

Why This Course?



This Level 8 programme will equip councillors with the foundational knowledge to critically assess planning decisions within the wider context of national and regional development priorities.



The programme will cover key planning policies and reforms, including the new Planning and Development Act 2024 and the revised National Planning Framework (NPF), alongside other emerging planning issues. Participants will explore how the spatial planning system operates within local government and across the planning hierarchy.



The first credit-bearing university CPD programme in Ireland designed specifically for elected members on spatial planning, offering a recognised Level 8 qualification.

Microcredential: The Planning System in Ireland - An Introduction to Planning Policy and Practice for Elected Members

Upon successful completion of this programme, participants will be awarded 5 credits (for use with future programmes in Maynooth university) and a certificate of completion.

Course Details



Part-Time



14 Weeks



Blended delivery: Mix of online and in-person sessions



Level 8

Fees & Dates

Fees: The fee for this course is €1270.

Deadline: 24th April 2026

Commences: 12th September 2026

Applications

For more information, or to register your interest, email info@ailg.ie



Course Outline

Sessions will explore key themes such as:

- Key Concepts influencing today's planning system;
- The Planning Hierarchy From National to Local;
- Key Principles of Balanced Regional Development;
- The Role of the Councillor in Planning;
- Data and Evidence-Informed Policy-Making;
- Planning and the Environment;
- Planning and Housing; *and*
- Planning and Transport.

The course will be delivered in a hybrid in-person and online format, allowing students from across the country to participate and interact with each other and learn through assignments and peer-to-peer learning, building strong inter-personal relationships and professional networks at the same time.

Delivery:

The programme, comprising of seven sessions in total, will be delivered through a mix of in-person and online sessions.

Assessment:

Assessment will take the form of a 1,500-3,000 word report or briefing paper on a particular aspect of the Irish planning system and your role as a councillor.