

Student view

Name: Aidan O'Brien

Programme: BSc in Information Technology Management



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I’ve always been keen on part-time education. I have a diploma in front-line management and in contrast have also completed training as a paramedic. I always like to keep busy and while completing the EUCIP (European Certification for Informatics Professionals) course in ITT the opportunity came up to continue on to the computing degree so I decided I’d just get stuck into it, particularly because it’s relevant to my work as IT project manager with the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food. The location was also a big plus: I live in Knocklyon, just down the road from the Institute and work in Maynooth so Tallaght is handy for both.

I attend classes three nights a week, four hours a night, so that keeps me fully occupied. On Saturday mornings there are also tutorials you can go to if you’re having difficulty with any particular part of the course and need help.. How many additional hours you need to put in on top of that really depends on how much free time you have and what your continuous assessment (CA) schedule is like. I like the CA aspect because it means you’re accumulating marks throughout the year and not placing all your hopes on one year-end exam. CA accounts for between 40% and 50% of the total marks for each subject. Some of the assignments are done there and then in college; others we take home and have to submit by a deadline.

Having worked in IT for a few years my knowledge was quite good overall but I wanted to gain more knowledge and deepen my understanding in certain areas. I find the lecturers’ depth and quality of knowledge to be very good and they bring a vast range of experience to the classes also.

But while the content is interesting the best thing is probably the people I’ve met. Everyone has a different background. It’s great to be in a class where there’s a good mix because everyone brings their own experience and perspective. There’s a good camaraderie with the group and some people have formed very strong friendships.

The Institute is planning to introduce an honours degree later this year. I’ve not sure whether I’ll do it after I’ve finished the ordinary degree. It is great the the college can provide the opportunity to progress right through to masters level. I can’t say for definite that either degree will benefit my career but there’s no doubt that qualifications are becoming increasingly important to employers these days and shows them that their staff are committed.