Higher Diploma in Early Childhood Studies, Care and Education

This part-time, evening, postgraduate course is designed to facilitate existing graduates from relevant areas who wish to upskill or convert to early childhood care and education to gain the professional qualification required in Ireland’s contemporary, professionalised, early years sector. The programme is targeted at applicants who are already working in supervised practice.
Higher Diploma in Early Childhood Studies, Care and Education

Programme Outline
The overall aim of the Higher Diploma in Early Childhood Studies, Care and Education is to develop critically reflective, skilled and ethically aware professional Early Childhood Educators. The course will afford graduates from relevant disciplines an opportunity to enhance existing qualifications, and build on existing practical expertise, to obtain a recognised level 8 qualification in Early Childhood Studies, Care and Education.

The course has three main elements:
1. Placement, where knowledge and skills acquired in the course are put into practice in a controlled work environment, under the supervision of experienced practitioners and academics; where also reflection on the application of theory to practice will take place;
2. Academic Development, where knowledge of new and emerging developments in the sector, combined with the development of conceptual knowledge and theoretical frameworks takes place;
3. Practice/Skills Development, where the skills necessary to function at a high level within the sector are developed.

Programme Structure

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<th>Semester 1</th>
<th>Semester 2</th>
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<tr>
<td>Practice Placement: Early Childhood Studies 1 (10 credits)</td>
<td>Practice Placement: Early Childhood Studies 2 (10 credits)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Personal and Professional Development: Early Childhood Studies (5 credits)</td>
<td>Managing Early Years Contexts (5 credits)</td>
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<td>Child Developmental Psychology (5 credits)</td>
<td>Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood (5 credits)</td>
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<td>Early Learning and Play (5 credits)</td>
<td>Early Years Curriculum, Quality and Practice (5 credits)</td>
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<td>Social Research Methods (5 credits)</td>
<td>Independent Study Early Childhood Studies (5 credits)</td>
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Career Opportunities
On successful completion of this qualification students will have a recognised level 8 qualification in Early Childhood Studies, Care and Education. They will be qualified to work as Room Leaders and their work setting will be eligible for a higher capitation grant for the ECCE programme.

Students will have opportunities to work in leading learning in ECCE settings, family and community settings; local development projects; advocacy work for children and families; management; setting up own business; childcare committees; pre-school inspectorate roles; pre-school educator; policy work; public and voluntary organisations and special education services.

Students will also have opportunity to progress to further study including: post grad opportunities; primary school teaching; play therapy; therapeutic professions and research and policy.

Entry Requirements
The programme is designed for:
i. Applicants with an existing level 7 major award in Early Childhood Studies, or equivalent, and with at least two years of relevant work experience who wish to progress to progress to level 8;
ii. Applicants with an existing major award at level 8 degree in a cognate area who wish to convert to a career in early childhood care and education. Cognate degrees are defined as level 8 degrees in which Psychology, Sociology or Early Years Education was a major component.

Candidates who do not currently meet these requirements may consider making an application using WIT’s Recognition of Prior Learning process. Guidelines on the Institute’s RPL policy and procedures are available at www.wit.ie/parttime and the full policy is available as Chapter 3 of the WIT Academic Regulations at www.wit.ie/policies

Fees
The fee is €3,000. A contribution towards the fee may be available to eligible candidates through funding secured by Waterford Chamber Skillnet working in partnership with Waterford Childcare Committee.

Applications
Visit www.wit.ie/parttime for full details on how to apply for this programme.

Contacts
General queries
WIT Part Time information desk
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