of a range of group work techniques. Learners will practice and improve their facilitation and presentation skills as well as their capacity to plan, deliver and evaluate a group. The programme will build on learners' ability to critically reflect on their own knowledge, skills and experience both as a group participant and a group facilitator.

Social Analysis (QQI Level 6)

The **Social Analysis** programme will explore key concepts of sociology, including the concept of power and social change. Learners will examine the relationship between social, economic and political development as well as analyse the potential of community activism to effect social change. Particular attention will be paid throughout the programme to Irish society and to the key influences shaping its development.

Continuous Professional Development
Special Purpose Award | QQI Level 7 | 10 credits | 10 weeks | €300

An Cosán VCC and IT Carlow provide an innovative and creative approach to continuous professional development through our accredited higher education blended learning programmes.

Technology Enhanced Learning   (QQI Level 7)

The **Technology Enhanced Learning** programme focuses on developing digital skills and competencies to enable learners to use a range of educational technologies. Learners will be introduced to the concept of communities of practice in technology enhanced learning. They will investigate and identify effective approaches to building digital skills in their own practice. Learners will also examine the Irish and European Union policy frameworks with regard to technology enhanced learning, community education and higher education.

Transformative Community Education   (QQI Level 7)

The **Transformative Community Education** programme introduces learners to theories and concepts of community education with a particular emphasis on a social action model. The module supports students to engage in reflective practice and to consider the implications of a social action model of community education in contemporary Ireland. The Irish social policy context in relation to community education is examined and analysed.

Progression Paths

The following progression pathways towards Certificate, Higher Certificate and BA Degree are open to An Cosán VCC learners:

Certificate in Leadership and Community Development
QQI Level 6 | Minor Award | 60 Credits | 1 Year | €1,800 |
September 2018 – June 2019
(Commencing 8th September 2018)

The aim of this interdisciplinary 1 year blended online certificate programme is to develop graduates who are equipped with sufficient knowledge and skills in Leadership and Community Development to enable them to make a professional contribution to communities, groups, societies and organisations and to prepare graduates for life-long learning so that they will be able to further develop and consolidate their knowledge and skills through experience, professional and/or academic education.

VCC is working in partnership with IT Carlow to develop a blended online Bachelor of Arts in Leadership and Community Development (QQI Level 7). Learners who complete Stage 1 at Level 6 of the NFQ (60 credits) are eligible to exit the programme with a "Certificate in Leadership and Community Development" (Minor Award Level 6) or to progress to Higher Certificate and BA awards.

Format: Each Module begins with a 'Face to Face' Saturday Workshop 10.00am – 16.00pm followed by 6 online sessions every Wednesday 18.00 – 20.30pm.

Modules included:
Stage 1 / 60 ECTS
- Learning to Learn at Third Level (QQI Level 6)

- Introduction to Community Development (QQI Level 6)

- Introduction to Community Leadership (QQI Level 6)

- Group Work and Facilitation Skills (QQI Level 6)

- Social Analysis (QQI Level 6)

- Introduction to Citizenship and Social Action (QQI Level 6)

Schedule Outline at a glance:

Module 1:	Saturday 8th September 2018
Module 2:	Saturday 20th October 2018
Mid-Term No Class:	29th October – 2nd November 2018
Module 3:	Saturday 8th December 2018
Christmas Break:	17th December – 4th January 2019
Module 4:	Saturday 9th February 2019
Mid-Term No Class:	18th February – 22nd February 2019
Module 5:	Saturday 30th March 2019
Easter Break No Class:	23rd April – 26th April 2019
Module 6:	Saturday 18th May 2019
Cert Completion:	26th June 2019

Certificate in Applied Addiction Studies & Community Development
QQI Level 6 | Minor Award | 60 Credits | 1 Year | €1,800 | September 2018 – June 2019 (Commencing 8th September 2018)

This interdisciplinary 1 year blended online certificate programme aims to develop knowledge, skills and competencies in the theory and practice of applied addiction studies and community development. The purpose of the programme is to build the capacity of community drugs workers and those working and volunteering in the wider community within an addiction context.

VCC is working in partnership with IT Carlow to develop a blended online Bachelor of Arts in Applied Addiction Studies and Community Development (QQI Level 7). Learners who complete Stage 1 at Level 6 of the NFQ (60 credits) are eligible to exit the programme with a "Certificate in Applied Addiction Studies and Community Development" (Minor Award Level 6) or to progress to Higher Certificate and BA awards.

Format: Each Module begins with a 'Face to Face' Saturday Workshop 10.00am – 16.00pm followed by 6 online sessions every Wednesday 18.00 – 20.30pm.

Modules included:
Stage 1 / 60 ECTS
- Learning to Learn at Third Level (QQI Level 6)
- Introduction to Community Development (QQI Level 6)
- The Nature and Context of Addiction (QQI Level 6)
- Group Work and Facilitation Skills (QQI Level 6)
- Social Analysis (QQI Level 6)
- Drug Prevention, Education & Awareness (QQI Level 6)

Schedule Outline at a glance:

Module 1:	Saturday 8th September 2018
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Module 4:	Saturday 9th February 2019
Mid-Term No Class:	18th February – 22nd February 2019
Module 5:	Saturday 30th March 2019
Easter Break No Class:	23rd April – 26th April 2019
Module 6:	Saturday 18th May 2019
Cert Completion:	26th June 2019

Certificate in Leadership and Social Enterprise
QQI Level 6 | Minor Award | 60 Credits | 1 - 2 Years | €1,800

This interdisciplinary 1 – 2 year blended online certificate programme aims to develop knowledge, skills and competencies in the theory and practice of leadership and social enterprise development. The purpose of the programme is to build the capacity of people working in the social enterprise ecosystem and volunteering in the wider community within a social enterprise context.

Modules included:

60 ECTS

- Introduction to Social Enterprise Development (QQI Level 6)
- Introduction to Community Leadership (QQI Level 6)
- Introduction to Community Development (QQI Level 6)
- Leadership & Organisational Development (QQI Level 6)
- Social Analysis (QQI Level 6)
- Management Development (QQI Level 6)

Skills to Succeed Academy

Accenture and An Cosán VCC have come together to roll out a virtual 'Skills to Succeed Academy' around Ireland. The interactive online training programme, developed by Accenture, gives people the skills and confidence to choose the right career and ultimately better position them to get a job or build a business. Registration for the Skills to Succeed Academy is free and can be applied for through local community-based employment support organisations that are working with An Cosán VCC as Academy advisors.

Next Steps?

To find out more about becoming an Academy Advisor and to sign up for the free training, get in touch with **Mark Kelly, Skills to Succeed Project Manager** on email m.kelly@ancosanvcc.com or call 086 0499643 to book your training session.

Visit http://ancosanvcc.com/s2sacademy/ or follow #S2SAcademy on Twitter.

Summary of all programmes and progression paths offered to learners:

Introduction Programmes | Unaccredited | Duration: 6 weeks | Fee: €200

Introduction to Community Development	Introduction to Community Drugs Work	Introduction to Community Leadership
Introduction to Climate Change	Introduction to Gender Studies	

Programmes | QQI Level 6 & 7 |10 credits | Duration: 10 weeks | Fee: €300

Learning to Learn at Third Level		
Introduction to Community Leadership	Group Work and Facilitation Skills	Introduction to Social Enterprise Development
Introduction to Community Development	Social Analysis	Citizenship and Social Action

Continuous Professional Development |QQI Level 7 | 10 credits | Duration: 10 weeks | Fee: €300

Transformative Community Education
Technology Enhanced Learning

Certificate | QQI Level 6 | 60 credits | Duration: 1 year | Fee: €1,800

Certificate in Leadership and Community Development
Certificate in Applied Addiction Studies and Community Development
Certificate in Leadership and Social Enterprise

Higher Certificate & Bachelor of Arts Awards

VCC is working in partnership with IT Carlow to develop a blended online Bachelor of Arts in Leadership and Community Development & Bachelor of Arts in Applied Addiction Studies & Community Development (QQI Level 7). Learners who complete Stage 1 at QQI Level 6 of the NFQ (60 credits) are eligible to exit the programme with a "Certificate in Leadership and Community Development" or "Certificate in Applied Addiction Studies and Community Development" (Minor Award Level 6) or to progress to Higher Certificate and BA Degree awards.

Find out More

Visit our website and follow us on Social Media to keep up to date with our latest news:

- www.ancosanvcc.com
- www.facebook.com/AnCosanVCC
- www.twitter.com/AnCosan_VCC
- www.linkedin.com/company/an-cosan-virtual-community-college-vcc-/
- www.youtube.com - Search for: An Cosán VCC
- Learners Blogs: http://ancosanvcc.com/blog

Become a Community Partner

If you are interested in becoming a Community Partner contact Maria Flanagan, Community Partner Lead on email m.flanagan@ancosanvcc.com or phone mobile 086 8223808.

Contact Us

If you need further information about registering for a programme or would like to speak to someone about your options, get in touch with our team today. We look forward to speaking to you.

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Email: info@ancosanvcc.com

Phone: 01 534 1847

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