

Higher Diploma in Arts in Early Years Montessori Education

QQI Level 8 Award



Who is this course for?

Graduates from any discipline who wish to change career direction or embark on a career in the *area* of Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC).

Early Childhood Context in Ireland:

In Ireland, in recent years, radical change has occurred in the area of Early Childhood Education and Care particularly with regard to policy and training. Renewed awareness and interest in the importance of a child's environment and experiences in the early years has produced a demand for highly qualified practitioners in the field. The Higher Diploma in Arts in Early Years Montessori Education is a popular course serving the needs of learners who have previously earned a degree and who wish to embark on a career in Early Childhood Education.

Programme Aims:

- Provide a graduate level entry and professional qualification for learners who wish to pursue a career in early childhood care and education while applying principles of respect and empowerment.
- Enable graduates from Early Childhood studies and from a wide range of rich and engaging disciplines to emerge as leaders in the field of ECEC informed by Montessori philosophy as a fundamental aspect of their practice.
- Encourage learners to research a range of contemporary early childhood policies, pedagogies, curricula and frameworks and to contribute to the wider field of ECEC.
- Contribute to the growing professionalisation of the Early Years education workforce in Ireland

Contact Hours:

The Higher Diploma in Arts in Early Years Montessori Education is a graduate programme and this is reflected in the balance of contact hours and hours dedicated to independent study. Learners will attend classes for three late afternoon/early evenings a week. This allows for placement hours to be completed in the mornings.

Opportunities for Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL)

Graduates with degrees in Early Childhood Education may complete the programme in **One Year** by using the RPL process to transfer directly into **Year Two**.

RPL in respect of individual modules is also available in the **First Year**, for graduates with other degrees, particularly cognate degrees e.g. nursing, social care, education etc.

Professional Development

Graduates of this course are highly qualified, competent early childhood educators specialising in the Montessori approach. They possess the skills and knowledge required to meet the responsibilities of working in the ECEC sector.

The College encourages graduates bringing a diverse and valuable range of skills and experiences to this programme to utilise and draw upon these assets in their engagement with course material and on their journey to becoming reflective early years practitioners.



Course Duration

This is a two year programme.

Year One puts the landscape of ECEC in Ireland into perspective. Modules such as Social Policy in ECEC, Developmental Psychology, The Child at Play, ICT in the Early Years, Active Start and the Creative Child are all designed to inform and support professional practitioners in an early education setting.

Year Two will focus on Montessori Education in the Early Years and the importance of recognition and early intervention for children with additional and special educational needs. Research also features in year two as an important part of the profile of the Expert Early Years' Practitioner.

Modules for Year One

- Professional Placement and Development in ECEC
- The Creative Child
- Developmental Psychology
- Social Policy in ECEC
- Sociology of Childhood: Spaces and Places
- The Child at Play
- Active Start
- ICT in the Early Years

Modules for Year Two

- Montessori Early Childhood Education and Care
- Montessori Placement
- Special Education in the Early Years
- Research in Early Childhood Education and Care

Placement in Year One (Hours: 200)

The field of ECEC has dimensions that extend beyond the classroom. Placement in this year aims to extend the professional development of learners by giving them a variety of experiences related to other pedagogical philosophies, policy, community- based delivery and administrative aspects of ECEC.

Learners will complete 200 hours of placement in 2 venues (100 hours per venue).

Placement in Year Two (Hours: 300)

This is predominantly a practice based module undertaken in Montessori early years environments. The module learning outcomes are met through interaction in the setting with the assistance and advice of a placement mentor and College tutor. The learner is provided with on-going feedback through meetings on a one to one basis with his/her College supervisor. There are some taught sessions relating to the role of the adult in observation, planning, assessment, communication and circle time.

e.g. Placement A: A crèche, daycare, private educational setting (other than Montessori) showing the range of early years education and care provision in Ireland (100 hours).

e.g. Placement B: A County Childcare Committee, charity-based organisation, special education, community group etc, showing the range of early years supportive agencies and organisations in Ireland (100 hours). This experience will allow learners to reflect critically on issues of quality, delivery, diversity, special needs, curriculum, policy and administrative practice. Concepts of professionalism, ethical practice and continuing professional development will feature strongly in this module.



Dublin
Century Court
100 Georges Street
Dun Laoghaire
Co Dublin

Cork
52 South Mall
Cork City
Co Cork

+353.1.2806064
www.snmci.ie