



DUBLIN INSTITUTE
of **TECHNOLOGY**
Institiúid Teicneolaíochta Bhaile Átha Cliath

DIT STUDENT CHARTER

As adopted by DIT Governing Body
8th December 2004

Introduction

The mission of the Institute emphasises partnerships between staff and students and working together to improve the quality of service and the response to diversity of needs. The focus in our Institute community is thus on personal responsibility to each other. Our Student Charter is intended to underpin this joint personal accountability, and was drawn up by a group of staff and students after consultation with staff and students across the Institute. It sets out the level of service and standards of excellence we intend to provide for our students from the point of making an application to come to the Institute, to student life while studying here including the academic, social, cultural & athletic environments of the Dublin Institute of Technology and describes the Institute's expectations of students in such matters.

The whole Institute community is committed to the promotion of equality of opportunity, treatment, consultation and access to facilities, to the avoidance of unfair practice, and to respect for and courtesy towards each other, in accordance with the Equal Status Act, 2000. Our focus on partnership reflects our view that the most rapid improvements in quality come about through direct one-to-one communication between each individual and those members of Institute staff with whom that student comes into contact. Should a problem arise, telling the person who is providing the service remains the expected way of putting it right. If the direct approach to solving a problem doesn't work, then the problem solving procedure described at the end of this document provides an alternative strategy.

Should you require any advice or information about the Charter or the Problem Solving Procedure please either contact the Dean of Students or the DIT Students' Union at 01 496 9741 or email info@ditsu.ie

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1. Before you arrive

You can expect us to:

1. Respond within five working days to any inquiry for information about joining the Institute and about the organisation and content of the programme you wish to study, and deal with your application as fairly and speedily as possible.
2. Provide you with accurate information on:
 - programme information, methods of application, Application Forms and Registration on-line at the DIT Web Site at www.dit.ie etc
 - how to apply;
 - programmes, modes of study and the awards to which they lead;
 - entry requirements;
 - fees, the relevant deadlines for payment, and easy payment options;
 - names and telephone numbers of staff who will be able to give you further advice and information if required;
 - opportunities to visit the Institute and/or Institute visits to your locality;
 - services provided by the Institute and how to access them;
 - facilities and procedures for applicants with disabilities;
 - information about traveling to and living in Dublin (especially to assist international students);
 - acknowledge a direct application to us (i.e. one outside the CAO system) within seven working days of receipt and, wherever possible, notify you of our decision within twenty eight working days (overseas students should note that postal delays can significantly affect their receipt of our communications);
 - provide you, after you have confirmed your acceptance of a place, with full joining instructions, including dates, times and places of enrolment and registration and induction arrangements;
 - offer students with disabilities a pre-entry consultation with a member of the Disability Services Team to discuss their own needs and to plan entry into the Institute, as well as help from the relevant School Tutor;
 - provide suggestions on how to proceed to acquire accommodation in the private sector.

We will expect you to:

- supply us with complete and accurate information in your application;
- comply with any additional selection procedures or requirements for information;
- let us know about any personal circumstances (for example, health, learning difficulties or disability) which we should take into account;
- respond to communications within our specified deadlines;
- clearly indicate in your application form (and inform the Disability Liaison Officer) of any special needs you may have. It is important that you do this prior to enrolling so we can accurately advise you about relevant facilities in DIT so that, if you decide to accept any offer we might make, the support you need may be organised in advance of your arrival;
- inform the Institute of any special requirements you may have prior to your arrival (including details of travel arrangements if arriving from overseas).

2. When you arrive

You can expect us to provide you with:

- a structured induction to life as a student at the Dublin Institute of Technology;
- a handbook containing the regulations and requirements applicable to your programme of study, with clear details about the modules you will be studying and the choices you need to make, and the Institute regulations and procedures governing assessment, conduct and discipline, and appeals;
- the academic year calendar and your timetable (note that seminars may be arranged at the first meeting of a class);
- details of tutorial, pastoral and other learning support arrangements including who your course coordinator/tutors are, their different roles and how to contact them;
- instruction on how to register correctly;
- a clear statement about what you need to do to successfully complete your award and the consequences of not passing key assessments;
- information about the DIT Students' Union, student representation and participation in Institute decision making,
- information about health, safety, environmental, bullying & harassment, equal opportunities, non-smoking, alcohol and poster policies and requirements;
- information about financial matters, including what student support services are available in cases of difficulty;
- information about the support service available to students;

We will expect you to

- make yourself familiar with the information provided;
- comply with the Institute's rules, regulations and procedures insofar as they concern students;
- register for enrolment and for examinations on time;
- pay any fees due on time;
- refrain from any illegal activities which would bring the Institute into disrepute.

3. Student Life

Your programme of study

You can expect us to provide:

- teaching and learning activity that is student centred, up-to-date, safe and well planned;
- a range of methods for promoting and assessing learning at each level of study;
- a schedule of assignments for each course/module within one week of starting work on that course/module;
- a safe learning environment appropriate to each type of learning activity;
- opportunities to express your views on the way in which your programme is delivered;
- regular opportunities for discussion about your progress and appropriate studies advice;
- as much notice as possible of alterations to the teaching arrangements with a notice clearly posted on the relevant room door if a class has to be cancelled unless circumstances prohibit this;
- details of an assignment at least 4 weeks before it is due to be handed in, clearly stating the criteria which will be used for assessment and the level of detail of feedback you can expect on it;
- your marked assignment back to you with feedback from the tutor within 4 weeks unless there is a good reason for this not to be possible;
- replacement classes if cancellations seriously disrupt the conduct of a subject/module;
- clear documentation of what is expected in project work, the basis on which marks will be awarded, and the arrangements for formal supervision;
- a learning experience which enables you to achieve standards comparable with those on similar programmes in other institutions;
- ongoing support for learners with disabilities from an appropriate tutor (in order to discuss academic issues), a Librarian, and from the Disability Liaison Officer for help in gaining access to special equipment where appropriate;
- advice and support from staff who have expertise in international cultural issues;
- an International Students Forum, designed to allow International students to raise issues that concern them in the Institute.

If your programme includes a period of placement or an overseas exchange you can expect us to provide (*wholtime students only*):

- every reasonable assistance in finding a suitable placement;
- a member of the Institute staff as your placement tutor during the period of placement;
- an assigned member of staff of the host organisation to act as your supervisor and provide supervisory sessions;
- a written statement for you and the host organisation of the terms and conditions of the placement and its learning goals.
- policy on safety programmes for placements

You are expected to:

- work enthusiastically through your chosen programme of study or research;
- attend classes and hand in work on time and notify appropriate tutors of any personal difficulties which might prevent this;
- inform us about reasons for absence;
- provide the Institute with formal and informal feedback about the total student experience we offer;
- comply with health and safety procedures when using any of the Institute's facilities;
- comply with the study and assessment requirements of any placement which forms part of your studies and all other reasonable requirements of the placement organisation;
- provide evidence of any extenuating circumstances that you believe may have affected your performance.
- co-operate with all safety policies

Student Participation

You can expect us to provide:

- information concerning student representation and involvement in decision making via the DIT Students' Union, as part of your induction programme;
- a variety of means of involving students in the decision making processes within the Institute with opportunities to express views and comments both formally and informally and a considered response to those views;
- student representation and participation in decision making at every level of the Institution; including the Governing Body, Academic Council, Student Services Council, Faculty Boards, Library Committee, Programme Committees, Safety Committee and other groups, committees and boards so established under the authority of the relevant DIT legislation;
- facilities for class representatives to undertake training provided by the DIT Students' Union.

You are expected:

- to take part fully in the learning process and provide the Institute with appropriate feedback when requested;
- should you be a class representative, to take advantage of the training provided and regularly attend and participate in appropriate meetings.

Research Students

You can expect us to provide:

- a mechanism for approval of your individual research programme and for approval of an appropriate supervisory team and support arrangements for it;
- a member of the supervisory team, possessing a qualification of at least NQAI level 9, in the relevant academic subject, who will be accredited by the Institute for supervising your research;
- regular feedback including reviews of progress, constructive criticism of written work and guidance on standards expected and on thesis preparation;
- an Institute-wide research student forum, with further opportunity to express your views through an annual research student questionnaire;

- a “Tutor to postgraduate research students” in each School, specifically to help you with problems that you have been unable to resolve in other ways;
- training in safety, health or welfare relevant to your area and the activity

You are expected to:

- take note of and respond to the feedback and guidance we give you;
- demonstrate your commitment to research by appropriate participation in School, Institute and external research activities (e.g. seminars) and in such courses as recommended by the supervisory team or as approved within your research programme;
- produce a full, detailed annual report on your research according to Institute requirements;
- complete your degree within the approved period of registration;
- publish your research findings in relevant journals and/or at conferences etc. as agreed with your supervisor;
- take advantage of all safety training and participate in meetings and briefing;
- perform specific risk assessments legally required for every project, in conjunction with your supervisor

4. Learning Support

You can expect us to:

- provide adequate library facilities containing materials in specialised subject areas as well as basic reference materials;
- ensure, where practicable, that the relevant library has at least one copy of each book and article recommended in module guides by teaching staff;
- maintain a comprehensive, accessible and easy-to-use library catalogue and reservation system for books and other materials both within the libraries and through any campus network terminal;
- ensure Library opening times are suitable, well-publicised and, unless for good reason, are adhered to;
- ensure that any planned changes to the availability of learning support and computing facilities are suitably publicised in advance;
- maximise access to materials which are heavily used by placing them in the Temporary Reference Collection;
- provide a quiet study environment, including a designated silent study area, in each library and ensure that regulations governing their use are enforced;
- provide reasonably-priced photocopying facilities for self-service use in all Libraries wherever possible;
- provide access to general computing facilities (PC, printer, scanner, internet and appropriate software) within each Faculty, provided a given facility is not required by a time-tabled class and ensure facilities are kept up-to-date and in good working order. (Note: for security reasons there are severe restrictions in some Schools whereby access to computing facilities is limited e.g. by user passwords, digital room locks etc.);
- publicise details in each computer laboratory and how to seek assistance if you have technical problems when using computers;
- provide appropriate facilities for students with disabilities.

You are expected to:

- respect the rights of other users by maintaining a quiet study environment and observing requests for silence in designated silent study areas;
- return items on loan promptly and pay fines on items not returned by their due date;
- abide by regulations governing Libraries and respond to reasonable requests from their staff;
- observe the law in regard to Data Protection and Copyright;
- familiarise yourself with and abide by the Institute regulations governing computers and their use;
- take reasonable steps to protect computing facilities and other users from computer viruses, with particular attention to the use of discs which may be faulty, or downloading data infected with viruses;
- to abide by the DIT Computer Systems warnings. To quote 'When you download a file from the network, you should be aware of security considerations. A file that contains malicious programming instructions could damage or otherwise compromise the contents of your computer',

5. Student Support

Accommodation Service

You can expect us to offer:

- information on a range of issues including contracts, landlord and neighbour disputes and public health regulations;
- a register of private accommodation to be available from mid-August;
- the accommodation service provides a database listing of private accommodation available on the internet

There is no vetting of accommodation and the letting arrangement is a matter for the landlord and student.

You are expected to:

- pay rent as it falls due;
- take good care of the accommodation;
- respect privacy of landlord, other tenants and neighbours;
- smoke only where this is permitted by the owner;
- be conscientious about personal hygiene and neatness.

Careers Service

You can expect us to provide:

- up to date, accurate and comprehensive information on education, training and employment opportunities throughout the duration of your programme of study;
- opportunities to receive careers education as part of your formal study (*wholetime students only*);
- duty advisers available most week days to answer individual queries (*wholetime students only*);
- access to a Careers Library and employment opportunities sourced by the Careers and Appointments Office during the first year after you leave us, until you find your first full-time job or register for a full-time course at another educational institution (*wholetime students only*);

- confidential careers interviews via an appointment system for final year students. You will not normally have to wait more than 3 weeks for an interview although during peak times (September - December) this could be longer (*wholetime students only*);
- opportunities for national companies to carry out the first stage of their recruitment processes within the Institute (*wholetime students only*);
- access to computerised career development packages;
- access to a Careers website containing a comprehensive range of career planning materials and links to other useful resources

Wholetime Students are expected to:

- visit the Careers Service during your first year at the Institute;
- attend pre-arranged events (internal and external);
- arrive on time for careers/employer interviews;
- notify the Careers Service if you are unable to attend previously arranged activities;
- complete a questionnaire letting us know what you are doing after leaving us, since we are required by law to give this information in statistical form to the Government;
- give us feedback on the service provided.

Catering

You can expect us to:

- sell a range of food and drink meeting a variety of dietary requirements available at the times advertised at selected sites;
- provide refreshment facilities for part-time evening students, including hot meals, where possible;
- respond to any views and suggestions you make for improving the catering facilities;

You are expected to:

- use opportunities to express your views and make suggestions regarding catering, formally and informally;
- treat the catering facilities with due care;
- refrain from eating or drinking in libraries and computer laboratories

Chaplaincy Service

You can expect:

- To meet or to contact a chaplain on calling to the chaplain's office
- To receive a reply to email or telephone contact within the day
- To receive an appointment (if necessary) within two days
- To have support/information that you can avail of with regard to a wide range of issues - personal/academic/social/spiritual
- To be referred to the appropriate support service where necessary
- The service to be confidential
- To be assisted in contacting chaplains/religious representatives
- To have information provided of religious services
- To have space available for quiet/reflection (only available in two sites at present – DIT Kevin St. & DIT Aungier St.)
- To meet with any member of the Chaplaincy service as you would request

You are expected to:

- Notify the chaplain if you are unable to attend appointment/meeting as soon as you can

Counselling

You can expect:

- To see a counsellor within ten working days of your initial request (if you have an urgent concern, you can obtain an initial assessment within the same week where possible) and not to wait longer than three weeks for subsequent appointments (during peak times – pre and post - Christmas and close to examinations, the waiting period may be longer due to greater take up of the service). *Appointments for part-time students may be offered between 5.00 p.m. and 6.30 p.m. depending upon the availability of the counsellor. In the event of an emergency occurring after 5.00 p.m., students are advised to contact their own general practitioner.*
- The service to be confidential. However details of discussions taking place within sessions might need to be disclosed when there is concern about the welfare of a child or if there is significant or immediate concern that an individual is at risk of harming themselves or others or if the psychologist's records are subpoenaed by law. Finally, in case of a referral to another professional the counsellor might need to communicate details of the case to him/her. In all the above cases consultation with the student will be sought first and efforts will be made to obtain his/her consent. In the case of danger to life though the counsellor reserves the right to break confidentiality even without the student's consent. *If part-time students are referred to other external counselling psychologists/specialists, the services are not free of charge although some external specialists do charge a reduced fee depending upon the individual's income level;*
- To be provided with support/help on a wide range of emotional/personal/social/academic issues on an individual and group basis
- To be able to choose a counsellor from a list of counsellors (male and female counsellors available) However, during peak times, you may be offered an appointment with the first available counsellor. If you are unhappy with this arrangement, you may request to be placed on a waiting list for the counsellor or location of your choice

You are expected to

- Notify the counsellor if you are unable to attend appointments or previously arranged activities
- Notify the counsellor if you are currently attending one of the other DIT counsellors

Disability Service

You can expect us to offer:

- access to a range of services, on validation of disability, either delivered individually or in a group setting, necessary to facilitate full access to and participation on DIT courses;
- the completion of an Educational Needs Assessment, within 3 weeks of registration in the Institute, examining in detail the range of disability related supports required to fully access and participate on DIT programmes;
- facilitation of the completion, at least within 4 weeks of receiving relevant funding documentation from the National Office for Equity of Access to Higher Education, of applications to the Fund for Students with Disabilities;

- timely co-ordination, with Academic Departments, of the agreed examination and/or assessment disability related accommodations or alterations;
- availability of information on services, in appropriate accessible formats, to all individuals and learners with disabilities

You are expected to:

- make an appointment with the Disability Service as soon as a course place is accepted in the Institute
- register with the Disability Service as soon as you register on the course of study
- inform, immediately, the Disability Service of any change in the status of disability
- advise, immediately, the Disability Service, of any new issues relating to the learning environment
- arrive on time for learning support sessions/meetings arranged by the Disability Service
- notify the Disability Service if you are unable to attend arranged learning support sessions/meetings

Medical Services *(available to Wholetime and Block Release Students only)*

You can expect:

- To see a medical practitioner within 7 days of your initial request (absolute emergencies at much shorter notice) during the academic session only;
- The service to be absolutely confidential;
- To be seen by highly qualified professional medical personnel;
- Support/Advice on a wide range of medical and health awareness issues

You are expected to:

- To notify the medical centre if you are unable to attend appointments;
- Liaise with the medical centre where there is a medical condition which needs monitoring;
- Seek medical help early and not let the medical condition worsen;
- Bring a fellow student to the medical centre or hospital if medical treatment is needed;
- Provide feedback when required on the medical services provided;
- Participate in health awareness promotional events organised by the medical services

Sports, Social, Cultural & Recreational Facilities

(Available to Wholetime, Part-time and Block release students who have paid a Student Service Fee)

You can expect to be provided with:

- the opportunity to participate in, and information about, a wide range of sports, social, cultural and recreational activities;
- sports and recreational facilities which will provide a balance between individual and organised group activities;
- facilities for students to participate in representative matches and authorised absence from classes for participants;
- accurate information about the facilities available and their opening hours where applicable.

You are expected to:

- use responsibly the facilities provided by or through the Institute and observe and abide by health, hygiene and safety requirements;
- conduct yourself in a sporting manner which is not likely to bring the Institute into disrepute;
- abide by the rules and constitution of any club or society in which you participate, in particular the Clubs and Societies Safety Manual.

Student Assistance (available to *Wholetime and Block Release Students only*)

You can expect:

- To see the Student Assistance Administrator within 7 days of your initial request for an interview (absolute emergencies at much shorter notice);
- The service to be absolutely confidential;
- Support/advice on a range of financial/personal/social issues

You are expected to :

- Notify the Student Assistance Administrator if you are unable to attend appointments;
- Co-operate with the requirements of the student assistance funding regulations;
- Provide feedback when required on the services provided

Students' Union

You can expect:

- to be provided with access to a student representative body recognised by the Institute. The DIT Students' Union Constitution is the ratified and accepted body of fundamental principles by which the DIT Students' Union is governed, as approved by the membership and the DIT recognises the right of the DIT Students' Union to independently organise its affairs in accordance with the articles of their Constitution and the laws of the State;
- to be provided with automatic membership of the DIT Students' Union. The DIT Students' Union makes representation, voices students' opinions, protests and offers commercial services at competitive rates on behalf of its members. (The DIT Students' Union is run by students for students and it is the forum of representation for students across the Institute).

6. Problem Solving

The system of talking directly to the person who, in your opinion, has let you down, should lead to the resolution of the vast majority of problems there and then. If not, it may be that a Class Representative or program leader can help, or the Head of the relevant School or Head of the relevant Service.

If, however, you still feel that the issue has not been responded to satisfactorily, you should go to the Dean of Students and/or the DIT Students' Union who can assist you in taking the matter through the formal procedure. If things have gone wrong, our aim is to put them right. We anticipate that all difficulties can be resolved in this way.