

Outdoor Education Department @ATU Castlebar

YEAR 1 Handbook

“Getting to know yourself, others and the environment”



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Introduction

On behalf of all the students and staff we would like to welcome you to the Outdoor Education Department of ATU Castlebar.

This booklet has been compiled by the course team in order to help you make the most of your time in Castlebar and to answer the many questions we are asked from both current and prospective students.

Here in the Outdoor Education Department we strive to achieve the highest standards in the advancement of good practice in the delivery of outdoor education. We also try to contribute, in as far as it is practicable, to the interest and development of the wider community of outdoor educationalists both regional and national and international.

We run fulltime 2 courses in Outdoor Education in Castlebar.

- **A three year BA Degree in Outdoor Education and Leisure**
- **A four year BA Honours Degree in Outdoor Education.**

Finally, all of the staff here wish you all the best for the year ahead. We hope that this year of study will be a rewarding one for you, and that you will get enjoyment, challenge and a sense of accomplishment from the year and the pathway to a rewarding career. .

Go n-eirí libh!
The Course Team

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What is Outdoor Education?

Outdoor education incorporates three main areas;

- outdoor recreation activities
- environmental education
- personal and social education and development

Course Introduction

Outdoor Education uses outdoor activities such as canoeing, climbing, surfing, hillwalking and field studies for the purpose of personal and social development and as a means of becoming more knowledgeable about the natural environment.

The educational, developmental, therapeutic and recreational aspects of outdoor education are now widely recognised and utilised within many sectors in Ireland, such as schools, tourism organisations and youth services. There is now an increased need for professionals who can go forward and chart and manage the future development of outdoor education in Ireland. GMIT at Castlebar is the only Third Level institution in the country running specialist courses in Outdoor Education.



Outdoor Education at ATU

Introduction to Outdoor Education

The outdoors is used in diverse ways for learning, therapy, tourism and recreation. Research evidence shows the therapeutic benefits of the outdoors and nature for wellbeing and there is a growing enthusiasm for using the outdoor classroom as a powerful and unique medium for learning and development and connecting with nature. Adventure activity providers have grown from a handful in the early 1980's to a situation where there are now over 400 hundred providers. In the educational, social care and youth services sector, adventure sport was embraced as a means to promote personal growth and social awareness especially for Transition Years, Youthreach and Post Leaving Cert Courses. An increased awareness of the multiple benefits of outdoor play and learning outdoors has seen a growth in Forest schools and Nature Kindergarten. Nature therapy and Green Exercise are also growth areas. The clients of outdoor education were becoming increasingly discerning and are demanding courses that provide opportunities for learning and personal development. In addition, many schools now organise geography and biology field trips in conjunction with outdoor education centres. Adventure tourism is a major component of the Irish tourism sector and in particular it is a very large industry along the Wild Atlantic Way. Other large adventure tourism developments such as Center Parc in Longford show the growth in this area.

Concern for safety and a concern for the environment has grown alongside this rapid development in the Outdoor Sector. Parents, teachers, insurance companies and customers demand that instructors are fully qualified. Adventure activity often takes place in fragile natural environments and these beautiful places need thoughtful and careful management to minimise the impact of increasing numbers of multiple users groups. In addition, participants in adventure sport expect that their guides and instructors are knowledgeable about the environment.

These factors have resulted in an increased demand for appropriately trained personnel in both the outdoor leisure and education industry.

The Outdoor Education programmes in GMIT began in 1996 and continues to develop and respond to the changing needs of a vibrant and dynamic Irish outdoor sector. The courses are an exciting mix of academic study and technical training.

There are five core areas of study in the BA Degrees.

Core Areas

- Adventure Activities
- Environment and Heritage
- Interpersonal Development and Education
- Health and Safety
- Research Methods

Adventure Activities

This involves technical competence training and skills in instructing outdoor activities safely and efficiently with a conceptual understanding of the developmental and educational role of outdoor education. Adventure Activities in Year One allows students to attain personal proficiencies in a selection of adventure sports. Year Two provides leadership and instructional skills training while continuing to improve one's personal proficiency in the various activities. Year Three focuses on providing monitored instructional and organisational experience as well as assisting students to broaden their personal experience in the outdoors. The Adventure Activities modules provide students with practical experience of

places, processes and concepts involved in the study of the Irish landscape and environment. The technical and leadership skills are supported by modules, which involve studying personal and group development and that develop communication and teaching skills. These modules will enable graduates to provide developmental and educational experiences to their clients rather than just a safely supervised outdoor excursion. The philosophy of the Leave no Trace ethic is integral to this core area as well as having relevance to all aspects of the programme.

Natural and Cultural Landscape

The Landscape and Environment modules study and explore the flora, fauna, geology and archaeology of the Irish landscape. These modules will enable graduates to interpret the rich cultural and natural diversity of the Irish landscape and will enrich the outdoor journey for both the graduates and their clients and students. These modules also stress sustainable use of the outdoor environment.

Psychology and Teaching/Facilitation,

This strand of the course addresses areas such as teaching, leadership, psychology, facilitation and group dynamics. The students will need underlying theory, skills and competence to work effectively with people in a training, educational, therapeutic or recreational setting.

Health and Safety

The Health and Safety modules provide students with the ability to recognise and manage the risk element inherent in outdoor education, while being cognisant of the legislation and health & safety regulations in the industry. Fitness training and diet are also covered. The students also gain first aid and water safety qualifications within these modules.

Research Methods and Dissertation

This strand begins in first year with the IT module and is developed in subsequent years with a Literature Review in third year and Research Methods and Dissertation in fourth year.

There are also four elective areas. You select one area.

Elective Areas

- Language
- Social Care
- Early Childhood Education
- Geography

The Degree Course Outline

In Year 1, students select one of the four elective areas. Language options include Spanish, German and French. You make your elective choice in the first two to three weeks of the course. All other subjects are mandatory.

Mandatory Modules Year 1

Subject	Lecturer	Hrs/Week
Adventure Activities Personal Skills	Mairead Cluskey, Stephen Hannon, Orla Prendergast	9
Learning and Innovation Skills	Sinead Kilgallon	3
Earth Processes	Kevin O Callaghan	3
Health and Fitness Studies (semester 2)	Pauline Jordan	1.5
Information Technology	TBC	1.5
Anatomy & Physiology	John Gately	1.5

Mandatory Modules Year 2

Subject	Hrs/Week
Adventure Activities Learning to Lead	9
Leadership and Facilitation	3
Safety & Legislation	1.5
Environmental Studies 1	4
Environmental Studies 2	4
Emergency Procedures	3
Work Experience	

Mandatory Modules Year 3

Subject	Hrs/Week
Adventure Activities 3	8
Developmental Psychology	1.5
Outdoor Development Training	2
Teaching and Outdoor Education	1.5
Ecological Fieldwork	2
Advanced Emergency Procedures	2
The Irish Cultural Landscape	1.5
Human Activity and the Environment	1.5

Mandatory Modules Year 4

Subject	Hrs/Week	
Dissertation	1.5	
Coaching and Performance Enhancement	1.5	
Experiential Learning-Expeditions and Facilitation	4	
Introduction to Sociology	1.5	
Environmental Management and Sustainability	4	
Social Psychology	1.5	
Creative Arts in the Outdoors (E)	1.5	
GIS (E)	1.5	
Therapeutic Application of Nature and Adventure (E)	1.5	
Critical Thinking (E)	1.5	

Elective Area	Language	Early Childhood Education	Social Studies	Geography
Year 1	Language 1	The Importance of Play Exploring the Curriculum	Introduction to Social Care	Society and Environment
Year 2	Language 2	Supporting Enquiry to Enact the Curriculum	Introduction to Health Promotion Exploring Values	Rural Development
Year 3	Language 3	Outdoor Play	Preparation for Social Care or Philosophy of the Human Person Community & Sustainability	Digital Mapping Rural Tourism
Year 4	Language 4	Nature and Place based Education	Youth Work	GIS

Elective Choices

The Social Care elective will enhance the ability of graduates to deliver programmes that are developmental and perhaps therapeutic in nature. Outdoor Education and Social Care have a shared purpose and are similarly grounded in a 'philosophy that is person-centred, developmental and facilitative'. Outdoor Education can include the facilitated use of adventure tools and techniques to guide personal change and to provide opportunity for life learning.

The Early Childhood Education and Care elective introduces students to approaches and models for working with children under 8 years. For students with relevant work experience this elective will help to enable graduates to gain work in Nature Kindergartens.

Course Team:

Tutors

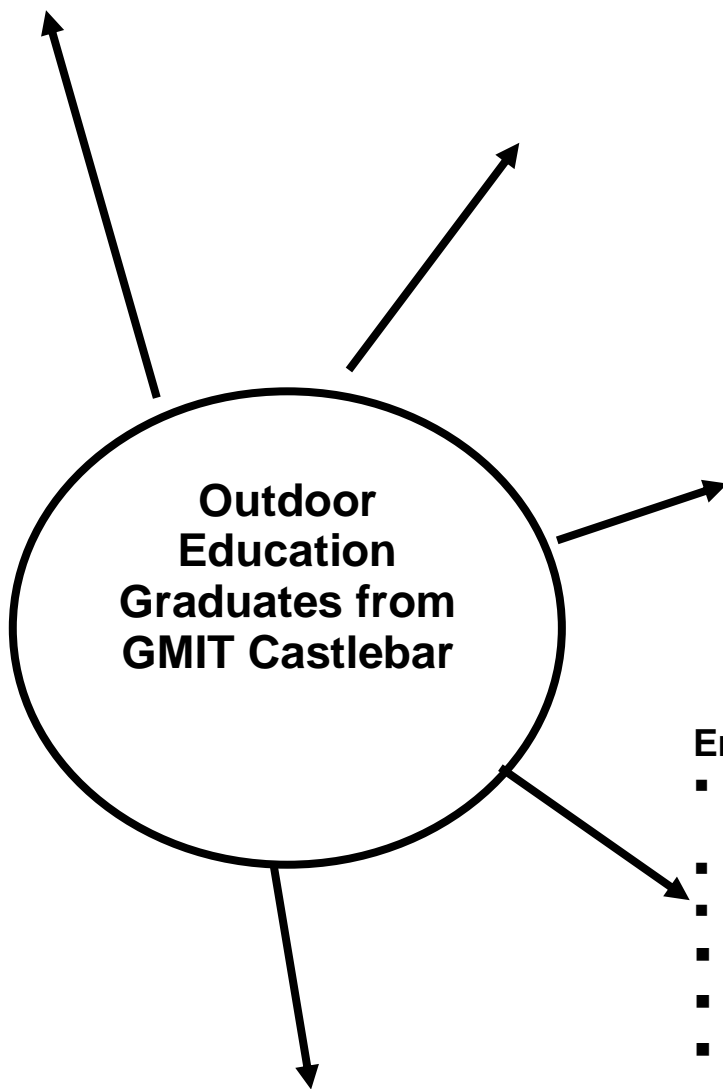
Year 1 Tutor
Year 2 Tutor
Year 3 Tutor
Year 4 Tutor

Orla Prendergast
Pauline Jordan
Kevin O Callaghan
Stephen Hannon

Contact Numbers

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Year 1	
Orla Prendergast/ Stephen Hannon/Maired Cluskey	<i>Adventure Activities 1</i>
Sinead Kilgannon	<i>Learning and Innovation, Communications</i>
Pauline Jordan	<i>Health and Fitness Studies</i>
tbc	<i>Information Technology</i>
John Gately	<i>Anatomy & Physiology</i>
Kevin O Callaghan	<i>Earth Processes</i>
Mark Garavan	<i>Intro to Social Care (elective)</i>
Maria Daly / Jessica Lysaght	<i>Languages (elective)</i>
Margaret O Riordain	<i>Society and Environment</i>



Environmental / Ecological

- Environmental Education Officer
Green Schools & ECOUNESCO
- Park Guides in National Parks
- Eco tours operator
- Field Studies Officer
- Rural Recreation Officer
- Community Development

Outdoor Recreation / Education Sector

- Instructor/Senior Instructor
- Managers of Outdoor Education Centres
- Coaches and trainers

Uniformed Service-Gardai, Army

Education Sector

- Providing programmes for Transition Year
- Early School Leavers Sector
- Youthreach
- Forest schools
- Nature kindergarten
- Further Education
- Geography Teacher

Outdoor Recreation / Education Sector

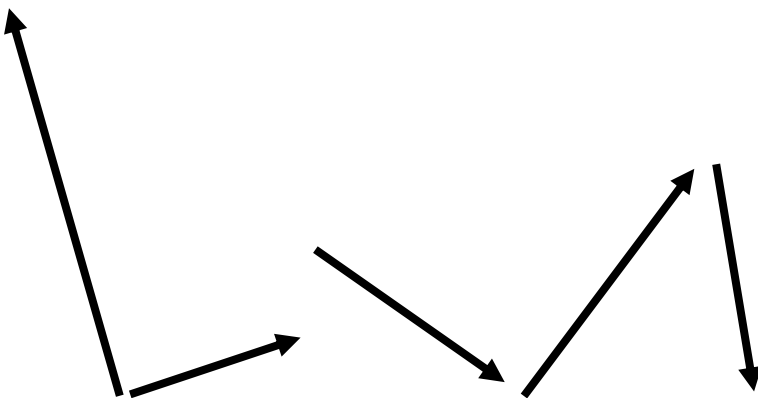
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Uniformed Service-Gardai, Army

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- Field Studies Officer
- Rural Recreation Officer
- Community Development

**Outdoor
Education
Graduates from
GMIT Castlebar**



Employment Opportunities for our Graduates

Development Training

- Foroige & Youth Services
- Probation Service
- Social Care
- NYP and Garda Diversion Projects
- Developmental Training Facilitator.
- Nature therapy

Adventure

Tourism

- Guides
- Setting up own businesses

The Adventure Activities Modules

The Adventure Activities Modules are an important component of the course here in GMIT. The outdoor education course is almost unique amongst Third Level College offering adventure activities as part of their core curriculum.

The approach to training on the course is based on giving more responsibility to the students for **self-learning** each year. There are 28 days formal training for students during the college year. It is obvious that students would gain only the most basic personal proficiency if they were to confine their adventure activities to these days. It is expected and assumed that the students are building on this formal training in their own time and develop and practice what has been taught. This expectation means that much of a student's free days could be spent gaining experience and skills in the various activities. This will have implications for students who are working and for the time management of all students.

There can be no guarantee that a student will reach a particular level of personal proficiency or instructor qualification during the course as so much of how a student progresses is under the control of the student. There are many opportunities during the course and those students who are keen, enthusiastic and organised can expect to progress quickly though their qualifications. Involvement in the college adventure sports clubs plays a crucial role in this personal training and development.

Much of the marks for the Adventure Activities Module is based on a reflective **Learning Journal** that students keep to log and to reflect on their experience of both formal and personal training. The aim of the activity-training course is to educate a professional for the outdoor sector who can grow and develop with changes as they happen and so become a **lifelong learner**. The journal encourages the students to critically analyse the sessions in which they have been involved and to evaluate their personal performance and set improvement goals for themselves.



Adventure Activity Training Year 1

By the end of year 1 students will have the opportunity to receive the following qualifications and training provided they have met the qualifying criteria.

- Mountain Skills (MS) Training and Mountain Skills (MS) Assessment
- Orienteering Proficiency Training
- Level 2 Kayak Proficiency Training and Assessment
- Level 3 Kayak Proficiency Training river and sea
- River Safety Rescue Level 1
- Leave no Trace Awareness
- Rescue Emergency Care 2

Notes

In addition students will have received training in Caving, Surfing, Sailing, Bushcraft, Coasteering, River Rescue, Archery, Mountainbiking and Rock Climbing.

Mountain Skills

Students should have a total of 15 walks completed for entry to the assessment. Mountain Skills is a Failed Element. Students must pass the assessment to pass the year.

Adventure Activity Training Year 2 & 3

Students will have the opportunity to receive a selection of the following qualifications and training provided they have met the qualifying criteria.

- Mountain Leader (ML) Training
- Level 2 Kayak/Canoe Instructor Training
- Level 3 Kayak/Canoe Proficiency Training and Assessment
- Level 3 & 4 Sea Proficiency Training and Assessment
- Level 1 Surf Coach Training and Assessment
- Rock Climbing Instructor Training
- Powerboat Level 2 and Safety Boater
- Leave no Trace Trainer
- Caving Fundamentals
- Orienteering Leader
- Beach Life Guard
- Snorkelling Instructor
- Archery Instructor
- Coastal Navigation
- Day Skipper
- VHF Radio Licence

Notes

There are registration and some other costs associated with these qualifications.

Many of the pre requirements for assessment are dictated by the relevant NGB. It is expected that the student takes personal responsibility for completing these pre requirements and for arranging assessment. These courses are run subject to minimum numbers and are not offered as a matter of course.

Outdoor Equipment

The college has built up a selection of specialist outdoor equipment which is utilises in the delivery of the Degree in Outdoor Education and Leisure. This equipment currently comprises of:

24	River specification kayaks
18	Sea Kayaks
3	Double Sea Kayaks
3	Slalom kayak
14	Surf Boards
16	Steamers
20	Wetsuits
28	Buoyancy Aids
30	Spraydecks
12	Sets of snorkelling Equipment
14	Sets of rockclimbing equipment
12	Sets of caving equipment
10	windsurfers
10	Archery sets & Targets & Safety Net
1	Set Orienteering equipment

Camping equipment for 35 people

A varied selection of materials to run initiative exercises

Organisations such as Petersburg OEC, Achill OEC and Delphi provide training as part of the course and we have use of their equipment.

Equipment you need for the Course

Over the three/four years of the Degree Courses in Castlebar students will be expected to purchase some of their own essential outdoor gear ,mainly hillwalking gear....the tools of their trade. To assist students in this the college has arranged discount with local outdoor retailers. In addition the lecturers will advise students on appropriate personal equipment to purchase. There is no need to buy gear before starting the course. All technical and safety equipment is supplied such as buoyancy aids, helmets, harness, paddles, kayak, surf boards.

First Year

Hill walking Boots, Rain Gear, Flask, Compass (Silva Type 4), Sleeping Bag and mat, OS Maps sheets 37 & 30., Bivy Bag, Ruck Sack , Headtorch, Wetsuit Booties, first aid kit.

Safety Considerations- Advice

There is an inherent risk associated with participation in adventure sports. It is the responsibility of both you and staff who work on ATU Outdoor Education programmes to take steps to minimise these risks.

Things you are responsible for when out on official ATU adventure activities classes

- You should never feel any pressure to perform any task you think you not safely capable of doing. If you have any concerns discuss it with the staff. Learning when to say no is important.
- Have the equipment/ clothing you were requested to have on the activity such as raingear or suitable footwear. This is vital for your safety and the well-being of the rest of the group. Staff have the right to refuse to let you participate in an activity if they have concerns about your safety. If you let staff know well in advance you don't have certain equipment, they may be able to sort a solution.
- Be physically prepared for the activity. If you are ill or have any medical problem it is your responsibility to let staff know. Occasionally it may be necessary for you to do another activity or not participate that day. If staff have any concerns about your ability to participate in an activity due to the effects of alcohol or drugs, staff have the right to refuse to let you participate in an activity if they have concerns about your safety.
- Some activity sessions such as river kayaking build in difficulty of rivers from week to week. If you miss one week you might fall behind the standard of the rest of the group and not have the skill level to participate the next week. Full attendance is vital for your safety. Staff have the right to refuse to let you participate in an activity if they have concerns about your safety.
- Wear your seatbelt when on ATU minibuses. Check others have theirs on too.
- Some hazards such as Weils disease which you get from water sports mainly and Lymes disease which is from ticks are hard to diagnose and potentially serious. Read up on the advice notices here and on Moodle.

It is a requirement of many of the National Governing Bodies of adventure sports that trainee participants and instructors gain a high level of personal experience and leadership experience. The Outdoor Education course provides you with technical leadership training in a range of adventure sports. However, you will gain the much of your personal and leadership experience outside of timetabled class hours. In this case you have a big responsibility.

- Don't do any adventure on your own. Go in groups of at least three. Make sure all the group has suitable equipment and ability. Having back up is vital if you have an accident.
- Check the weather forecast and make a plan for the day based on the weather. Cancel completely or shorten your activity or change location to suit the weather. Most accidents are caused or made worse by unsuitable weather conditions.
- Make sure someone knows where you are going and when you should be back and what to do if you don't return such as who to contact.
- Be organized with the right gear and make sure everyone in the group is prepared. A group is only as strong as its weakest link. Always think -what if something goes wrong?- bring the safety equipment needed to cope.
- Do some research/reading on the area before making a definite plan. Local knowledge is very useful. Ask more experienced people for advice on where to go.

- Have a backup safety plan. Think in advance about how you can shorten your day, get off the hill or river or sea etc. if things change unexpectedly. Turning back or changing plans is a big part of adventure activities- don't get fixed on an ambitious plan.

Cavers & Kayakers Beware—Weils Disease

- Weill's disease, is a *bacterial* infection with a raft of different names: mud fever, swamp fever, haemorrhagic jaundice. All are known as *Leptospirosis*, mild cases of which affect millions of people every year worldwide.
- The infection is caught through contact with infected animal urine (mainly from rodents,), generally in slow moving water, and typically enters the body through cuts or scrapes, or the lining of the nose, mouth, throat or eyes. Weill's disease, kills two or three people a year in Britain but infects a much larger number.
- After an incubation period that can vary from three days to three weeks, most patients suffer severe headaches, red eyes, muscle pains, fatigue, nausea and a temperature of 39C or above.
- In very severe cases, There is significant organ damage, Hospitalisation, followed by antibiotics and often dialysis, will be required if the patient is to survive. Recovery can take months.
- The risk of contracting Weill's disease from recreational water is small but serious. Infection is more likely in slow-moving or stagnant water and areas where agriculture and rodents mix; lakes, ponds and canals are more likely to be contaminated than fast-running streams, although some activities – angling, for example, where minor cuts and nicks are common, and swimming, where some water will almost inevitably enter the mouth – could heighten exposure.
- Cavers and canoeists should cover all cuts and abrasions; avoid splashing themselves, or swallowing potentially contaminated water; wash their hands carefully and if possible shower afterwards; and wash all equipment and clothing regularly. Anyone experiencing flu-like symptoms after contact with fresh water should see their doctor immediately and inform them of possibility of Weils disease.

Hillwalkers & campers be aware of ticks!

Lyme disease is a bacterial infection that is spread to human by infected ticks. Ticks are small, spider-shaped creatures that feed on the blood of mammals, including humans.



The most common symptom of Lyme disease is a red skin rash that looks similar to a bull's eye on a dart board. Further symptoms can follow including:

- a high temperature (fever) of 38°C (100.4°F) or higher
- muscle pain, joint pain and swelling
- neurological symptoms, such as temporary paralysis of the facial muscles

How common is Lyme disease?

It is estimated that there are between at least 200 cases in Ireland each year.

The ticks that cause Lyme disease are commonly found in woodland and heathland areas. This is because these types of habitats have a high number of tick-carrying animals, such as deer, mice and sheep.

Outlook

If Lyme disease is diagnosed in its early stages, it can be treated with antibiotics, and the outlook for the condition is excellent. Most people will make a full recovery within a couple of days. But if undiagnosed for a long period it can then be difficult to treat.

Prevention

You can reduce the risk of infection by:

- being aware of ticks and which areas they normally live in, using insect repellents,
- wearing appropriate clothing in tick-infested areas (a long-sleeve shirt and trousers tucked into your socks),
- inspecting your skin for ticks, particularly at the end of the day, including your head, neck, and skin folds (armpits, groin, and waistband),

How to remove a tick

If you find a tick on your skin you should remove it by gently gripping it as close to the skin as possible, preferably using fine toothed tweezers, and pull steadily away from the skin.

Do not use a lighted cigarette end, a match head, or volatile oils to force the tick out. Some veterinary surgeries and pet supply shops sell inexpensive tick removal devices, which may be useful if you are frequently exposed to ticks.

The Course Board and Course Management

The Outdoor Education Department in Castlebar has initiated a number of policies and procedures to ensure that the courses can be organised and delivered effectively. The Degree Course is managed by a Course Board, which is chaired by the Course Co-ordinator and supported by the core staff. The Castlebar Campus of GMIT organises all courses through course boards, which comprise all full-time teaching staff on any particular course as well as student representation.

Course board meetings normally take place every term (i.e. 3 times a year) and deal with all matters of an academic nature relating to the course. This would include matters relating to the aims and objectives of the course, the course structure, student progress, monitoring of course work, projects, placements, assessments and syllabus modifications.

A year tutor is responsible for the co-ordination of each class groupings academic studies and the activity modules and training. The Year Tutor is the first port of call for students who have queries or concerns about the course.

Student Representation

Each year group is encouraged to elect a class representative. The class representative acts as spokesperson for their classes on the Course Board and thereby can bring issues of student concern to this forum. The class representative generally liase with the Year Tutors on behalf of their class.

There is an active Students Union in the College. They represent the students and organise student entertainment and fund the sporting and Special Interest Clubs in the College.

Student Support

If you are having difficulties, whether personal or academic, the sooner you contact someone the better. The Year Tutor or Course Co-ordinator is the obvious one to contact if you have academic problems. **Cathy McGovern is an Education Support Officer** and can provide assistance to students with learning difficulties such as dyslexia. **Michelle Kerins O'Brien, is the Counsellor**, and the obvious one for personal difficulties. However, do not confine yourself to those. Any staff member to whom you find it easy to talk, or whom you find approachable, is a good starting point.

Tuition, Assessment and approaches to Study

Tuition

There is a considerable difference between the approaches taken to tuition in most second level schools and the approach to tuition taken in third level institutions. The main difference would be the emphasis on personal responsibility for one's learning. The lecturer introduces the topics and thereafter the student must engage in research, discussion and reading if they are to fully comprehend the material. Students will have to develop their own method for noting the pertinent points of a lecture and filing these for later study and reference. Please note that poor attendance at lectures leads to failing exams and poor continuous assessment marks.

Assessment

This course is unusual in that there is a very high percentage of student evaluation is done during the term by Continuous Assessment. One consequence is that there isn't the stress of cramming for the once-off evaluation of how you have performed during the year. Another consequence is that students need to employ careful time management strategies or they will find themselves unable to cope with the number of assignments they receive during term. Some subjects have up to 70% Continuous Assessment (CA) and it is very important that students realise that they can have passed or failed a subject even before they sit any final examination.

Assignment Submission Dates

Definite submission dates are given for assignments in order to ensure that all assignments can be evaluated together by a lecture and a fair mark can be given. This ensures that a student can plan their time effectively and give individual assignments their full attention.

Therefore submission dates mean that if something is due on a certain day it should be handed up on or before that day. If you cannot hand it up then see the lecturer involved and explain the situation. You can submit a written request for an extension if there are genuine reasons why you cannot submit by the correct date.

All assignments have to be handed personally to the lecturer on the date that the assignment is due or in whatever format is specified by the lecturer involved. **For each day that an assignment is late 10% will be deducted from the final mark.**

Attendance Policy

If a student is absent for whatever reason, it is necessary to inform:

1. The lecturer involved
2. The Year Tutor.

If there is a prolonged absence for personal reasons then the student concerned should contact both the year tutor and the college counsellor. In these circumstances every effort will be made to facilitate the students continuation on the course.

Careers Paths of some of our Students

Please check the Careers Notice Board just up from Orla's office for Information on the varied careers of recent graduates. There is a booklet on Moodle that gives you plenty of ideas on careers options.

Postgraduate courses

BA (hons) graduates can apply for a range of Masters courses and post-graduate courses, within Ireland ranging from Environmental Science, Counselling, Rural Development, Geographical Information Systems, Sustainability, Philosophy, Youth Work, Primary School Education and Sports Psychology.

To date some of the programmes that the graduates of the BA (Hons) in Outdoor Education have pursued include:

Environmental

- MSc in Outdoor & Environmental Education, University of Edinburgh
- MSc in Coastal Zone Management, University of Ulster.
- MSc in Sustainable Architecture, North Wales,
- MSc in Environmental Protection and Conservation, DIT
- MSc in GIS and Remote Sensing, University College Cork
- MSc in Ecological Assessment, University College Cork
- Diploma in Field Ecology, UCC

Counselling & Support

- MA in Counselling, University of Strathclyde
- MA in Ethics, NUI Galway
- MA in Family Support, NUI Galway
- MA in Management for Community & Voluntary Services, All Hallows, Dublin
- MA in Community and Youth Work, NUI, Maynooth
- MA in Criminology, DIT
- Diploma in Addiction Studies, UCD
- MA in Family Support Studies, NUIG

Community / Society Related

- MA Environment, Society and Development, NUIG
- PGDip in Remote and Offshore Medicine, RCOS Edinburgh

Sport

- MSc in Applied Sport and Exercise Psychology, WIT
- MSc in Sport Management, UJJ

Therapeutic / Therapy related

- MA in Cognitive Behavioural Therapy and Interviewing, WIT
- PGDip in Practice Based Play Therapy, NUIG
- Post Graduate Diploma in Drama Therapy, NUI Maynooth

Geography

- MSc in Sustainable Rural Development and Project Planning, Queens University Belfast
- Post Graduate Diploma in Geography, University College Cork

Business

- MSc in Business, Innovation, Technology & Entrepreneurship, WIT

Education Related

- Graduate Diploma in Education, St. Patricks, Drumcondra
- Graduate Diploma in Education, Hibernia College
- MA in Development Education, MIC & UL
- MA in Primary Education, Hibernia College
- Erasmus Mundus in Outdoor Adventure and Experiential Education

Additional Opportunities-Adventures abroad

The programme is committed to providing students with additional optional opportunities to pursue adventure sports in a variety of locations. However, COVID issues will impact severely on these opportunities for this year.

For example from September 2018 to May 2019 these optional trips included

- Hillwalking & climbing trip to Snowdonia , North Wales
- Rock climbing in Costa Blanca, Spain
- Coastal sailing week from Kinsale to Westport
- Hillwalking in Kerry and hillwalking in the Mourne Mountains
- Seakayaking weekends in Clare & Connemara,
- River Kayaking in Kerry
- Climbing weekends to The Burren and to Dalkey Quarry

As part of the Expedition module in Year 4 2018 , students canoed across Scotland along Lough Ness and the Caledonian Canal.

Exchange USA and Sweden - Adventures abroad

We have an exchange programme with Western Carolina University, USA and students have an opportunity to study Parks and Recreation for a year in the heart of the Appalachian Mountains. Western Carolina is an excellent location for whitewater kayaking and a variety of adventure sports. We also have links with University of Galva in Sweden and University of Agder in Norway. Students can spend a semester there studying Arctic Ecology or Outdoor Education. Ask Stephen for details and watch the noticeboard for when to apply.

Industry Consultation & Liaison

The lecturing staff are some of the most experienced outdoor instructors and teachers in Ireland. At a national level the staff have been involved with the main National Governing Bodies (NGBs) for adventure sports and with national training initiatives and other strategic planning committees.

Staff members are active climbers, sailors, bikers, sea and river kayakers and cavers. Recent achievements by staff include a trans-Atlantic sailing crossing in winter, a seakayaking expedition to Greenland and a Trans Pyrenean mountain bike trip.

They have:

- * Participated in numerous mountaineering, sailing and kayaking expeditions in Africa, North America, Nepal, Norway, Greenland, Pakistan and South America.
- * Represented Ireland at the World's kayak surfing and Worlds canoe polo and have been placed in such events
- * Coached the National Canoe Polo squad

The Outdoor Education Course at GMIT in Castlebar has developed liaisons with the various sectors involved in the outdoors in Ireland such as

- Chairing The Department of the Marine Interdepartmental Working Group on safety standards in outdoor education / activity centres
- Development of syllabi for Marine and Countryside Guides,.
- Writing of modules for FETAC–
- Tutor Training with Coaching Ireland
- Monitoring of Centres for Safety Standards
- Chairing Bord Oiliunt Sleibhe, the Irish Mountain Training Board
- Duchas's Landscape studies working group
- Chairing Canoe Ireland Training and Development Committee
- Representation on The Recreational Educators Forum
- Representation on Institute of Leisure and Amenity Managers
- Consultation for the Department of Education's Physical Education Pilot Programme (PEPP)
- Consultation and design of teamwork programmes
- Assessing at a senior level for National Governing Bodies, The National Mountain and Whitewater Centre and the National Coaching and Training Centre.
- Development of Blueways

