

National Learning Network

Think *Possible*

NLN Portlaoise

PROSPECTUS 2023



057 86 21263 / 087 054 9413



portlaoise@nlm.ie / www.nlm.ie



@nlmportlaoise



Dublin Road, Portlaoise, Laois, R32 HK11

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Welcome Message from the Centre Manager

“ **At NLN** we teach differently. We approach learning with wellness. We understand that through learning, students can grow in confidence and reach their full potential. We pride ourselves on the flexibility of our courses, which are all designed to meet the individual needs of each student.

We set ourselves apart from other training bodies by addressing all the factors that affect how a student learns. Our unique method of training enables students to reach their potential in a way that takes account of personal, social and environmental requirements.”



National Learning Network

Who We Are

We are very pleased to welcome you to National Learning Network Portlaoise and are delighted you are taking the opportunity to look at what we can offer you.

Conveniently located on the Dublin Road in Portlaoise we are a short distance from the town centre. NLN Portlaoise has great on-site parking which is ample for all students and staff. We have our own centre bus



which serves Abbeyleigh, Ballacolla, Mountrath, Rathdowney, Stradbally as well as Portlaoise town/train station etc. We are also served by both the Airport Green Bus/Kavanaghs and multiple local link routes.

Our courses and supports assist you to fulfil your own personal goals, whether this is to get a qualification or a job, or go on to further education or to simply work on your own personal development.

We work closely with our local community and have built a network of business and industry partners, including many local employers who offer our students the opportunity to gain on-the-job training and in-work placements.

Learning Options with NLN

Some students come to NLN and have a really clear plan on the course or the job they want. Other students don't have a clear plan and that is why they come to NLN. With NLN, they can explore options, develop new skills, learn about different types of work and make choices about their future.

We have two types of courses – vocational training courses and rehabilitative training courses. Something to suit everyone.

What is a Vocational Training course?

Vocational Training Courses are designed to help you build skills and identify pathways into full or part time work or progress further in your educational and training journey.

You can learn about lots of different career options with NLN if you aren't sure of the exact job or course you would like. While doing this you will get skills that you can use in many career areas.

In NLN there are also courses where you can get skills specific to an occupation such as catering, horticulture, retail and software development.

Our Vocational Training Courses Funded by Laois & Offaly Education and Training Board:

- Transition For School Leavers & Young Adults
- Kick Start Your Future
- Employer Based Training

Rehabilitative Training

National Learning Network provides a range of rehabilitative training courses with individualised services allowing people to be supported in all aspects of their lives, including helping people to either return to work or to find a new direction in their lives.

Our rehabilitative training courses support people between 18 and 66 who may have suffered a setback in life through either injury or long-term illness and have left hospital or supported care settings. We also support and deliver training to people with mental health difficulties, people who have learning difficulties who may have left school early or are transitioning from school settings, people with physical and intellectual disabilities and people living with Autism.



Our Rehabilitative Training Courses funded by Health Service Executive:

- Access
- Choices Mental Health Recovery
- Options



Certification



eNLN Online Digital Learning System

e-Learning is available as standard on all NLN programmes and services. NLN has a state-of-the-art and very user friendly e-learning system that contains thousands of learning and support resources including course notes, training videos, online quizzes, weblinks, discussion forums and more.




National Framework of Qualifications

The National Framework of Qualifications (NFQ) is a system of ten levels used to describe the Irish qualification system. Each level is based on nationally agreed standards of knowledge, skill and competence.



All Vocational Training Courses meet the Education and Training Board training standards and are funded through **Loeis & Offaly Education and Training Board**.



QQI
Quality and Qualifications Ireland
Dearbhú Cáilíochta agus Cáilíochtaí Éireann

QQI is responsible for the quality assurance of further and higher education and training in Ireland. QQI validates education courses and makes awards for certain providers, NLN being one of them.



All Rehabilitative Training Courses are delivered in line with the New Directions Standard and are funded through the **HSE**.

Transition For School Leavers & Young Adults

CERTIFICATION:

QQI Level 3 Employability Skills (3M0935)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Duration: Up to 24 months.

The Transition course offers young adults and early school leavers the opportunity to explore their future training and employment options in areas such as office administration, retail or catering and hospitality. We help and encourage students to identify their own strengths and goals as well as providing the practical experience and skills necessary to demonstrate communication, self-advocacy and teamwork within their own communities. We differ from other post-secondary school courses in that NLN provide access to psychological supports, one to one coaching and a personal development and training plan to help with any additional supports the student may require.

CORE MODULES:

Students need to obtain 60 credits for Major Award in Employability Skills (approx. 7 completed modules)

- Application of Numbers
- Career Preparation • Internet Skills
- Health and Safety Awareness
- Health and Fitness
- Nutrition and Healthy Options
- Personal Care and Presentation
- Personal & Interpersonal Skills
- Potting and Planting by Hand
- Work Experience

Options Depending on Career Choice

- Retail Skills or/Breakfast Cookery
- Culinary Operations
- Operating a Dishwasher or/ Desktop Publishing
- Word Processing • Spreadsheets

NON-CERTIFIED MODULES:

Personal Development Skills that we would encourage students to cover whilst attending the Transition course.

- Career Coaching
- Creative Exploration
- Customer Service Skills
- Enhancing Work Skills
- Health and Safety
- Induction
- Learning to Learn
- Literacy and Numeracy
- Personal Development
- Resilience in the Work Place
- Transition and Moving On

Kick Start Your Future

CERTIFICATION:

General Learning (4M2010) or Office Skills (4M2070)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Duration: Up to 18 months.

This course is designed to support students explore options for either work or for going on to further education whilst gaining their QQI Level 4 Major Award. Split over three phases, Kick Start offers optional training modules in areas such as hospitality/catering, retail skills, IT/office administration or they may opt for a general learning award whilst gaining practical work experience with an employer. New skills are acquired through a combination of practical demonstration, instruction, supervised practice, e-learning and on-the-job training with an host-company.

CERTIFIED MODULES:

- Communications
- Customer Service
- Information Technology Skills
- Work Experience
- Computer Applications
- General Learning Options (4M2010)
- Office Skills Options (4M2070)
- Retail Skills Options (4M1998)

NON-CERTIFIED MODULES:

We encourage students to cover an additional set of personal development skills while attending the Kick Start Your Future Course.

- Induction
- Advocacy Skills
- Enhancing Work Skills
- Career Coaching
- Personal Development | Self-Esteem
- Stress Management
- Resilience in the Work Place
- Transition Planning and Moving On

Employer Based Training

CERTIFICATION:

QQI Level 4 Employment Skills (4M0857)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Duration: Up to 12 months.

This work based training course offers students a work placement with a host company so that they can acquire real life training, skills and experience whilst gaining a QQI Level 4 Major Award. This course is focused on the practical and soft skills required such as workplace resilience, team working and appropriate workplace behaviours to build the skills they will need to succeed in not only getting a job but keeping that job. Students attend training in the centre two days per week and will be based in their host company for three days per week. We work with students to find a work placement of their choice and support both student and the employer whilst in training. Upon course completion students have moved into jobs in areas such as catering, administration, childcare, horticulture and many more. Additional on the job Certified Training Modules can be delivered on an individual needs basis, such as Safe Pass, HACCP etc.

CERTIFIED MODULES:

The following modules are available for contribution towards a major award:

- Business English
- Career Planning
- Communications
- Computer Applications
- Customer Service
- Functional Maths
- Information Technology Skills
- Personal & Interpersonal Development
- Work Experience
- Work Place Safety

NON-CERTIFIED MODULES:

We encourage students to cover an additional set of personal development skills while attending the Employer Based Training Course.

- Compensatory Education
- Enterprise Skills
- Individual Profiling
- Induction
- Host Company Induction
- Pre Placement Preparation
- Professional Workplace Behaviours
- Review and Future Planning
- Teamworking skills

Access

CERTIFICATION:

QQI Level 3 Employability Skills (3M0935)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Duration: Up to three years.

The Access course aims to develop the personal and social skills of students. This is done through extensive use of community facilities and practical skills training. Underpinning this course is **New Directions**, a Health Service Executive (HSE) person-centred service for adults with disabilities. Access aims to help boost students' confidence and to give people greater level of independence. We will help the student make realistic choices about further training or get a job that best suits their strengths and abilities. Access offers a variety of work experience placements so students can sample different work environments and learn the skills required.

CERTIFIED MODULES:

- Application of Numbers
- Career Preparation
- Communications
- Community Participation
- Health & Fitness
- Information Technology
- Managing Personal Finance
- Nutrition & Healthy Options
- Personal & Interpersonal Skills
- Personal Care & Presentation
- Self-Advocacy
- Work Experience
- Workplace Safety

NON-CERTIFIED MODULES:

- Active Citizenship
- Art/Drama/Craft/Music/Sport
- Community Clubs/Groups/Gaisce Award
- Community Mapping
- Decision Making
- Independent Living Skills
- Independent Travel
- Literacy & Numeracy Assessments
- Managing Change
- Managing Personal Finance
- Moving On
- Person Centred Planning
- Personal Discovery
- Positive Risk Taking
- Programme Sampling
- Relationships & Sexuality
- Team Building
- Cooking
- DIY
- Induction

Choices Mental Health Recovery

CERTIFICATION:

QQI Level 3 Employability Skills (3M0935)

COURSE OVERVIEW

Duration: Up to 24 months.

The aim of Choices is to provide participants who have mental health difficulties with the opportunity to develop their confidence, personal and social skills to improve the quality of their lives. This course encourages students to improve their general wellbeing through social interaction, community involvement and wellness. The course increases their independence so that students can take a more active part in their own communities. Through this they will learn the skills and techniques they need to help them to move towards recovery. Students will also have the opportunity to sample different work placements as part of Choices.

CERTIFIED MODULES:

- Application of Numbers
- Career Preparation
- Communications
- Community Participation
- Health & Fitness
- Health & Wellbeing
- Information Technology
- Managing Mental Health
- Managing Personal Finance
- Nutrition & Healthy Options
- Personal & Interpersonal Skills
- Personal Care & Presentation
- Self-Advocacy
- Work Experience

NON-CERTIFIED MODULES:

- Creativity and Self-expression
- Cultural and Leisure Activities
- Emotional and Mental Well Being
- Home Management and Independent skills
- Managing Change and Transition
- Problem Solving
- Promoting Positive Self-Image
- Self-Awareness
- Stress Management
- Team Building
- Time Management

Options

COURSE OVERVIEW

Duration: Up to 24 months.

Options is a two year rehabilitative training programme funded by the Health Service Executive. The Options course is individualised person-centered training to support the needs of high functioning Autistic individuals aged 18 years and over. This training is supported by highly experienced team to include Instructors, Rehabilitation officer, Resource teacher and Psychologist. Options aims to provide the person living with autism and their families with the tools to improve social skills and maximise the use of independent living skills while also supporting their individual progression paths.

The training is underpinned by the **New Directions** model which encompasses twelve pillars and uses a blended delivery approach of in centre and community based training.

CERTIFIED MODULES:

- Application of Numbers
- Career Preparation
- Communications
- Community Participation
- Health & Fitness
- Nutrition & Healthy Options
- Personal & Interpersonal Skills
- Word Processing
- Work Experience

NON-CERTIFIED MODULES:

- Anxiety Management
- Career Exploration & Understanding Work Communication Skills
- Community & Leisure Activities
- Enhancing Assertiveness
- Independent Living Skills
- Information Technology Skills
- Managing Conflict & Negotiation Skills
- Relationship Building
- Self Advocacy
- Self Awareness
- Social Skills Stress Management

Why Students Choose NLN

At NLN we recognise the need to do things differently. We've put in place structures and support to help students start and complete their training.

- NLN courses are **FREE** (*All courses are funded by the HSE or the LOETB*)
- There are **no registration fees**
- Students **keep** any social welfare payments they may be entitled to
- If you are under 26 you may receive an **increased payment** (*eligibility criteria apply*)
- If you are aged 16 or 17 you will receive a **training allowance**
- **Transport allowances** may be available
- **Small class** sizes
- **Continuous intake** (Students start when they are ready)
- Work at **your own pace**
- **High quality** work experiences
- Recognised **QQI qualifications**
- Psychological and advocacy **support**

What our Students Say

At National Learning Network we understand that success means different things to everyone. Check out what some of our students have to say:



“ I joined NLN Portlaoise and enrolled in the Kick Start programme, earning QQI Major Awards in Office Skills and General Learning, this helped me gain a host of new skills while refreshing existing ones. After that, I enrolled in their Employer Based Training programme where I gained work experience with an environmental services company called Enva, working in a project team helping to transform and upgrade their IT and business systems. As a result, I am now starting full-time employment with them.

I can now look toward a future working in an exciting job sector with plenty of opportunities, and National Learning Network played a huge part in helping this happen. I have met all kinds of awesome people in my time here, both students and staff. The education, guidance, support and encouragement offered has been so valuable. NLN offers a very open minded and non-judgmental environment for students to learn, meet new people, and discover opportunities for employment or further/higher education.

Dave Corry
Student

“ Everyone here makes you so welcome and you will meet so many people of all ages. It's so different from school. You don't have the pressure of exams or doing long days then going home to do lots of homework and study. Since being here I have met so many people who will be my friends for life.

Caoimhe Delaney
Transition Student





“ Before I came to NLN, I was very shy but once I was there I got to know people and have made lots of friends. NLN helps people to discover what they want from their lives. In the centre, there's a separate space, the Quiet Room, that people can go to if they need to. People learn that there's always a way to deal when things get too tough.

Padhraic Delaney
Access Student

“ The Choices Programme gave me a routine and some direction both of which were lacking in my life at that time. It allowed me time to grow and develop both life skills and vocational skills in a safe and supportive environment. I benefited so much in terms of my personal development, confidence, interacting with people and self-esteem. I cannot recommend the Choices programme highly enough.

Aileen Murphy
Choices Student



“ The staff helped me set & achieve goals. I have gained more independence. I have become more motivated and more confident in myself. I am also able to manage my money better. NLN Portlaoise has changed my life.

Sarah O'Halloran
NLN Student

Supports offered at NLN

- **Nationally and internationally recognised** accredited training and education courses at Levels 3 - 4 on the National Framework of Qualifications including awards from QQI (Quality and Qualifications Ireland), ECDL and others.
- **Personalised training plans** supporting you to achieve your individual goals and ambitions. **You learn at your own pace.**
- **Key instructors** who will act as an extra support should you need it.
- **Wellness programmes** ensuring a holistic approach to your continuing personal and professional development. WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Planning) available if needed.
- **Education, literacy and numeracy supports** where required.
- **Information Technology** skills training including learning how best to use technology to support your training and education.



- **Access to health, leisure, social and cultural individual and group activities** supporting your quality of life and ensuring you enjoy yourself as you build confidence.
- **Access to work experience** and to employers that are seeking employees, while fully supported by your Work Experience Co-ordinator.
- **Training in job seeking skills** such as CV development, interview skills and job search skills enhancing your chances of employment.
- **Continuous intake**, meaning you can start a training course at any time during the year.
- **Online and blended learning** including our state-of-the-art online digital learning system, eNLN, which allows you to learn in the comfort of your own home.
- **We will support you to progress** to your chosen next step and all of our awards facilitate your progress to further or higher education in Ireland.
- **Representative Council Student Union to support you** and your fellow students.



Who Comes to NLN

At NLN we cater for a diverse range of students including people who have:

- Physical disabilities
- Had a setback in life due to illness or injury
- Mental health issues (including anxiety, depression etc.)
- Learning difficulties (including dyslexia, dyspraxia etc.)
- Autism
- Addictions
- Left school early

All applications must be approved by the Department of Employment and Social Protection, Laois & Offaly Education and Training Board (LOETB) and/or the Health Service Executive (HSE).

How to Apply

Applying couldn't be easier.

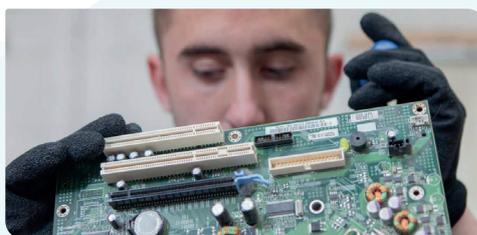
 **057 86 21263**

 **portlaoise@nl.n.ie**

 **Drop in to us: Dublin Road, Portlaoise, R32 HK11**

The application process is very straight forward and you will be linked in with our liaison officer who will guide you through the application process and will support you with any additional requirements and support needs you may have.

Nine out of ten people who complete courses at NLN go on to employment or further education or training.



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