

Dundalk Institute of Technology
Strategic Plan

2024-
2028

Partnership for Growth

I cherish the memories, knowledge and friendships at DkIT. It has truly been a transformative chapter so far and I believe the best is yet to come.

Tom Hakizinka Senga

3rd Year BEng Mechanical Engineering

DkIT fostered an environment of practical learning and creativity.

Fionn O Brien

Graduate BA in Audio Music Production

Contents

Foreword	04	Strategic Pillar 2: Excellence in Teaching and Learning and Quality Student Experience	30	Implementation and Reporting on Progress	62
Partnership for Growth	06			Strategic Impact – Now and 2028	64
Our Connected Region	10	Strategic Pillar 3: Widening Access and Participation	34	References	66
Institutional Profile	12	Strategic Pillar 4: Excellence in Research and Innovation	38	Glossary	68
Student Centred Strategy	14	Strategic Pillar 5: Enhanced Engagement	44	Appendix 1: Executive Responsibility	69
Our Mission	16	Strategic Enablers: People and Culture Organisational Excellence	50		
Our Vision	17				
Our Values	18				
Our Strategic Plan 2024-2028 at a Glance	22				
Strategic Pillar 1: Sectoral and Tertiary Cohesion – Our Place in the Landscape	27	Strategic Themes: Sustainability Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	56		

Foreword

In recent decades, there has been a dawning realisation that Ireland has finally solved many long-running economic and social problems that had been endemic in the country since the early 1800's, problems which many believed to be unsolvable.

These included an underperforming economy; falling population due to famine, emigration or low marriage rates and low levels of national confidence and interminable conflict in Northern Ireland.

From the 1960's onwards Ireland embarked on a trajectory which aimed to overcome these longstanding challenges. In this endeavour, it has been remarkably successful. The population in the Republic, which fell to 2.9 million people in the census of 1961 is now, 60 years later, close to 5 million. Ireland has become a global hub for world leading technological and pharmaceutical companies; indigenous companies, in the food sector in particular have attained a global footprint and long-term trends of net emigration have been reversed.

Education has been at the very core of this transformation. From a position where in the early 1960's less than 10% of the cohort progressed to third level education, we now have about 66% progressing. Similarly, the percentage of the population with a third level qualification now stands at 54% with more women than men with such a qualification. With regard to those aged between 25 and 34, 61% hold a third level qualification - the highest in the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD). Unlike other economic inputs, knowledge is not depleted with use but increases with use. A society that is open to learning and welcomes learning is best placed to optimise the returns on an economic model that becomes increasingly knowledge based and knowledge driven, while acknowledging and celebrating our national achievements, there is no room for complacency. Indeed, it could be argued that the problems which Irish education addressed so successfully in the past are not the problems that it will need to address in the future. All third level institutions must, therefore, plan for a different future and ensure they are fit for purpose in addressing new challenges and 'wicked' problems.

It might indeed be argued that some of the future problems are already apparent. Most notable here are the climate change and sustainability challenges. Reaching net zero carbon will test not only our capacity to innovate technologically but also our commercial and legislative capabilities – a case for social change as well as technical change. In 2004, when Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) erected the wind turbine on the campus it was already the case that there was little left to be learned about the engineering of such turbines. Much remained to be learned, however, about the pricing of renewable energy and the mix of incentives necessary to invest in or switch to renewable energy. In this sense, the turbine posed more questions for the School of Business and Humanities in DkIT than it did for the School of Engineering.

It is now necessary to shift the focus of higher education teaching and research to an explicit focus on the existential crisis posed by climate change; by the loss of bio-diversity; by ocean acidification and the degradation of habitats. Additionally, while developments in generative artificial intelligence can enhance learning and research, they can also undermine long held approaches to assessment and authentication of learning. Assumptions regarding the resilience of democratic institutions can no longer be taken as given. And, as if these were not enough, the mental health needs of today's young people become increasingly severe as they find themselves at the cutting edge of processes and trends to which no previous generation has been exposed.



Ms. Antoinette Rourke, Ms. Holly Lambe-Sally, Ms. Ciara O'Shea, Mr. Fergus Grimes

Mr. Eoin Clarke, Mr. Patrick Malone, Ms. Ann Marie Lacey, Prof Thomas Collins, Dr. Diarmuid O'Callaghan, Mr. William Sweeney, Mr. Richard Hanlon

Missing: Ms. Anna Shakespeare, Dr. Jennifer Brennan, Dr. Fiona Lawless, Mr. Pat McCormick, Mr. Mark Lee

And so, this strategic plan must position DkIT for a world that is very different to that which the Institute has inhabited since its foundation in the early 1970's. But in doing so, it can take confidence from the legacy of achievements and contributions which the Institute has already made and from the fortitude and creativity with which the Institute has approached all previous challenges. The institute community of staff and students, together with its regional partners are now being asked to bring fresh approaches, new knowledge and new ways of doing things as to ensure that the college continues to dispel despair and be an ongoing source of inspiration and hope to its students and their families.

President
Diarmuid O'Callaghan, PhD

Chair Governing Body
Professor Tom Collins

Partnership For Growth



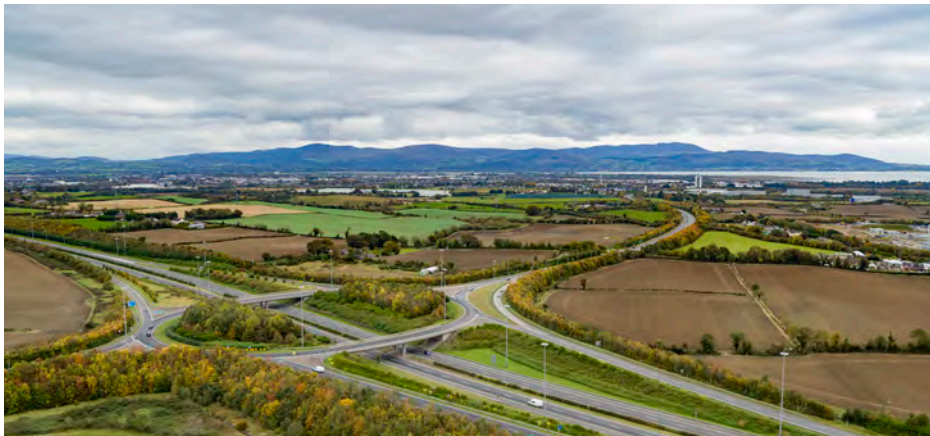
Dundalk Institute of Technology cultivates and enriches strong collaborative partnerships with its students, employers, educational institutes and the wider communities in continually striving to innovate and deliver real impact across teaching and learning, research and innovation and engagement.





Our Connected Region

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) has been at the forefront of delivering excellence in higher education to meet the educational, economic, social and cultural needs of the region since 1970. Set in an 87-acre campus, DkIT provides quality learning and teaching to circa 6,000 full-time and part-time students across four Schools in Business and Humanities, Health and Science, Engineering and Informatics and Creative Arts at undergraduate and postgraduate degrees from Level 6 to Level 10, in addition to its track record of excellence in craft and higher apprenticeships. DkIT is situated within an unique, rural border landscape strategically positioned at the nexus of the island's two capital cities along the vibrant M1 Corridor. It is a region rooted in innovation and creativity with a strong and proud heritage and cultural expression.



It is within this vibrant and ever-changing, dynamic environment that DkIT plays a pivotal role in the educational, economic, social and cultural evolution of the region. DkIT has placed collaboration and partnership at the heart of its approach in delivering on its remit. Its meaningful engagement with its key stakeholders – students, employers, educational partners and the wider community - has ensured that the Institute remains relevant, responsive and impactful.

The overall strategy sets out a vision and plan for the Institute which evokes a sense of common purpose as a positive driving force in the educational, economic, social and cultural development of the region. The strategy sets out the Institute's ambition to proactively position itself within the Higher Education Institutions (HEI) landscape in achieving university status through the development of a strategic collaborative partnership with a university. The overarching aim of such a collaboration is to achieve greater scale and enhanced provision (in teaching and learning, research and innovation and engagement) to meet the ever-changing and dynamic needs of the region served.



Institutional Profile

87-acre

campus

570

Staff

Top Performing Institute in Research and Innovation

6,000

Students

Level 7

Level 10

Plus Craft and Higher Apprenticeships

94%

Graduate Employment and Further Study Rate

90%

Undergraduate

10%

Postgraduate

20%

Part-time Students

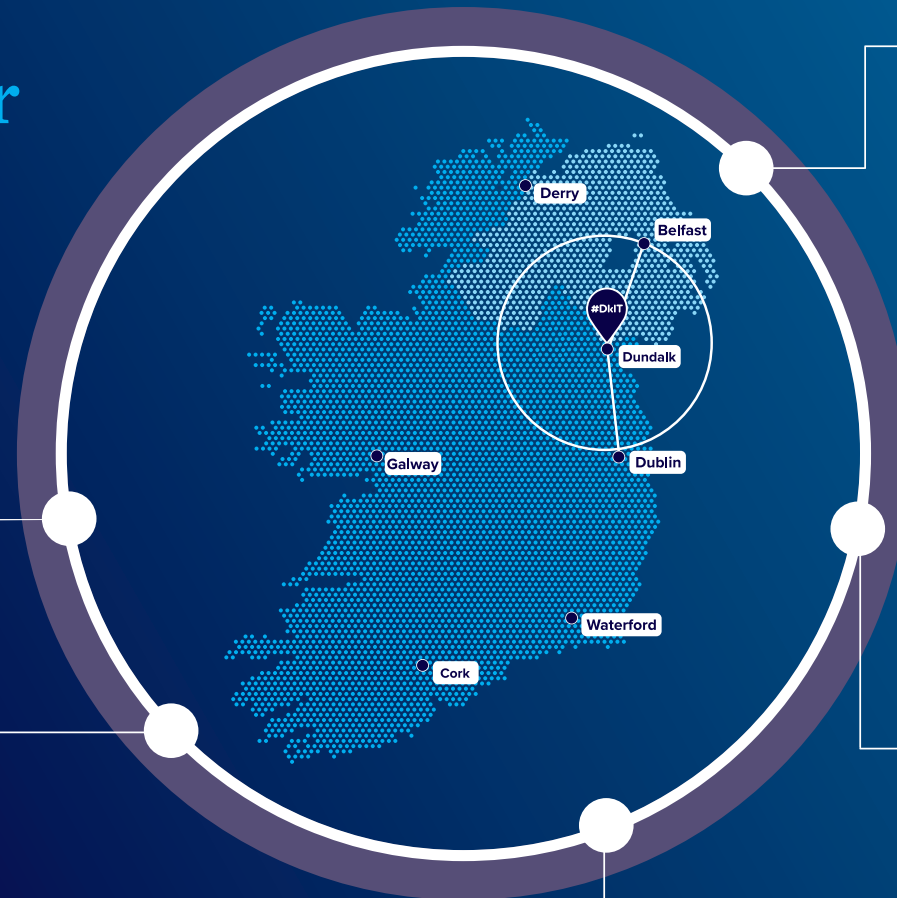
10%

International Students

M1 Corridor

is home to a vibrant cluster of indigenous and multinational businesses in such sectors as software, communications, pharmaceuticals and emerging technologies etc.

Ireland's fastest broadband connectivity is in Louth, **86% of the region** has access to high speed fibre-enabled broadband, 3 times faster than Dublin speeds.



60 mins

to Dublin/Belfast by train or motorway.

DkIT serves a region of **2.25 million**, the most densely populated region outside Dublin.

3 international airports, serving 250 global destinations.

A photograph of three young adults in a casual setting. On the left, a man with long, curly brown hair and a beard, wearing a bright pink t-shirt, is looking towards the right. In the center, a person with long dark hair is seen from the back, wearing a dark blue hoodie and making a peace sign with their right hand. On the right, a woman with curly dark hair and glasses, wearing a dark blue zip-up cardigan and tan pants, is smiling and looking towards the man in the pink shirt. The background is a light-colored wall with a large green circular graphic. The entire image has a blue tint.

Student Centred Strategy

The Institute places, at the centre of its strategy, the student and the student experience in delivering work-ready, globally-minded graduates with the necessary skills and attributes to work and live in an ever-changing world.

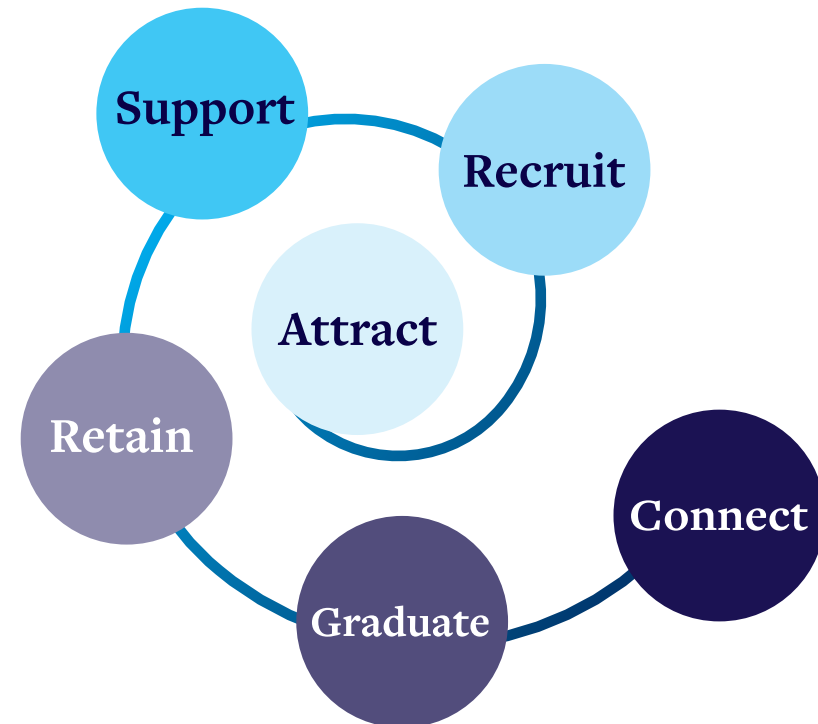
The student journey starts at the recruitment phase where the Institute engages with schools, Further Education (FE) Colleges and other key stakeholders to attract students to study at the Institute. Their first encounter and experience of the Institute is that of a welcoming campus where they are individually valued. It is critically important that our students know when they graduate that the Institute has prepared them for the ever-changing and ever-challenging working world as well as equipping them with life skills.

The Institute is committed to ensuring that it creates a vibrant campus community that is connected, safe, inclusive and caring. The Institute seeks to enhance its Student Experience and Success Strategy to reflect the ethos of **Support - Belong - Empower** for its diverse student cohorts. The Institute is committed to supporting our students to engage fully in college life and thrive in a vibrant college community.

It is critical that students have a voice and feel they are co-creators in enhancing their student experience. The Institute will work closely with its student body in fostering a sense of belonging and inclusivity by creating a campus culture that celebrates diversity, encourages collaboration and ensures every student feels valued, connected and a vital part of our community. Through the learning experience students will feel empowered to develop transferable skills and to gain valuable experience for their future lives and careers.

The Institute is committed to strengthen the relationship with our Alumni to enable lifelong connections to benefit current, past and future students. These connections are key to future collaborative engagements with our Alumni to support the development of the Institute within the region.

The student-centred approach is reflected in all aspects of the Strategic Plan in its teaching and learning, access and participation, research and innovation and engagement goals, objectives and key performance indicators.



Our Mission

DkIT provides quality, accessible and inclusive student-centred practice-based higher education and apprenticeship provision to meet the educational, social, economic and cultural development of the North-East and cross-border region and beyond.

Our Vision

To be a sustainable, accessible and impactful University campus of choice for students, employers and the community in the region and beyond.

Our Values

Our values set out the Institute's ethos, which guides and underpins our strategy. We place students at the centre of our strategy and this is reflected in how we approach and deliver on all that we do.



Inclusive

We embrace equality, diversity and inclusivity as a core value. We are committed to accessible higher education for students in all their diversity through equal access opportunities and the delivery of education and support services to support and enable students to achieve their aspirations.

Sustainable

We adopt a whole-of-the-Institute approach to embracing sustainability in all its dimensions.

Collaborative

We are committed to the ongoing development and enhancement of our collaborative partnerships with our internal and external stakeholders for the benefit of all.

Innovative

We continually strive to innovate and encourage creativity thus embracing transformative change.

As I start my final year in DkIT, I only wish that I could make it last eternally. Secondary teaching has always been my professional goal and my course has equipped me with such exciting knowledge to share with future students.

Liam McCourt

4th Year BA (Hons) Arts



The Jocelyn Bell Burnell
Science Building

Our Strategic Plan 2024-2028 at a Glance

Dundalk Institute of Technology's mission, vision, values and strategic pillars set out its ambition for the period 2024-2028. These are aligned to the strategic areas identified in the HEA's System Performance Framework and reflect the ambitions of the Institute across five key areas as determined by the needs of the students, staff and the wider communities within the region.



Strategic Pillars: Goals, Objectives and KPIs

The five Strategic Pillars set out the direction of travel for the Institute over the next five years. The pillars are presented with associated high-level strategic goals, objectives and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).



Strategic Pillar 1: Sectoral and Tertiary Cohesion – Our Place in the Landscape

A significant and overarching strategic priority for DkIT is to achieve University status. This will future-proof the Institute as a key strategic stakeholder in meeting the educational, economic, social and cultural needs of the region. Central to this pillar is the opportunity for our students to choose to study and graduate with a university award in the North-East region.

In doing so, the Institute will ensure that greater numbers of students are attracted to the region and will contribute to economic, social and cultural fabric within our communities by choosing to stay and work in the region after they graduate. University awards for our students is critical in ensuring the global recognition of their educational achievements. This status will drive research and innovation and enhance the talent pool for distinctive regional clusters.

Goal 1: To achieve University status and strategically engage with the Further and Higher Education Sector to deliver on our regional remit.

University status can only be achieved through the development of a strategic alliance with an existing university. Any such alliance would require that the enhanced regional remit would benefit exponentially from such a partnership. The Institute has embarked on this journey, the outcome of which is to deliver on a value added proposition in terms of: (1) strategically connecting regions and further enhancing regional impact through the identification and delivery of joint collaborative initiatives of mutual benefit in teaching and learning, research and innovation and engagement; (2) in significantly scaling, via such collaborative engagements, such that the region and its constituent stakeholders can avail of an enhanced higher education offering; and (3) delivering on competitive advantage to provide a credible and sustainable higher education institution in a broader catchment area.

DkIT's collaborative engagements with other education and training institutions is an important strategy in delivering on its remit. The Institute has established and valued strategic alliances with NEFHEA, the MEND cluster and cross-border HE institutions. These will be further enhanced during the lifetime of this strategic plan to deliver real value-added impact to the region.

NEFHEA, whose members include DkIT, Drogheda Institute of Further Education (DIFE), Monaghan Institute, Cavan Institute, O'Fiaich Institute, Dunboyne College of Further Education, Beaufort College and NI-based SRC (Southern Regional College) - is committed to working together to enhance progression opportunities for learners from further to higher education, to collaborating on programme design and development in response to regional needs and to sharing expertise and resources. In contributing to the progression of the tertiary agenda, NEFHEA is particularly focused on enabling more learners from the FET institutes in the region to progress and provide pathways to study at DkIT on HE courses (Levels 7, 8 and higher in the NFQ), thereby facilitating learners to fulfil their learning potential.

Through its strategic partnership within the HE sector, the Institute's ambition is for the establishment Regional Graduate Academy for the joint registering and training of postgraduate research students. This will further enhance the opportunities for all learners in the region to access higher level education up to and including Level 10 on the NQF. It affords industry and employers in the region the opportunity to access high levels of skills and expertise as part of the recruitment and workforce development and retention. The development of regional smart specialisation clusters across sector specific disciplines is further enabled resulting in a more enriched and diversified region with real added value opportunities.

The Institute has built strong alliances with University of Ulster and Queen's University Belfast over the past decades. These are important and distinguished collaborative alliances that benefits students, staff and communities on a cross-border basis. These relationships are critical for the development of the All-Island Economy in infrastructure, health, climate, enterprise, etc. As a major and critical contributor to the development of the cross-border region and the All-Island Economy, DkIT will seek to build on its successes to date and further expand and strengthen these alliances in such areas as research and innovation and enterprise development.

Objective 1:

Strategically align with an identified University partner to determine a pathway to achieve University status

Our KPIs :

- All Graduates receive a University Award from Level 8 - Level 10
- Increased economic, social and cultural impact in the region as a result of the strategic alliance

Objective 2:

Enhance and strengthen the relationships with Further and Higher Education Sector

Our KPIs :

- Increased FE-HE pathways
- Increased student participation from Schools and FE colleges in the region
- Increased number of joint initiatives with HEIs

Objective 3:

Enhance and strengthen strategic cross-border relationships with Northern Ireland FEs and HEs

Our KPIs :

- Growth in the number of joint cross-border initiatives in teaching and learning, research and innovation and enterprise development

**Strategic Pillar 2:
Excellence in Teaching and
Learning and Quality Student
Experience**

The Institute continually seeks to enhance its portfolio of provision from Level 7-Level 10 across its disciplines in Business, Humanities, Informatics, Creative Arts, Health, Science and Engineering supported through the Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT).

DkIT has in place its Student Success Strategy reflecting the Institute's commitment to ensuring all learners reach their potential. The Institute will continue to build on the success of this strategy and develop it further to reflect the changing needs of students in terms of what and how they study and learn. The Programmatic Review process 2023-2025 will ensure that academic programmes continue

to innovate to remain effective, relevant and supportive of student success. They will promote student engagement, offer more flexible lifelong learning and use evidence, assessment and feedback to promote student success. The key themes of: (a) employability and graduate attributes; (b) Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and (c) inclusive learning teaching and assessment, including Universal Design for Learning (UDL) will be embedded across programmes.

Goal 2: To provide accessible and inclusive approaches to Learning, Teaching and Assessment which ensures that all students can flourish and achieve their potential.

This strategic pillar is set out in the context of the changing student profile and how the Institute seeks to reflect this in its Learning, Teaching and Assessment strategy. In doing so the Institute aims to ensure that students, in all their diversity, can achieve their full potential. DkIT is a best practice exemplar in the embedding employability within its programmes as part of its student success strategy.

DkIT's Embedding Employability initiative has in place:

- Employability Statement;
- Graduate Attribute & Mindsets Framework;
- Online Embedding Employability Toolkit for Academic Staff (AHECS Award winner for Graduate Employability 2022);
- Suite of online resources for to support students identify their graduate attribute development – Graduate Futures Toolkit.

The values of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) foster an environment where all students and staff are valued and can thrive. DkIT is currently in the process of applying for reaccreditation onto the Athena Swan framework and accreditation as an Autism Friendly Campus. Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is an educational framework that aims to make learning accessible to all individuals, by providing multiple means of representation, engagement and expression. Including UDL principles involves designing and implementing features and strategies that cater to diverse learner needs and preferences

and removes barriers to learning. This work is also informed by the Sustainable Higher Education Futures Framework currently under development. This aims to transform learning, teaching and assessment by focussing on transforming the student experience, and developing the capabilities of all staff to address a sustainable pedagogical and learning environment.

In line with Irish Educated, Globally Connected 2016 – 2020 strategy, international experience and intercultural expertise have been identified as core competencies for graduates in an export-driven and innovation-based economy. DkIT has a very strong international focus. In doing so, it actively formulates links with other Higher Education Institutions internationally to maximise the opportunities for its students to access the global higher education system thus enhancing the quality of the student learner experience. Enhancement of the Institute's Internationalisation agenda is multi-faceted, encompassing: recruitment of international students; promotion of international European mobility for students and staff through the Erasmus+ programme and building global awareness, international diversity and integration on campus for all stakeholders.

Excellence in practice-driven research-informed teaching and learning is a key component in delivering a high quality, supportive learner experience enabling student success in all its dimensions. Key to student success is completion of their programme of

study. The Institute will place a strategic and targeted focus on increasing progression rates across all levels and all cohorts of students.

Objective 4:

To enhance student-centred, practice-based and research-informed inclusive approaches to Teaching, Learning and Assessment which ensures that all students can achieve their potential.

Our KPIs :

- Total student numbers (ex-apprentices)
- Number of graduates
- Improved first year undergraduate progression rate
- Improved progression rates year-on-year

Objective 5:

To enhance strong graduate attributes within all our programmes thus fostering the development of globally-minded, work-ready graduates who can contribute sustainably to society.

Our KPIs :

- Enhanced Graduate Outcomes
- Improved Student Survey Scores
- Develop and enhance a Student Experience and Success Strategy to incorporate, more holistically, a strategic approach to the student experience



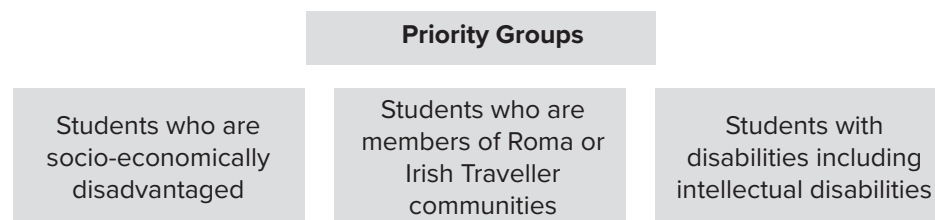
Strategic Pillar 3: Widening Access and Participation

DkIT will prioritise its strategic focus on increasing its access and participation rates.

This requires a prioritised focus on increasing flexible and lifelong learning provision. This reflects the strategic intent of the Institute to provide programmes relevant to the needs and abilities of learners and to meet the needs of employers in the region. To support this strategic goal, the Institute will develop and further enhance access and progression routes for diverse learner cohorts.

Goal 3: To maintain a high-quality, inclusive and flexible student experience that supports all our students, holistically, and in their diversity, to achieve their potential.

The three overarching priority groups are represented below:



Students who are socio-economically disadvantaged come from a diverse background. DkIT has a strong track record in attracting and working with students from a diversity of backgrounds and culture. The Institute has placed a strong focus on supporting students in their learning journey through small class groups and proactive engagement with lecturers. A wide range of support services and pastoral care as well as resources to support learning ensure that the student feels valued and has a sense of belonging at all times.

DkIT works closely with the NEFHEA partners to ensure greater levels of progression from FE to HE and greater access to higher education from targeted under-represented groups. The Institute will explore further options for common entry-level programmes to enhance learner opportunities. Consideration is also be given to the greater provision of micro-credentials as a talent retention and upskilling strategy to meet the needs of the region.

The Institute will become a National Centre for Craft and Higher Apprenticeship provision in the Leinster region. Apprenticeships are work-based industry-led approaches to education provision, delivered by consortia of industry and education partners. In support of lifelong learning approaches, apprentice education leads to awards from Level 5 to Level 10 on the National Framework for qualifications, with a minimum of 50% of "on-the-job" learning. The professional apprenticeship model of learning is becoming an increasingly recognised alternative to traditional higher education and is necessary to attract the scale and diversity of candidates needed to support industries such as construction, civil engineering and manufacturing. Through its focus on the apprenticeship model of learning, the Institute's ambition ensures that:

- The apprenticeship education model involves the active participation of employers in both programme design and in delivery of the on-the-job component and are employer led;
- The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is in line with awards standards specified within the NFQ;
- It provides for continuing education through 'ladder' progression opportunities within apprenticeships and additional micro-credentials in specific areas of skills needs, e.g. Electric Vehicles, Heat Pump Installation and Solar Power;
- The apprenticeship model serves to provide an alternative pedagogical model for further and higher education which

supports national EDI targets for further and higher education. It also facilitates students who face economic barriers to higher education as apprentice students are paid by employers for the duration of their programme;

- ➔ Apprenticeships are designed to develop skillsets which meet the needs of the economy.

This objective focuses on producing significant numbers of work-ready graduates in areas of skills shortages such as the construction and manufacturing sectors. It also provides ongoing flexibility to respond to changing needs of employers and business. The ambition to become a National Centre for

Apprenticeship Provision for the Leinster Region signifies a strategic commitment to the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda in partnership with the ETB sector. This allows for the progression of students through pathways from apprenticeships at Level 6, to both higher-level apprenticeships and traditional degree programmes at Levels 7 and 8 to taught and research postgraduate opportunities at Levels 9 and 10.

Objective 6:

Enhance the lives of our community members by offering a wide range of programmes, access routes and modes of delivery

Our KPIs :

Increased year-on-year:

- % Disadvantaged New Entrants
- % New Entrants with a Disability
- % Mature Students of New Entrants
- % FE Students of New Entrants
- % of Direct Entry of New Entrants
- % HEAR & DARE New Entrants

Objective 7:

Develop craft and higher apprenticeship provision to meet the needs of the students in the region.

- Number of Craft Apprentices and Higher Apprentice Students.

Objective 8:

Empower students to develop transferable skills and to gain valuable experience for their future lives and careers

- % Part-time students

Strategic Pillar 4: Excellence in Research and Innovation

DKIT continues to strengthen and expand its role in research and innovation, focusing on strategic objectives that align with regional policy goals and future collaborative efforts. Ensuring our research has impact, whether it is contributing to the knowledge gap, aiding economic development, solving societal challenges, informing national and international policy and informing the teaching remit of the Institute has always been at the heart of our research endeavours.

The Institute aims to invest in growth areas of strategic importance, which are aligned with the Institute's research strengths and which are informed by the external environment and founded upon excellence led by global needs with real-world societal and economic impacts.

Goal 4: Focus on and drive research and innovation excellence that has societal, economic and sustainability impact, aligned with National and European Research Priorities.

The Institute’s research agenda within both these established and emerging areas is driven by a number of research groups and clusters, which are embedded across the Institute’s four academic schools and include:

Prioritised Established Research Clusters: (a) ICT, Health and Ageing; (b) Energy and the Environment; and (c) Creative Arts.

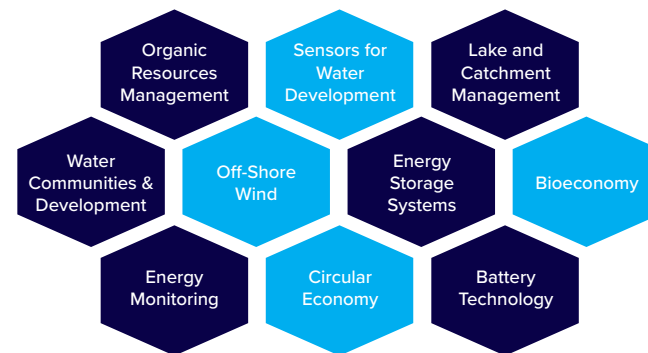
Emerging Research Groups and Clusters: (a) Humanities and Social Sciences; (b) Teaching and Learning; (c) Entrepreneurship; and (d) Nursing, Midwifery and Early Years.

A number of these centres work closely with the Regional Development Centre’s (RDCs) CREDIT Technology Gateway and the dConnect and Connected Health & Wellbeing Cluster in driving research and innovation within sectoral clusters.

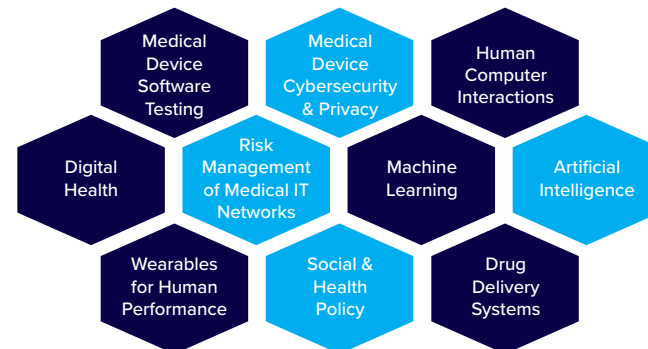
In particular, the Institute aims to build a critical mass centred on a select number of high performing research clusters and foster growth in key enterprise domains highlighted by national policy, including Medtech, Renewable Energy, Biopharma, ICT, and Marine industries, within the North-East region. Over the course of the Strategic Plan, the Institute in collaboration with enterprise in the region will advance enterprise innovation, leading to increased value creation, competitiveness, high-value employment opportunities and upskilling in the region. This will

involve the development of a number of Research Institutes in the areas of Connected Health and Wellbeing and Climate and Natural Resources that are addressing real-world challenges.

Climate and Natural Resources Cluster



Connected Health and Wellbeing Cluster



Objective 9:

Continue to consolidate and concentrate our research through the establishment of Institutes of Excellence of scale through the building national and international collaborative networks and clusters of scale and impact

Our KPIs :

- Number of research enrolments (Level 9 and Level 10)
- Number of staff supervising Level 9 and 10
- Establish and develop Research Institutes in Connected Health and Wellbeing and Climate and Natural Resources.
- Promote emerging research areas

Objective 10:

Develop international Institutional led research and innovation strategic partnerships with Higher Education Institutes in key areas that will maximise our research impact

Our KPIs :

- Research Income (€)/ Academic Staff (FTE)
- Number of large scale national and European research and innovation networks and clusters

Goal 5: Embed Research and Innovation into our Teaching & Learning and Engagement Remits



We recognise that it is the quality and expertise of our researchers, which underpins our research success to date. The Institute will strive to actively support its research community in their endeavours, both established and early career researchers. It is only through this that the Institute can attain its research vision to be a leader in its research themes. Research, is a critical and integral part of the overall learning environment of the Institute for its staff and student body. The guiding principle is to embed the Institute's research activities within its academic Schools through the implementation of a suite of strategic actions.

My class is like an extension of my family. I have found all the lecturers know my strengths and help me with the areas that I struggle with.

Ciara Smith
4th Year, BSc in Agriculture

Objective 11:

Promote technology transfer and commercialisation to staff, researchers and students and facilitate to engage in research opportunities

Our KPI :

- Number of commercially relevant technologies (licences, options, assignments)

Objective 12:

Facilitate external organisation engagement opportunities with the DkIT research community through collaborative project development

Our KPI :

- Number of collaborations, applied projects and service agreements with industry/community

Strategic Pillar 5: Enhanced Engagement

The Institute is committed to its engagement with employers, enterprises, communities, state and semi-state bodies, educational providers and other key stakeholders for the benefit of the region. Enhancing the teaching and learning and research and innovation environment at DkIT is underpinned by the creation and enhancement of rich opportunities resulting from strong, mutually beneficial engagements with both national and international organisations.

Goal 6: To strengthen DkIT as a valued partner for all stakeholders.

The Regional Development Centre (RDC) at DkIT acting as the commercially oriented interface between DkIT and the industrial, commercial and business life of the region has been an engine for regional economic growth and development since 1989. The RDC makes available the expertise, facilities and resources of the Institute for the wider benefit of the regional economy and provides extensive enterprise support that is supplemented through ongoing research. The work of the RDC ranges from the promotion of entrepreneurship to students, supporting knowledge based start-up businesses and providing specialised supports to meet the needs of established business through innovation and applied research projects. DkIT's Careers & Employability Centre focus on Employability Skills and Student Work Placements by engaging with learners and employers to enhance student learning and creating meaningful linkages with all professional fields locally, nationally and internationally. The Lifelong Learning Centre at DkIT coordinates part-time programme provision to meet external organisation requirements delivered on campus or as outreach options.

DkIT will seek to enhance and deepen its strategic partnerships and engagement with the local authorities, education sector, public sector, cultural, community and voluntary organisations within the region to maximise regional cohesion and impact.



Objective 13:

Strengthen relationships with external community partners to include employers, industry and the community

Our KPIs :

- Number of MOUs with key strategic HEI/ industry/community partnerships
- Number of Entrepreneurs/SMEs/MNCs supported
- Annual Occupancy of Incubation Companies

Objective 14:

Enhanced support for employers and key stakeholders in the region for graduate employment and talent retention

Our KPIs :

- % of students on work placements/ internships
- Development of an Alumni Association

Objective 15:

Promote social responsibility and community involvement across staff and students

Our KPIs :

- Number of volunteering and community engagement activities with regional stakeholders
- Number of college outreach activities

Goal 7: Maintain and enhance strategic alliances with international HEIs.

DkIT's objective is to consolidate its international market recruitment, enhance international diversity and develop strategic international engagement through inbound and outbound student and staff mobility. The internationalisation agenda remains a key priority for the Institute and it aspires to continue to be one of the top performing Institutes in terms of attracting overseas students. Brexit continues to present opportunities for Ireland and the Institute in further attracting international students.

This objective feeds directly into the delivery of the overall Institute mission and vision to produce graduates who are work-ready, internationally engaged and inter-culturally aware. Internationalisation is already embedded in the curriculum. Learning and teaching strategies are employed in the classroom to ensure Irish and international students collaborate, thus enhancing their inter-cultural competencies. The Institute remains committed to the maintenance and promotion of international exchange activities and will continue to raise awareness among the staff and student body of the importance of overseas exchanges.

*I have loved everything about my course,
and I can see how relevant all my modules
are. It never seemed like studying because I
loved every aspect.*

Evan Kane
4th Year, BA in Hospitality Management

Objective 16:

Increase DkIT's global footprint by continuing to recruit in established markets and by diversifying recruitment opportunities into new and emerging International and EU markets

Our KPIs :

- % International and EU enrolments of total DkIT enrolments
- Number of International MOUs
- Number of Erasmus+ inter-institutional partnerships
- Number of Inbound and Outbound Erasmus+ students
- Number of Research collaborations with international partners

Objective 17:

Continue to promote staff and student international collaborations, and develop internationalisation-at-home, in order to foster intercultural competence, develop global perspectives in programmes and increase student participation in Erasmus+



Strategic Enablers: People and Culture Organisational Excellence

Underpinning the success of this strategy is the two key enablers of **People and Culture** and **Organisational Excellence**.

Enabler 1: People and Culture.

Key to the success of our strategy is an engaged and empowered staff. The Institute seeks, at all times, to engender a culture of well-being and academic and professional services excellence. We seek to support our staff to achieve their full potential through the provision of a supportive, inclusive and respectful environment, fostering collegiality and transparency in how we approach and carry out our remit.

Continuous professional development is encouraged to support staff to reach their potential. The Institute seeks to demonstrate equality of opportunity for all staff and recognise staff contributions.

The development of a Resource Plan will seek to address the competences and skills required to deliver on the goals and ambitions of this Strategy. The recruitment and retention of high calibre academic, research and professional staff will assist in sustaining and building expertise for the benefit of all key stakeholders.





I had a number of remarkable lecturers, who understood that teaching goes beyond the ability to deliver course content. Their encouragement gave me the confidence to pursue a PhD and their enthusiasm inspired me to follow a career in teaching.

Dr Leanna Morgan
Lecturer and Graduate

Objective 18:

Enhance a culture which supports a strong sense of identity and common purpose where staff are valued and acknowledged for their contribution within an environment which fosters health and wellbeing.

Our KPIs :

- Recognition Awards Scheme in place
- Healthy Campus Plan in place for staff and students

Objective 19:

Empower and enable staff to reach their full potential through the provision of continuous professional development

Our KPIs :

- Resource development plan in place
- Increased expenditure for Staff Training and Development

Enabler 2: Organisational Excellence.

DkIT aims to deliver on its promise to its students, to the community and to the region. This will require an ongoing enhancement in organisational development in terms of organisational infrastructure and finances to ensure that the ambition of the Institute as articulated within its strategy is achieved.

Physical Infrastructure: The Institute's Campus Development Plan 2024-2034 will reflect the capital requirements to meet the needs of current and future learners, staff and the wider community. Greater utilisation will be made of the existing 87-acre campus infrastructure reflecting the climate action and sustainability agenda.

IT and Digital Infrastructure: The Institute will set out its plan to optimise the utilisation of its existing IT infrastructure and to leverage systems to support the ongoing and varying needs of a diverse community in terms of digital infrastructure, new modes of learning and connectivity.

Financial Sustainability: A fundamental principle within the strategy is to ensure the longer-term financial sustainability of the Institute. All future resource planning will be strategically aligned to the overall mission and vision and underpinned by the financial considerations.



Objective 20:

Effective governance, leadership and operational practices reflective of a professional, engaged and responsive organisation

Our KPI :

- Governance and Operational Policies, Risk Registers and Internal Controls in place

Objective 21:

Enhanced campus facilities and IT infrastructure/Systems

Our KPIs :

- Development and implementation of plans to deliver effectively on the Institute's strategic goals and objectives reflective of its sustainability agenda to include:
- Campus Development Plan 2024-2034 in line with Climate Action Agenda
 - Climate Action and Sustainability Plan 2023-2028
 - IT and Digital and Security Campus Plan 2024-2028 in place and implemented.

Objective 22:

Enhanced Financial Sustainability

Our KPI :

- Plans developed to identify and deliver on revenue models, balance income and expenditure with operational and governance frameworks in place.

Strategic Themes: Sustainability Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

There are two key cross cutting strategic themes reflected throughout all aspects of the Strategic Plan namely, **Sustainability** and **Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**.

Theme 1: Sustainability.



DKIT's ambition is to become a sustainable campus in all its dimensions. The Institute will seek to support sustainable development and embed the UN Sustainable Development Goals across its activities to generate demonstrable impact. In conjunction with key stakeholder partners, such as local authorities, DKIT will play a role in extending the sustainable campus community ethos into the wider community across the region.



Objective 23:

To become a sustainable campus

Our KPIs :

- Establish Cross-Institutional Climate Action and Sustainability Committee
- Develop and Implement Climate Action and Sustainability Plan 2023-2028 to include Climate Action Plan 2023



Theme 2: Equality, Diversity and Inclusion.

The Institute is a strong advocate of embedding Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles across all its activities. DkIT will continue to actively promote the values of equality, diversity and inclusion in the culture, behaviours, interactions and operations in the delivery of its remit.

We will continue to embrace an inclusive approach to our policies and procedures in promoting and delivering on the EDI agenda. This data will be utilised to disseminate progress and empower our staff to embrace and embed meaning EDI engagement and culture cross-campus.

The Institute has received an Athena Swan Award and signifies our commitment to promote gender equality and diversity on campus. The institute has also signed up to the anti-race principles

Objective 24:

To become an exemplar Institution that supports and embeds the ethos and principles of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in all its dimensions

Our KPIs :

- Renewal of Athena Swan Bronze accreditation
- Work towards Athena Swan Silver accreditation
- Develop and implement a Race Equality Plan
- Targeted actions around bias and discrimination
- Implementation of the Irish Language Act



Arrangement drawings

Isabella Samayoa

Technical Design

Passive House

FIRST FLOOR
GROUND FLOOR
3D PERSPECTIVE SECTION
BUILDING SECTION
ACQUINATELLI
METRIC PASSIVE HOUSE STUDY

Implementation and Reporting on Progress

The Strategic Plan sets out the high-level strategic pillars and goals which will serve as a basis for the future decision-making process within the Institute. The responsibility for the management, review and reporting on the implementation of the Strategic Plan is the responsibility of the President and the Executive Board. The roles and responsibilities for the delivery on each of the strategic goals are set out in Appendix 1.

Sub-strategies and implementation plans will be developed for each of the Strategic Pillars to ensure delivery on the strategic goals and objectives and associated KPIs. These plans will detail how the strategic goals will be achieved, the detailed strategic and SMART (specific, measurable achievable, realistic and timely) objectives and key actions and performance indicators. The overall executive responsibility for each strategic pillar will develop the plan in conjunction with the relevant Schools, Departments and Functional Units. These plans will reflect the agreed HEA System Performance Framework 2023-2028.

Within these detailed plans, a number of additional areas will be explored and documented. In line with best practice, each strategic goal will identify its risk profile and risk mitigation options so as to feed into the risk management process of the Institute. Each area will identify benchmarking criteria. External and internal factors, which may impact on the achievement of the overall strategic objectives and key performance indicators, will be identified and subsequent contingency options scoped.

A framework for assessing the overall impact of the attainment of each strategic priority will be developed. This framework will then be adopted in assessing the economic and social impact of the Institute across its strategic priorities. These plans will serve as the basis for the development of a resource allocation plan in line with overall agreed strategic goals for the Institute for the next 5 years.

The Executive Board will review, monitor and report on progress. This will also form the basis for the annual report. This report will be presented to the Governing Body for review and adoption. It will also form the basis for the annual report to the HEA on the System Performance Framework.

Strategic Impact – Now and 2028

By the end of the implementation of the Strategic Plan 2024-2028, the Institute will have evolved to reflect its mission, vision and strategic pillars and goals.



2024

Achieved University Status

Teaching and Learning is practice driven and research informed delivering work ready globally minded graduates

DkIT will be a Sustainable and EDI focussed and embedded Community

Increased number of students reflecting diverse student cohorts with increased progression rates reflecting national norms

National Centre for Craft and Higher Apprenticeship in Leinster Region

Recognised as a Centre of Research and Innovation Excellence in Connected Health and Wellbeing & Climate and Natural Resources

Strong Engagement with key stakeholders as partners in driving globally connected regional growth and development

2028

References

Action Plan for Apprenticeships 2021 – 2025	Green Public Procurement Guidance for the Public Sector 2021	National Action Plan for Open Research 2022 -2030
Climate Action Plan 2024	HEA Principles of Good Practice in Research within Irish Higher Education Institutions 2022	National Development Plan 2021-2030
Enterprise Ireland Strategy 2022 – 2024	Higher Education Healthy Campus Charter and Framework 2020	National Framework for Doctoral Education 2023
Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Higher Education Institutions, Implementation Plan, 2022 – 2024	Healthy Workplace Framework 2019	National Framework on the Transition to an Open Research Environment 2019
Export Control and Dual-Use 2022	Impact 2030 – Ireland’s Research and Innovation Strategy 2022	National Further Education and Training(FET) Strategy 2020
Framework to Enhance Research Integrity in Research Collaborations 2022	Implementing the Public Sector Equality and Human Rights Duty 2019	National Skills Strategy 2025
Framework for Consent in Higher Education Institutions: Safe, Respectful, Supportive and Positive – Ending Sexual Violence and Harassment in Irish Higher Education Institutions 2020	International Education	National Smart Specialisation Strategy for Innovation 2022-2027
Funding the Future Investing in knowledge and skills: Ireland’s competitive advantage 2022	Irish Survey of Student Engagement 2022	National Strategy for Higher Education to 2030
	National Access Plan: A Strategic Action Plan for Equity of Access, Participation and Success in Higher Education 2022-2028	National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework 2020
		Next Steps for Teaching and Learning: Moving Forward Together 2021

NF-2021-Student-Success-Guiding-Framework.pdf

NStEP Strategy 2022-2025

Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

Project Ireland 2040–National Planning Framework Programme for Government 2020

Progressing a Unified Tertiary System for Learning, Skills and Knowledge: Public Consultation Report 2022

Policy Statement on Ensuring Research Integrity in Ireland 2019

Public Sector Climate Action Mandate and Strategy 2023

Race Equality in the Higher Education Sector Implementation Plan 2022-2024

Regional Economic and Spatial Strategies - Regional Enterprise Plans

Second HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions 2022

Second National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development - ESD to 2030

Sharing the Vision - A Mental Health Policy for Everyone 2020

Technology Skills 2022

The European Code of Conduct for Research Integrity 2023

The National IP Protocol 2019

THEA Code of Governance for Institutes of Technology 2018

Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development National Implementation Plan for the Sustainable Development Goals 2022-2024

Understanding and Enabling Student Success in Irish Higher Education 2019

20-Year Strategy for the Irish Language

Wellbeing Policy Statement and Framework for Practice 2018-2023

Glossary

Athena Swan	Recognising advancement of gender equality: representation, progression and success for all.
CELT	Centre for Excellence in Learning and Teaching
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DkIT	Dundalk Institute of Technology
EDI	Equality Diversity and Inclusion
FE	Further Education
FET	Further Education and Training
HE	Higher Education
HEA	Higher Education Authority
HEI	Higher Education Institute
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
MEND	Midlands East North Dublin
NE	New Entrants
NEFHEA	North-East Further and Higher Education Alliance
NFQ	National Framework of Qualifications
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
RDC	Regional Development Centre
The Region	North East and Cross Border encompassing Counties Louth, Monaghan, Cavan, Meath, North Dublin, Armagh and Down

Appendix 1: Executive Responsibility

Strategic Priority	Executive Responsibility	Sub-Strategy and Action Plan
Sectoral and Tertiary Cohesion – Our Place in the Landscape	→ President and Executive Board	→ Sectoral Cohesion: High Level Steering Group → Tertiary Engagement Action Plan 2024-2028
Excellence in Teaching and Learning and Quality Student Experience	→ Heads of School → VP Academic Affairs Registrar	→ Teaching and Learning Action Plan 2024-2028 → Student Experience and Success Action Plan 2024-2028 → Retention and Progression Action Plan 2024-2028
Widen Access and Participation	→ Heads of School → VP Academic Affairs Registrar	→ Access and Participation Action Plan 2024-2028
Research and Innovation	→ VP Academic Affairs Registrar → VP Strategic Planning, Communications and Development → Heads of School	→ Research and Innovation Action Plan 2024-2028
Enhanced Engagement	→ Head of Innovation and Business Development → International Manager	→ National Engagement Action Plan 2024-2028 → Internationalisation Action Plan 2024-2028
People and Culture Organisational Excellence	→ VP Finance, Resource and Diversity → VP Strategic Planning, Communications and Development	→ Resource Plan 2024-2028 → Financial Plan 2024-2028 → IT & Digital Transformation Action Plan 2024-2028 → Campus Development Plan 2024-2028; → Marketing & Recruitment Action Plan 2024 - 2028
Sustainability	→ VP Strategic Planning, Communications and Development	→ Climate Action Plan 2023 → Cross-Institutional Sustainability Plan 2024-2028
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion	→ VP Finance, Resource and Diversity	→ Race Equality Plan 2024-2028



