



What's the story?

Volume 1, Issue 6

October 2010

Soilse News

Well done, everyone!

Soilse's main aim is to help you become - and remain - drug free. Gaining a FETAC award is a significant endorsement of that.

A FETAC qualification verifies that you have studied modules in different subjects and that you have a level of proven competency in these subjects. This is a big achievement.

However, the stark reality is that FETAC awards are only beneficial if you work on your addiction, change your lifestyle and build your skills. If you do this, there is no limit to the potential to which you can aspire.

We see FETAC involvement in Soilse as highly positive.

FETAC monitors the modules we offer in Soilse to make sure we work to high standards. It guides our facilitators in developing and delivering programmes, enables us to evaluate our work and allows us to access education pathways and networks.

For you, gaining a FETAC qualification will help you to progress to further education and training. We have links with all the colleges in Dublin and beyond. Past Soilse participants have graduated from a wide range of courses in these colleges and gone on to successful careers.

Progressing to mainstream education and having the assurance and motivation to achieve your learning goals

results in real social inclusion and social capital.

From Soilse's perspective, it means that you are no longer dependent on social services and can become net contributors to society.

However, the most important work done in Soilse is on addiction. For us in Soilse, being drug free means no dependence on methadone, alcohol or other substances. Recovery is building a life out of and beyond addiction. FETAC supports this.

On behalf of Soilse staff and facilitators, and HSE Addiction Services, well done, congratulations and best wishes to you all on your FETAC achievements.

Gerry McAleenan
Head of Services

FETAC SPECIAL

FETAC Presentation Night

- 7:00 Welcome — Noel Murphy, chair
- 7:05 Poetry—Karl Parkinson
- 7:10 Drama—Tommo and Roisin
- 7:15 Past participant—Paul D
- 7:20 Drama — Ben
- 7:30 Martin Keane, Social Research Manager, HRB
- 7:40 Drama — Tommo and Helen
- 7:45 Dave Tracy—CDVEC
- 7:50 Drama — Shane, Jed
- 8:00 Pat Carey, Minister for Community, Equality and Gaeltacht Affairs
- 8:10 Poetry—Karl Parkinson
- 8:15 Music — Dextra
- 8:30 Close

Return to Learning

The second Soilse-NUI Maynooth Return to Learning Programme took place over the summer. Six people completed the programme and will receive certificates of completion tonight.

The 20-week course helps prepare people for college and covers Introduction to Sociology, English, Study Skills and Recovery Education.

The six people who completed the programme have all gone on to colleges of further education.

Music tonight by ...



Participants' Stories

I came from a place with no education. I wasn't interested in education. I only went to school once a week. I never thought it would do any good - English, mathematics, I didn't need it.

I came to Soilse with very low self-esteem and a low opinion about education and then to actually take part, I realised I could

do it and it was so important. It was a great confidence and self-esteem builder.

Being here was a very productive five months of my life. I thoroughly enjoyed it. There was great growth for myself in the challenge of it.

Mark K

I left school at 11. I hated school. I felt I was a dunce. I hated the Christian Brothers. I was in trouble with school inspectors. Later, my daughter would show me homework and I wouldn't have a clue what it meant.

Since I came to Soilse, I got a belief that I could achieve stuff. After a while, I got stuck into it. It will mean a great deal to me to get my FETAC

certificate. I actually passed when I was expecting to fail it!

The staff here really encouraged me. I read a lot now. I'm reading a book every week, learning the big words.

I can achieve now. I'm capable of learning. I'm not thick. It was a great confidence booster. I'm going on now to further learning. I enjoy learning now.

Dave K

Soilse FETAC Awards Presentation

Outcomes	
Candidates	96
Portfolios	389
Major Level 3 Awards	31
Component Certificates (1-7 modules)	65

What is FETAC?

FETAC stands for 'Further Education and Training Awards Council'. It is the national authority for awarding certification for further education and training. FETAC sets educational standards and gives certificates to people who achieve those standards. It also monitors those providing FETAC courses to make sure they meet quality standards in education and training.

Who designs the modules?

Soilse staff design the modules they deliver around your needs. Soilse then makes sure that the module meets FETAC's quality standards. The aim of each module is to develop your knowledge and core skills. For example, Jed designed the drama module to help you get involved, show initiative, work as part of a team, communicate openly, listen effectively, understand health and safety issues, and reflect on your learning.

All learning in Soilse is aimed at meeting your needs. It should relate to your life experience and support the direction you want to take in the future.

For example, drama builds your interpersonal skills, communication skills and confidence. Health and nutrition looks at your diet, exercise and stress management. Maths gives you the skills to count, budget and spend. At the same time, your life experiences are a resource for the sessions.

A Learning Community

As an adult learning organization, Soilse believes that we all learn best when we learn together. That's why we encourage you to interact with each other and to share information so that all of us within Soilse - participants, staff and facilitators - can become a more knowledgeable and skillful learning community.

Learning together promotes motivation, ideas, skills, better productivity, and communications, a focus on solutions rather than problems, leadership and responsibility. This is Soilse's culture. We want to empower you to take control of both your life and your future.

What is important is to keep learning, to enjoy challenge and to tolerate ambiguity. In the end, there are no certain answers.

- Martina Horner

How do you get a FETAC Award?

FETAC offers modules in many subjects. Some of the modules on offer in Soilse are communications, drama, art, and so on.

To get a FETAC award, you must successfully complete a module and present your work in a portfolio. Your Soilse facilitators will then assess your work for accreditation. A FETAC representative, known as an external authenticator, then signs off on the work.

If you successfully complete eight modules, including three core modules, FETAC will award you a Major Level 3 certificate.

FETAC qualifications are recognised in Ireland and internationally and represent your passport to further education.

Module	Total Awards
Communications L 3	2
Communications L 4	37
Personal & Interpersonal Skills	41
Maths L3	15
Maths L4	19
Drama	27
Health-Related Fitness	17
Preparation for Work	31
Art and Design	34
Ceramics	43
Pyrography	1
Drawing	8
Woodcraft L3	6
Woodcraft L4	4
Computer Literacy	62
Computer Applications	15
Data Entry	2
IT Skills	3
Food and Nutrition	8
Personal Effectiveness	14
Total	389

Notable Quotables

Tell me and I'll forget. Show me and I may not remember. Involve me and I'll understand.

- Native American saying.

Intelligence plus character—that is the goal of true education.

- Martin Luther King, Jr.

More participant views

"The facilitators telling me I was good at all subjects helped develop my confidence and belief"

- Graham

"I felt like I wanted to finish out all the subjects in FETAC. That is also down to the facilitators which I found were very good to work with"

- Paul

"It opened up an opportunity for further education and college. I came to Soilse for support in my recovery and am delighted I put the work in and got my FETAC. Great sense of accomplishment"

- Alan