

Frequently Asked Questions Information Provision and Advocacy Practice (IPAP)

Application process

Q: Who can apply?

A: *Initial delivery of the programme will be confined to individuals on various back to work schemes within the CIS's, paid employees (Information Officers) and volunteers (Information Providers). All students for the programme must be nominated for registration by the local CIS Development Managers and have passed the CIB selection process before applying to ITB.*

Q: What criteria should the development managers apply before nominating someone for the programme?

A: *The nominee should have:-*

- *6 months experience in an information provision role in their Service by 18th September 2017;*
- *Completion of Induction programme for new IP's in the CIS;*
- ***A commitment to complete the 2 year programme;***
- *Competency in the use of IT.*

Q: How are applications assessed?

A: *This is a two tier process. Firstly, students must meet the CIB criteria noted above. Secondly, entry to the programme will be offered to those sponsored by the CIB who meet the minimum requirements outlined in ITB's Admissions Policy (3AD08) noted below:*

- *The minimum entry standard for applicants is a grade D3 (ordinary level) in the leaving certificate examination in five subjects including mathematics and either English or Irish.*
- *Mature applicants may be admitted without meeting these formal entry requirements. (Please note a mature student is 23 years of age on 1st of January on the year of entry).*

Q: What is the deadline for applications?

A: *All CIB applications must be submitted to their Service by **10th July 2017**. CIB will then forward approved applications to ITB by **17th July 2017**. ITB will then invite all to apply through the online system by **31st July 2017**. Those approved will then be invited to register by **4th September 2017**.*

Q: Do you accept late applications for this course?

A: *No.*

Q: How many places are available on the course?

A: 75 places are available.

Q: Should DM's prioritise applicants?

A: Yes, that would be very helpful.

Q: The programme is designed for CE and paid staff. What is the position regarding volunteers?

A: Each Service should put forward the most suitable students for the programme and for the Service. Volunteers are not excluded from the programme but, if possible, CIB recommend the Service to prioritise CE staff and paid staff.

The Course

Q: How does the IPAP differ from the IAAP?

A: The IPAP Cert is a level 6 QQI ITB higher education award on the NFQ whereas the IAAP was a level 6 Fetac further education award. Programme learning outcomes for students of IPAP are not the same as IAAP.

Q: Is it necessary for information officers who have the IAAP Cert to also do IPAP Cert?

A: No. They already have the qualification necessary to do their job. However, if people want to improve their level of education and achieve a higher education level 6, they can discuss this with their development manager.

Q: Do I have to complete work practice hours for this course?

A: No. This is a new course and unlike the IAAP you do not have to complete practice hours however, CIB require that you have 6 months experience in an information provision role with your Service by 12th September 2016.

Q: What level of IT skills do I need to have?

A: As you will be undertaking a course with online elements, it is highly recommended that you be reasonably competent with using a computer. You need to be able to do basic things like create a Word document; type and save; cut and paste; use e-mail; look up the Internet; navigate between hyperlinks.

Guidelines on using the tools and resources required for your course will be provided for you during your orientation of the course.

Q: Do I require any special equipment to enable me to do the course?

A: You must have access to a computer with a reasonable technological standard and Internet to study through the ITB webpage and Moodle. We recommend the computer has software such as Windows 7 (or higher), Internet Explorer 9 (or higher) and Adobe Flash Player, Adobe Reader and Adobe Shockwave (all free downloads) installed.

Q: Will training on how to use Moodle be provided?

A: Yes, training will be provided at the IPAP induction session. In addition there will be screenshots in the Learners Handbook and an on-line tutorial will be available to all students at ITB.

Q: What facilities can I access remotely?

A: All of your course work and resources will be available on-line and you will have on-line access to the library.

Q: What facilities will I have access to at ITB?

A: You will have on-line access to the library. If you live locally, you can use the library, gym and access student services.

Q: Will students be expected to reference their work?

A: Yes, this is a higher education Level 6 course therefore all work needs to be referenced. Students will be advised how to reference at the induction and there is also an on-line tutorial available on the Moodle website.

Q: Who can I contact if I have a question regarding a module?

A: Please send any queries to ipap@itb.ie and copy your CIS Development Manager.

Q: What is the timetable?

A: The timetable dates below are provisional as they depend on the number of applicants and the availability of centres.

YEAR 1 SEMESTER 1 & 2				
Semester 1 (2017): Sept 18th - Dec 15th		Dublin	Athlone	Cork
Location		To be agreed	Athlone Education Centre	Cork Education & Support Centre
Induction	10 am to 4.30 pm	September 18th*	September 22nd*	September 20th*
Tutorial	10 am to 4.30 pm	October 16th*	October 20th*	October 18th*
Assessment Day	10 am to 5 pm	November 20th*	November 24th*	November 22nd*
Webinar	10.00 - 11.00 am	Every Tuesday from 18th September 2017 to 24th October 2017; 7th November to 12th December 2017		
Exam Board Meetings		TBC by Academic Council		
Semester 2 (2018): January 22nd - May 4th		Dublin	Athlone	Cork
Location		To be agreed	Athlone Education Centre	Cork Education & Support Centre
Tutorial 1	10am to 4:30pm	January 22nd*	January 26th*	January 24th*
Tutorial 2	10am to 4:30pm	March 19th*	March 23rd*	March 21st*
Assessment Day (Tel)	10am to 5pm	April 9th*	April 13th*	April 11th*
Webinar	10:00 - 11.00 am	Every Tuesday from 23rd January to 20th March 2018 and 10th April to 24th April 2018		
Exam Board Meetings		TBC by Academic Council		

Q: What is a webinar?

A: A webinar is an online lecture whereby the lecturer delivers the content for a particular topic. Although the webinars are not as interactive as a face-to-face tutorial, the learner does get the opportunity to raise questions. All webinars are recorded which means that those who are unable to attend the webinar at the time set, can review the content at any time afterwards.

Q: Can I do some of the modules?

A: Yes but you will not receive a Certificate for these. You will however receive ECTS credits and your transcript of results.

Q: Is there a word count?

A: Yes, this will be set by the lecturer.

Q: If I fail an assignment can I repeat?

A: Yes you can. This will be arranged at the time with the lecturer.

Q: Do we sit exams?

A: No. All assessments are continuous assessments and no written exams are scheduled to take place.

Q: When will we know the format of assignments?

A: At the induction day there will be information provided and each lecturer will provide information on the assignments directly.

Q: What are the benefits of doing the course?

A: Completing the IPAP programme will equip information providers with the skills, knowledge and competencies necessary to provide a high quality, impartial and confidential information advice service to the public on their rights and entitlements. Furthermore it will enhance the capacity of information providers to deliver advocacy as part of an integrated information, advice and advocacy service.

Q: What are the learning outcomes?

A: *On successful completion of the Higher Certificate Award the student will:*

- *Demonstrate the principles of effective communication in an information provision and advice capacity; the principles, types, and application of information and advice in a CIB context.*
- *Demonstrate a broad range of knowledge of information and advice practices and specialised knowledge needed to deliver information and advice services.*
- *Develop competencies in specialised information provision and advice skills.*
- *Demonstrate a comprehensive knowledge and awareness of social services, rights and entitlements to service users in a confidential context.*
- *Demonstrate a competency in identifying social policy and advocacy issues and develop appropriate social policy and advocacy responses to issues arising for service users.*
- *Recognise the relationships and interdependency of functions and processes in organisations.*

Q: Will students have Student Cards?

A: *Yes, Student Cards will be issued for students. For this purpose, when students register they need to send us a photograph. Please note we will only accept jpeg file format under 50kb. With a Student Card, those living in Dublin will be able to access the library and gym. All students will have access to the on-line library.*

Q: How many hours a week do students need to commit to the course?

A: *This question is for each individual student to decide for themselves as each student has different skillsets, knowledge and experience. As everybody learns and works differently, it is therefore not possible to give a hard definitive answer to each and every student. It should also be noted that each module requires a different level of work input. However, it is reasonable to expect each student to allow 10-15 hours per week for the programme and students should be prepared to commit to individual study time outside their working hours. Applicants need to consider their own circumstances before committing to do the course.*

Q: Will there be a mentor for the new applicants?

A: *It is recommended that each Service provide a mentor for each student to support them on the programme and to bring their learning back to the workplace.*

Progression

Q: Is there a progression from the Higher Certificate to another course?

A: Students who wish to progress beyond this programme may be awarded exemptions in cognate and non-cognate areas in ITB and similar higher education institutes. Those who attain a higher education Level 6 Cert can progress to a degree Level 7 course should they wish to.

Q: In order to progress paid staff to the next level (Level 7) will conversion courses be made available to them by ITB?

A: This will be investigated in the future.