**Exit Award: Graduate Diploma in Guidance Counselling and Lifespan Development**

All students are automatically registered on the MA route, but have the option of exiting the programme with a Graduate Diploma in Guidance Counselling and Lifespan Development. This is a so called ‘exit award’, where you complete the same modules as per the MA, except the dissertation modules (EN6044 and EN6006). This means that you are still a registered students for two years.

The Graduate Diploma in Guidance Counselling and Lifespan Development is an NFQ level 9 award, with a total of 63 ECTS.

Both the MA and the Grad. Dip. are recognised awards for Guidance Counsellors who wish to work in educational settings (Post-Primary and Further Ed), under the Department of Education [Programme Recognition Framework: Guidance Counselling](https://assets.gov.ie/25003/f6b754be708443469ae7d569da311a81.pdf).

NB. thatopting for the graduate diploma will not impact on the fees you have to pay in year 2 of your studies as you will still have to be a registered student for the Spring semester for your placement module.

You will have the option of returning to UL to complete a dissertation and thereby have the MA qualification.

However, please note that:

* You cannot re-apply for readmission within the same academic year of exiting.
* You have toreturn within 10 years
* It is also subject to availability of supervision

You apply for admission through the Graduate and Professional Studies admissions (it would also be advisable to make contact with the course director at an early stage).