



AIT to increase access to all

LOCAL FINE Gael Senator Nicky McFadden last week congratulated Athlone IT on its participation in the college admission scheme which aims to make it easier for those with disabilities to access third level education.

"The Disability Access Route to Education (DARE) initiative, which is being launched by seven universities and four colleges including Athlone IT, will encourage the transition from second to third level education for people with disabilities by making an average of 5% of first year places available on a reduced points basis.

"It is commendable that Athlone IT is partaking in this scheme, which recognises the difficulties faced by people with disabilities in making the leap from secondary school to college and university.

"Across the country, DARE is aiming to open up more than 1,000 college places for students with disabilities, doubling the number of students in third level with sensory, physical and multiple disabilities by 2013.

"A student's disability can, and very often does, impact greatly on his/ her ability to obtain sufficient points allowing access to a preferred course, hindering progression to third level and stifling future career possibilities. It is essential that students living with disabilities are encouraged to meet their education potential by whatever means and to overcome the obstacles they meet.

"Every child has a right to a full and fulfilled education. By opening up these places, all of our children will be given the opportunity to participate fully in education, while focusing on their strengths and meeting challenges head on. I commend Athlone IT for its participation in the scheme."