



ENNIS VTOS YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED



Bord Oideachais & Oiliúna
LUIMNIGH & AN CHLÁIR
LIMERICK & CLARE
Education & Training Board

WHAT IS VTOS?

The **Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme** is a full-time general education and work related training programme for adults. The aim of the scheme is to provide unemployed adults with an opportunity to gain skills, confidence and certification which will enable them to enter/re-enter the work force, or progress to further education. VTOS offers you the chance to return to education in an environment suited to adults.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

An applicant for VTOS must be at least 21 years of age and getting one of the following payments for at least six months immediately before the commencement of the course:

- Jobseeker's Benefit
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- One-Parent Family Allowance
- Invalidity Pension
- Disability Allowance
- Disability Benefit
- Illness Benefit

The following categories are also eligible to apply for VTOS, provided they are at least 21 years of age and are in receipt of one of the following payments for at least six months immediately before the commencement of the course:

- Blind Person's Pension
- Deserted Wife's Allowance
- Deserted Wife's Benefit
- Widow/er's non-contributory pension
- Widow/er's contributory pension
- Prisoner's Wife's Allowance

A person who received statutory redundancy but who has not been in receipt of a qualifying payment for the required period may be permitted to participate in a VTOS course after being made redundant. This applies solely to persons in receipt of, or awaiting payment of, agreed **statutory** redundancy, who are over 21 years of age and available for a full-time course. Persons **signing for credits** for at least six months, and the **Dependent Spouse** of an eligible person can also apply, **but will not receive a training allowance.**

Periods spent in receipt of a **Carer's Allowance**, on SOLAS Training Courses, Community Employment Schemes, Jobs Initiative, and Youthreach Programmes, or time in Prison, can count towards this six-month qualifying period but a person must be getting one of the relevant social welfare payments immediately before the course commencement date.

WHAT ARE THE EDUCATIONAL ENTRY REQUIREMENTS?

There are none. A wide range of courses are offered from basic to more advanced levels. People who may not have had the opportunity to progress through secondary school are particularly welcomed. Short listing for courses may apply.

WHAT COURSES ARE AVAILABLE?

Ennis VTOS offers a wide range of courses. Courses are offered subject to demand as follows:

Business Administration (Level 5)	Graphic Design (Level 5)
Community Care (Level 5)	Regional Tour Guiding (Level 6)
General Learning (Level 4)	Tourism with Business (Level 5).

All courses are certified by QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland) at Levels 3- 5. Other non-certified subjects are also offered.

Business Administration 5M2468

The purpose of this award is to enable the learner to acquire the knowledge, skills and competence to work independently and under supervision in an administrative role in a range of business contexts and/ or to progress to further or higher education and training. 120 Credits are required to achieve a Major Award at Level 5 in this area.

Subjects offered may include:

Bookkeeping-Manual & Computerised		
Payroll- Manual & Computerised		
Safety and Health at Work	Word Processing L5 & L6	
Spreadsheet Methods	Communications	Customer Service
Database Methods	Work Experience	Irish/French/Spanish
Desktop Publishing	Legal Studies	The Internet

Tourism with Business 5M5011

The overall aim of this programme is to enable the learner to acquire the knowledge, skills and competence to work independently and under supervision in a tourism related role in a range of business contexts and/or to progress to further or higher education and training 120 Credits are required to achieve a Major Award at Level 5 in this area.

Subjects offered may include those listed above (Business Administration) and additionally:

Irish Cultural & Heritage Resources	Tourism Principles & Practice
Tourism, Information & Admin.	

Community Care 5M2786

The purpose of this award is to enable the learner to acquire the knowledge, skill, and competence to work under supervision in a variety of community care settings and or to progress to further and or higher education and training. 120 Credits are required to achieve a Major Award at Level 5 in this area.

Subjects offered may include:

Care Provision and Practice	Care Skills
Human Growth and Development	Manual and Patient Handling
Care of the Older Person	First Aid
Intellectual Disabilities	Communications
Safety and Health at Work	Work Experience

Graphic Design 5M1995

The Graphic Design course aims to give the Learner an introduction to the skills necessary to become a graphic designer including the main computer software packages used in the industry. 120 Credits are required to achieve a Major Award at Level 5 in this area.

Subjects offered may include:

Drawing	Desktop Publishing
Design	Digital Photography
Graphic Design	IT Skills/Computer Applications
Communications	Painting
Work Experience	Combined Materials
Embroidery	

General Learning Skills 4M2010

The purpose of this award is to enable the learner to develop the relevant knowledge, skill and competence in a broad range of employment and personal skills which enable employment, under direct supervision, in a variety of sectors, or progression to further education or training. The total credit value required for this award is 90.

Subjects offered may include:

Communications	Computer Applications
Maths	Life Management
Personal Effectiveness	Career Planning
Cookery	Customer Care
Painting/Drawing	Work Experience
ESOL	

Regional Tour Guiding 6S20233

This is joint pilot programme between Ennis VTOS and The Burren Outdoor Education and Training Centre. It will involve a range of classroom and outdoor elements. It will also involve some overnight stays in the BOEC. On successful completion of this programme learners will be able to demonstrate a range of communication, information and customer care skills to offer a professional, accurate, informative and interesting regional tour guiding experience.

Subjects offered may include:

Irish Tour Guiding	Communications
Irish Natural Heritage and Culture	Work Experience

Other general subjects are offered at all levels, including languages and study skills. Most subjects are of one year's duration. **Subjects are offered subject to demand and funding.**

ASSESSMENT

Continuous assessment takes place on all VTOS courses. Work produced throughout the year, such as projects and assignments will be graded and will contribute towards final assessment. Some subjects have written exams.

WHAT ARE THE HOURS OF ATTENDANCE AND HOLIDAYS, AND CAN YOU WORK PART-TIME?

All classes take place Monday to Friday between 9am and 4.00pm. Learners will be required to attend every day. **Days off and holidays** coincide as closely as possible with primary school holidays. Learners can work part-time, without loss of benefit, **provided the work does not interfere with class times**, as agreed with the Co-ordinator.

CHILDCARE

The Department for Children and Youth Affairs offers supports for childcare; Childcare, Employment and Training Support Scheme, (CETS). Subvention (Subsidy) is given for each full-time, part-time and half-time childcare place per week, for 43 weeks per annum. Once offered a place on VTOS you will be given an up to date CETS providers list.

WHAT ABOUT MONEY MATTERS?

No fees. VTOS supplies Learners free of charge with the resources they need to complete their programme. If you are in receipt of a social welfare payment you will continue to receive that payment whilst on the course. A top-up payment is available to the U25's. Travel allowance is also payable for people who live more than 3 miles from the centre and a meal allowance is payable to all learners.

Learners continue to receive allowances during the holidays.

Your local Social Protection office will give you full details of your payment entitlements if offered a place on VTOS.

HOW LONG ARE THE COURSES AND WHEN DO THEY START?

The programme commences each year in the last week of August and runs until the end of May. Ennis VTOS operate over a two year period.

HOW TO APPLY?

If you would like some help or advice about applying to VTOS, or would like to have a look at other courses or training opportunities available to you, please contact:

**Clare Adult Guidance Service,
Further Education and Training
Centre*,
Clonroad Campus,
Clonroad Business Park,
Ennis
Phone: 065-6897617.**



***Previously known as Adult and
Community Education Centre**