

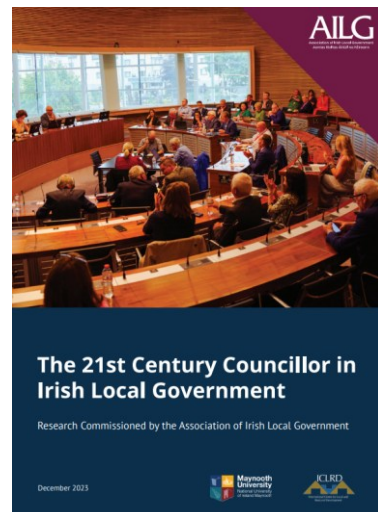
Micro-Credential: An Introduction to Spatial Planning for Elected Members



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Background

- Research by MU / ICLRD on the changing role of the councillor in the 21st Century
- Highlighted the key role of the councillor in the planning process – while also noting the evolving nature and complexity of the process
- Increasing focus on local responses to global challenges – and need for councillors to be ‘experts’ in diverse range of areas...but what supports are in place for this?
- Noted the high demand for training that deals with planning issues and policy matters – and councillors recognition of importance of, and growing need for, training and continuous professional development
- Backing up other needs analysis and research by AILG into the changing role of the councillor



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What is a Micro-Credential?

- The broad definition of a “micro-credential”...
...is a short course that provides recognition of skills, knowledge, and experience gained in a specific subject area.
- Generally, micro-credentials are designed to be flexible and part-time.
- They can be delivered online or take a blended approach, so that they fit into the demands of everyday life
- Micro-credentials are formally accredited by seven Irish universities (including Maynooth University) as partners in the Irish University Association (IUA).
- As an accredited programme, it provides credit in the form of ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System) which are recognised all over the world.

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Micro-Credential: Introduction to Spatial Planning for Elected Members

WHERE: A Joint Pilot Programme between Department of Geography and Innovation Value Institute (IVI) in partnership with the Association of Irish Local Government (AILG)

WHO: Councillors in Irish Local Government - must be currently elected

LEVEL: A Level 8 Course

ECTS: 5 Credits

COST: €1,250 + €20 Acceptance Fee (Total - €1,270)

OBJECTIVE: Aims to provide elected members with a grounding in the Irish planning system, their role as policy-makers and decision-makers in the planning process, and how this role is evolving. Particular attention will be paid to the Planning and Development Act 2024 and subsequent amendments, and the First Revision of the National Planning Framework (April 2025) – all of which has implications for local planning processes. The programme will also consider planning policy and practice in the context of emerging priority themes for local government – this includes, housing, transportation and the environment.

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The MU Team



Ms. Caroline
Creamer



Dr. Kevin Credit



Prof. Mark Boyle



Dr. Caoilfhionn
D'Arcy

Supported by:



Dr. Alistair Fraser



Prof. Markus
Helfert

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Delivery

- A **seven unit programme** comprising 125 hours of learning
- Taught component will total 25 contact hours; additional 100 hours made up on reading and assignments
- To include a **mix of online and in-person** delivery
- **5 x Online Units** will last 2.5-3 hours, and will be delivered on Wednesday evenings to accommodate elected officials
- **2 x in-person Units** to be delivered on Saturdays
- 1 x In-person unit to include a study tour
- In-person units will take place on campus in Maynooth University
- Programme will commence with an In-person unit on **Saturday 6 February 2027**
- Delivery thereafter will usually be on a **fortnightly basis ****
- Taught programme will conclude on **Saturday 24 April 2027 (TBC)**



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Focus of Micro-Credential

- Designed to compliment other training councillors receiving from both AILG And OPR
- Focusing on the 'soft' end of the Irish Planning System

Indicative Calendar for February-May Programme

- **Unit 1: An Introduction to Planning (and each other) – In-Person @ Saturday 6 February**
- **Unit 2: Overview of the Planning Policy Environment – Online evening of Wednesday 10 February ****
- **Unit 3: The Role of the Councillor in Planning – Online evening of Wednesday 24 February**
- **Unit 4: Planning and the Environment – Online evening of Wednesday 10 March**
- **Unit 5: Planning and Housing – Online evening of Wednesday 24 March**
- **Unit 6: Planning and Transportation – Online evening of Wednesday 7 April**
- **Unit 7: Study Tour and Concluding Session – In-person on Saturday 24 April (TBC)**
- **Final Assignment Due: Friday 21 May**

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Course Requirements



- Must be a serving Councillor
- Course grading: Pass or Fail
- To Pass
 - # 85% 'live' attendance required to completed course (i.e. must attend 6 of the 7 units on the day)
 - # Complete 3 of the 5 Continuous Assessment assignments set (worth 10% each – total of 30%)
 - # Complete end of programme assignment – final paper (worth 70%)
- Camera must be 'on' for duration of on-line sessions
- All course material and assignments will be available on Moodle, MU's virtual online student learning environment
- An Introduction to use of Moodle will be provided during 1st session on 6th February
- Lectures will be recorded and available to re-watch on Moodle
- A Departmental Celebration will be held, and Certificate of Completion awarded, following final assignments

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Key Dates

- **Monday 19 October:** Information Webinar
- **Friday 23 October:** Closing Date for Expressions of Interest
- **Tuesday 27 October:** MU Review of Expressions of Interest received
- **Monday 2 November:** Notification as to whether being called forward to participate in programme
- **Wk commencing 2 November:** Opening of MU Apply to formally apply for programme
- **Friday 27 November:** Closure of MU Apply
- **Wk commencing 30 November:** Review of MU Apply Applications and Support Documentation / issue of Formal Offer
- **Wednesday 16 December:** Acceptance of Offer
- **Friday 8 January:** Cohort of Students known and confirmed for February term.

Followed by formal registration process, getting student numbers, access to relevant accounts/platforms, etc.

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The value of a colleague's perspective



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M-C Testimonial

**Cllr. Breandán
Fitzgerald, Kerry
County Council**



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Thank You

**All questions
welcomed**



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For any follow-up questions, contact

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