Your future is in your hands

A message from Barbara Burns, head of the GMIT Castlebar campus

This historic grey stone building on the edge of Castlebar houses a vibrant campus of the Galway-Mayo Institute of Technology (GMIT). The second largest GMIT campus, it offers programmes ranging from accounting to heritage, from nursing to computer science, and from construction to applied social studies. The diversity of our programmes means that students have the opportunity to meet other students with a range of interests. They also have the chance to customise their own degree with electives from other programmes.

Opening in September 1994, GMIT Castlebar has grown to approximately 1,100 students, comprising full-time and part-time students, from across Ireland and over ten foreign countries. Approximately two-thirds of our current students are directly from the Leaving Certificate; the others are returning to education as mature students. The nursing and applied social studies programmes account for almost 250 students, with the remaining students in such diverse programmes as business, computer services management, engineering management, art & design, and outdoor education.

Why do students come to Castlebar? The location, programmes on offer, and the character of the campus. Castlebar’s location is particularly important for the outdoor education course, with access to excellent water and mountain facilities, and for the heritage course, with the nearby presence of historic sites and the National Museum. As well as the surrounding natural beauty, the town offers a wealth of cultural and social activities ranging from international performances to local fairs.

Our programmes combine the highest standards of education with a personal approach. Our graduates have gone on to successful careers.

Our campus encourages students to take a wider view of the world through language trips abroad, exchange programmes, and summer volunteer projects. Our programmes have gradually changed since our beginning to keep pace with student interests, new technologies and social change. Programmes in applied social studies were added in 2008 and a new programme in social multimedia innovation is currently in review.

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Life on campus is enriched by the strong Student Union, clubs and societies ranging from archery to music, an active and successful sports programme, and a sense of community.

Our economic contribution to the community is significant. Our annual spend is between €7.5m and €8m. We employ a staff of 100, comprising full-time and part-time staff. In addition, we use the services of local companies for maintenance and upgrade of the facilities, provision of equipment and services, and student services.

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Preparing for a caring future

Geraldine Murray, head of the Department of Nursing and Health Sciences at GMIT Castlebar, tells Keith Bourke why demand for places is at an all time high

The time to improve your skills is now

Michael Gill, head of the Department of Business, Humanities and Technology on what makes a GMIT Castlebar course so worthwhile

SINEAD WORTH, BELMULLET
B.SC (HONS) IN PSYCHIATRIC NURSING

When I was first considering applying was the ecology and environment side. I did a FETAC Level 5 Animal Technology and was a keen interest in social care work; I had done three years in Germany and now I love the fact that I can study back here in Mayo as it’s a great part of this country.

The degree programme is quite demanding. The biggest challenge was getting back into the structured and supported setting within the college itself. I felt very privileged to be studying in this comprehensive range of work areas: social care and people who already work in this field. I did my Leaving Certificate in 1997 and got a good degree and it all has helped. I do not regret doing it at all. I feel ready to go into the workplace.

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PAUL WIENSCHE, WESTPORT
BA IN ACCOUNTING AND FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT

With smaller classes our lecturers are far more available to individual students for discussion and explanation.

MARIA MCGOLDRICK, WESTPORT
BA IN APPLIED SOCIAL STUDIES

The programme also represents a great opportunity for me to study a new degree programme. I’ll never forget.

Both organisations are always looking for more, in the area of management, but the real issue for us is in the area of management. We are always looking for more.

ALAN JUDGE, KILDARE, NOW BASED IN CASTLEBAR
GRADUATE OF THE BA (HONS) IN OUTDOOR EDUCATION, PRESIDENT OF THE GMIT CASTLEBAR STUDENTS’ UNION

I advise any student who’s thinking about studying here to just go for it. It was the best decision I ever made. I love every minute of it here. I advise any student who’s thinking about studying here to just go for it. It was the best decision I ever made. I love every minute of it here.
Innovation Centre fosters student spirit of endeavour

Throughout the day by a panel of judges comprising Alan Mac, Shell Ireland, Robert Grealis, Consulting Partner with The Discovery Partnership and Patrick Craven, Chief Executive of GMIT Castletown, and Brian Maguire, Lecturer in Computing at GMIT Castletown.

“Put in the current economic climate it is vitally important that we encourage young people to look at setting up their own businesses,” Martin Middahan, Innovation Centre Manager. The annual GMIT Innovation Centre Innovation Competition was launched in order to provide young people with an opportunity to test their concepts and compete for a chance to win cash, incubation space in the Innovation Centre and mentoring from The Discovery Partnership, a client company in the GMIT Castletown Business Centre. The three students are currently in their second year of a BA in Accounting and Financial Management (Level 7).

The annual GMIT Innovation competition judges and winners, Alan Mac, Shell Ireland, Robert Grealis, IBC Manager, Castletown; Brian Maguire, Lecturer in Computing, GMIT Castletown; winning students Mary Burke, Maria Coll and Michelle Kilcoyne, Robert Grealis of the Discovery Partnership and Michael Gill, Head of Dept of Business & Technology, GMIT Castletown.

Judith Feekins, Marketing Assistant, and Maria Staunton, GMIT Innovation Centre Manager. Photo © KWP Studio

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