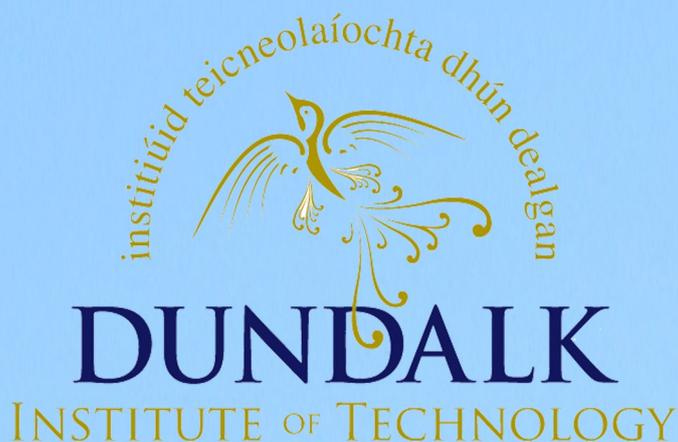


Dundalk Institute of Technology

STUDENT SERVICES ANNUAL REPORT 2012 / 2013



STUDENT SERVICES

- ▶ Access
- ▶ Administration
- ▶ Careers
- ▶ Chaplaincy
- ▶ Counselling
- ▶ Disability
- ▶ Health



DkIT Student Support Services - Supporting Students to be Successful !

ACCESS SERVICE, STUDENT COUNSELLING SERVICE, CHAPLAINCY SERVICE, CAREERS SERVICE, DISABILITY AND STUDENT QUALITY SERVICE, STUDENT HEALTH SERVICE, SPORTS AND SOCIETIES, STUDENT SERVICE ADMINISTRATION

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STUDENT SERVICES AT DKIT



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INTRODUCTION

The objective of the Institute to support the personal and academic development of our learners is facilitated by Student Services. The Services support learners in transition to higher education and assist in increasing student retention.

This report provides an opportunity for Student Services staff to document their service over the past year providing an opportunity for dialog with Executive Management, Staff and Students. It helps to create an awareness of student needs and the needs of the Student Services Staff.

Student Services provide a variety of services that facilitate student involvement and learning comprising the following :

- Access
- Careers
- Chaplaincy
- Counselling
- Disability and Student Quality
- Financial Assistance
- Health
- Sports and Societies

The majority of the services, with the exception of Access and Disability, are located in the Faulkner Building and are assisted by the administration staff in the Student Services Centre.

HIGHLIGHTS

Each of the service providers has prepared a detailed report on their service, forming the appendices of this report.

The following are some of the highlights of their year:

- One of the main highlights was the hosting of the 14th Biennial Confederation of Student Services in Ireland Conference: Mind, body, Spirit – The Holistic Approach to the Student Experience. Approximately 180 service providers from the university and Institute sector attended the two day conference hosted by DkIT. Feedback from the organisers and attendees was excellent and DkIT Student Services staff fully participated in the event.
- All service providers participated in the centralised induction programme providing information sessions to all 1st year students.
- VTOS students from adult education centres in Drogheda, Dundalk and, for the first time, Navan visited the Institute in February. Feedback from the scheduled visit was extremely positive.
- A successful grant application to State Street provided over €13,000 in funding for access students.

- The Institute appointed a part-time Employer Liaison Officer to the Careers Service to assist Springboard Learners with their career planning.
- The Careers Service conducted a survey of the class of 2012 in relation to their career with a 35% response rate, up 10% on last year. 60% of those surveyed are currently in employment either full-time, part-time or contractual.
- Through the development of Chaplaincy on social networks and through the use of the DkIT web news service, multi-media screens and promotional leaflets, a greater awareness of the service was created.
- The Chaplaincy Service developed a ‘support forum’ for students and staff to share sensitive issues in a confidential and supportive way.
- As part of their commitment to the continued development of the Institute Mental Health Guidelines the counselling service developed a competition for their 2012/13 theme “Letting Go After A Relationship”.

The competition required students to develop a resource which could be used to educate students about the issues and provided the service with three new resources by

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students for students. The service worked very well with a couple of departments and in addition to generating good quality entries it increased awareness among students around mental health and has helped to develop a model that can be put to all departments early in the next academic year.

- Academic staff continued to be proactive in referring students to the disability service when they considered further investigation to be warranted. Seven students registered with the service as a direct result of lecturer referrals.
- The introduction of two learning support workers offering one to one support has resulted in positive feedback from the

seventeen students who availed of the service.

- The Institute has developed a committee to provide a fully comprehensive first aid delivery throughout the campus with the addition of a defibrillator at each first aid station.
- With the provision of the additional funding from the Student Assistance Fund and a supplementary allocation the Institute continued to financially support students who experienced severe financial hardship.
- The Sports & Societies Office held an additional sign up day in January for the first time to target new enrolments and to remind

existing members of the variety of clubs and societies available.

- Sports & Societies in partnership with the Irish Sports Council and the DkIT Athletics Club hosted a 3km walk/run in aid of the Irish Heart Foundation.
- The Erasmus Student Network (ESN) Society was awarded best Event at the Annual Board of Irish College Society (BICS) Awards.

FUNDING

Funding for the provision of support services comes mainly from the Student Contribution Charge which was €2,250 for the 2012/13 academic year.

The Access Office made a successful grant application to State Street which provided over €13,000 in funding for access students.

Student Assistance Fund

The Student Assistance Fund (SAF) is funded by the HEA and part funded by the European Social fund under the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme 2007-2013.

Originally funding was allocated on the basis of a simple head count of FTE students. The IOTI sector argued that the success of the sector in delivering the socio-economic strand of the access agenda should result in funds being targeted to those in greatest need. In 2011 the HEA changed their distribution model and allocated 25% of the funds on the basis of the proportion of new entrants in the access target groups and 75% on the basis of the total FTE. In 2011/12 the figures changed to 50% and 50%.

In 2012/13 DkIT received an allocation of €241,224 in funding. As a response to the problems with the SUSI grant system the HEA then provided a supplementary allocation of €45,652. The Student Services Office awarded funding to 255 students.

Fund for Student with Disabilities

The HEA allocates funding to further and higher education colleges for the provision of services to full-time students with disabilities through the Fund for Students with Disabilities. The Fund aims to ensure that students can participate fully in their academic programmes and are not disadvantaged by reason of a disability.

A claim under the fund is made on behalf of an eligible student by their college following an assessment of need.

Colleges are responsible for the management of funding approved for eligible students. There are three types of assistance typically provided under the Fund for Students with Disabilities:- Assistive Technology equipment and software, Personal & Academic Support and transport.

In the academic year 2012-2013 DkIT received a total allocation of €65,000 from the Fund for Students with Disabilities.

STUDENT SERVICES AT DKIT



QUALITY ASSURANCE

Service providers continue to review feedback from their users annually to help them to improve on the service they offer.

Direct feedback was sought from the service users in the Access, Careers, Counselling and Disability Services.

Users of the careers service were offered the opportunity to provide feedback in relation to their experience of the service with 98.2% of users that responded saying they found the level of service excellent or good.

The level of feedback from the users of the counselling service was disappointing this year with just a 15% response rate. The student email system being down after Easter may have contributed to this. The feedback received is generally quite positive with over one third of students attributing their knowledge of the service to their induction talks. The feedback in the general survey to all students about the counselling services was also quite positive with almost 80% being aware of the

service and 59% being satisfied or very satisfied with the service.

The Disability Service received a 30% response rate from their service users. Feedback was generally very good.

Positive feedback was received from the Access Office in relation to the Mature Student Induction Day and also the VTOS visit. The Access Office plans to shorten the mature student induction day to focus on key issues for mature students which has been highlighted in their feedback.

Student Services conducted an on-line survey of all students before the end of term. Again response rates were very low with just 4% of students responding. There was a good awareness by students of all services with the majority of students being either satisfied or very satisfied with the services which they received. 95.1% of students stated that they would recommend the services to others.

PRESENTATIONS/SEMINARS

The following is an overview of some of the events provided by or facilitated by Student Services Staff over the last academic year:

The counselling service assisted AWARE in offering their "Living Life to the Full" programme on campus to staff and students.

The Counselling Service co-hosted "I see a Darkness" – a presentation of the impact of suicide which was well attended.

The Counselling Service conducted a radio interview with LMFm on the work of the service.

Student Services provided a presentation to AMPC on the selection process for mature students and advanced entry students.

The Careers Service assisted with CV clinics at the Gradireland Careers Fairs in October, February and June.

The Careers Service were invited by a number of academic colleagues to

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present a careers workshop to their class groups.

The Careers Service invited a number of external companies and presenters on campus during the year. The following is a sample of these:

- Professional Accounting Training Options ACCA/ACA/CPA/CIMA
- Teacher Training in the UK, Edgehill University & St Marys London
- Intel Recruitment Drive
- Washington Ireland Summer Intern Programme
- Career Boot Camp Sessions, Michelle Mc Mahon, Correlate

AREAS FOR CONCERN

Once again there was a marked increase in the number of students availing of the services. Although we have managed to maintain the current level of service the demands on these services have increased dramatically and operational budgets have been reduced.

Some of the issues that arose during the 2012/13 academic year included:

- An increased demand on the services as students struggle to sustain themselves financially with a particular increase being contributed to difficulties students encountered with the SUSI grant system.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

- The Access Officer is on the Board of Management of the Ogra Dun Dealgan Community Training Centre (The Magnet Centre).
- The Access Officer is the DkIT representative on the AIT (Area Implementation Team) in Dundalk and on the Traveller Sub Group of Louth County Council's Social Inclusion Measures (SIM) Group.
- The Counselling Service continued to develop referral links with other providers including BodyWhys, Rian Counselling Service and Ladywell Mental Health Services.
- The Counselling Service is represented on the board of the RCNE and form part of their Policy Review Committee.
- The Careers Service is a member of GCI (Graduate Careers Ireland). Each year GCI (in conjunction with GTI) organise the Gradireland Recruitment Fair.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT

The Disability Officer completed an on-line course with AHEAD (Association for Higher Education Access and Disability) in Inclusion and Needs Assessments for students. All service providers participated in the two day CSSI Conference: Mind, body, Spirit – The Holistic Approach to the Student Experience. The Conference was opened by DkIT President, Denis

Cummins followed by two keynote speakers, Dr Dominic Orr, Eurostudent Project and Professor Liz Thomas "What works: Student Retention and Success". The conference covered a wide range of topics including Mental health, Meditation, Financial Support, Peer Mentoring, Student Employability, Student Volunteers and much more.

- The Counselling Service in particular saw the greatest number of students since it was established in 2003. There was a 23% increase in the numbers of students accessing the service which has put considerable strain on the service. The recession is having an impact on students' mental health.
- The percentage of the student body seen for counselling was 5.1% which is higher than the national average at 4.7%. The number of sessions per client has dropped further and is lower than the national average which is understandable with the increase in students accessing the service.
- Counselling attendance rates for students presenting with Addition and Self Harm have risen and are well above the national average.
- IT Security issues have meant that the 'My Mind Matters' website was out of operation for most of the academic year. A task force has been established to look at the issue and the counselling service is hopeful that these issues will be resolved.
- Mature students tend to present disproportionately to student

STUDENT SERVICES AT DKIT

counselling and because of the complex nature of their problems they often need the support of the service for longer. As the proportion of mature students increases it will increase the demand on the counselling service.

- The non-attendance rate at counselling as once again increased.

- The student email downtime after Easter and the unavailability of the SMS service since mid-March have caused concern amongst the service providers.

The SMS failure may have attributed to the non-attendance rates in the counselling service as they use the text system to remind students of appointments. The Disability Service has

experienced difficulties in communicating with students regarding examination arrangements or to get feedback on the service.

- Students are still experiencing problems with information regarding their needs assessments being communicated to individual

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

All providers are currently developing operational plan for their service in line with the Institutes Strategic Plan.

Student Services staff are very committed to the Institute and to supporting the Institutes Strategic Plan.

Admissions

Student Services Staff have expressed concern regarding the admissions process for mature students. A number of students have been identified by service providers as not being ready to attend 3rd level.

Representation from the Student Services Team met with the Academic Management and Planning Committee highlight their concerns and to suggest that where there is a maths requirement for programs that they consider introducing a maths aptitude/assessment.

Departments need to be cautious of the social and personal as well as academic ability of applicants to fit in to groups that are already established. Departments should consider a buddy system for advanced entry students.

The Access Office will be reviewing access targets in line with national strategy. As part of the review of the mature student admissions policy the access office will monitor 1st year mature students and analyse mature student retention rates.

The Access Office plan to expand visits to northern counties and will pilot visits to FE College visits in the Newry region over the next academic year.

Disability Service - Profiler Software

The Disability Officer will offer to screen all mature students for specific learning difficulties. The rationale for this is that there is now an increased understanding of specific learning difficulties and supports are available to second level students which may not have been available to mature students. Mature students may have missed referral opportunities at second level.

Mental Health

The Counselling Service will continue to develop the mental health guidelines and to develop a road show on their theme for the next academic year "Dealing with Conflict" which they can take to the Schools and collaborate with Departments on setting continuous assessments to link to the theme. The Service will also launch the resources developed by students for students from the last academic year.

Marketing of Services

All of the services plan to increase their marketing activity to improve awareness. Feedback from the student services survey suggests that individual service providers should communicate their particular message to students on a regular basis. The use of social media also needs to be developed.

The Counselling Service in conjunction with the Communications Office has developed a promotional video which is now showing on all screens. The Mental Health Theme for the next academic year is "Dealing with Conflict" – the counselling service hope to work with more departments in setting assignments around this area.

The Schools Liaison Office in conjunction with the International Office has appointed a Technical

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lecturers. The Disability Officer will review this and implement changes where required.

- In response to unprecedented levels of stress at the January examinations the Counselling Service developed an information sheet on "Coping with Examinations" which was sent to all students prior to the May Examinations

Sadly there were two student bereavements and two staff bereavements during the year. The Chaplaincy and Counselling teams helped staff to manage supporting students and staff. The thoughts and prayers of the Institute community are with the families of the deceased.

Communication Intern. Niall Kearns joined the team in January and I would like to acknowledge the great work he has done on promotional materials for Student Services under the guidance of Diarmuid Cahill in the Schools Liaison Office.

Personnel

Student Services welcomed the appointment of Fergal Scully during the year. Fergal has been appointed as part-time Employer Liaison Officer to the Careers Service to assist Springboard Learners with their career planning.

Ciara Patterson, Sports and Societies Officer has bid farewell to the Institute. Ciara has worked in the Sports and Societies Office for over two years. We wish her the best of luck with her travels.

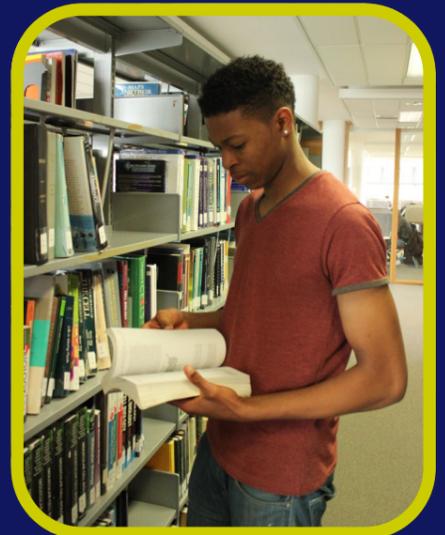
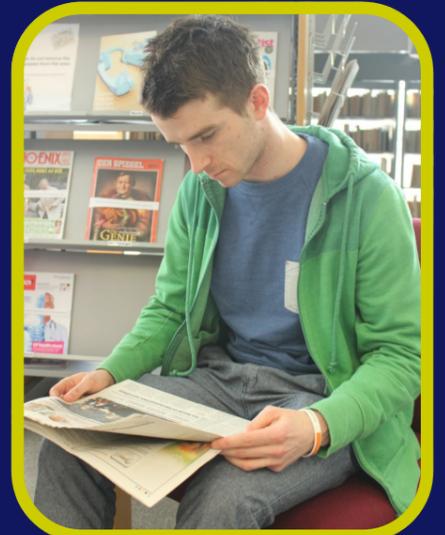
We welcome Derek Crilly, Sports and Societies Officer, to the team. Derek is a past student of the Institute.

The annual reports from each of the service providers are included in this report and will provide you with a better insight to the work they have carried out and the service they have provided over the past year.

I would like to thank the staff in Student Services for their continued dedication and commitment to the student experience.

Linda Murphy

Linda Murphy
Academic Administration & Student Affairs Manager



APPENDIX I - ACCESS OFFICE



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MATURE STUDENTS

Mature Student Application Route

Mature offers in June 2013 are running at just under 200 – it is expected that more offers will be made when available places are advertised in August and interviews for same held in early September.

The mature application route ran smoothly this year and student services administration staff are thanked for their efforts in ensuring that this was the case.

Mature Student Interviews: delays in some academic departments providing reasonable notice of interview dates continues to cause difficulties for prospective interviewees. When these dates cannot be flagged in advance to applicants (as is the case each year), the result is that a number of prospective applicants cannot attend for interview and in other cases, applicants are put under unnecessary stress by having to change plans or make arrangements (e.g. childcare) at relatively short notice.

Induction Day for Incoming Mature Students

This was held on 3rd September and feedback from participants was positive for the most part, however there were a number of negative comments on the day about the overview of the Library – this session

ended well ahead of time and participants were left waiting around for the next session to begin. Following a review, the induction day will be an induction morning in September 2013 and the schedule has been streamlined to focus on the key issues for mature applicants. It was also felt to be necessary to move the Counsellor's presentation ahead of lunch in order to ensure that as many participants as possible attend it.

VTOS STUDENTS VISIT TO DKIT

Just over 40 VTOS students from adult education centres in Drogheda, Dundalk and for the first time, Navan, visited DkIT on a structured half-day visit on 27th February organised by the Access Office.

Feedback was extremely positive and the value of this day to VTOS students planning to attend DkIT ensures that it is worth doing each year.

DKIT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAMME

Following a review of the programme last year, a new system is in place for this year. All shortlisted applicants have been asked to contact the Access Officer once they have accepted a place at DkIT through the CAO. Confirmation of financial means and family circumstances will then be sought. A final decision will then be

made on the scholarship recipients for the coming academic year.

STATE STREET BURSARY

A successful grant application made prior to the start of academic year 2012/13 saw State Street provide just over €13,000 in funding for access students. I submitted a grant application to State Street in early 2013 and it has been approved in the past week. The company will provide \$18,000 (approx. €13,500) for academic year 2013/14. I meet with bursary recipients throughout the year and support them during their time at DkIT. State Street staff have confirmed that they will visit DkIT early in the coming academic year and meet with some of the seven students supported in the past academic year.

OTHER

There was a marked increase in the number of students calling to the office in person and telephoning the office in both semesters due to difficulties they were encountering with the SUSI grant system.

The problems with the SUSI system caused much distress to students – some of whom were only approved at the end of the academic year. Non-access students and their parents / guardians also contacted the access office at this time and were given assistance.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE FUND

Working with the Disability and Student Quality Officer, we developed a coherent and fit for purpose appeal system for the Student Assistance Fund.

Under the new system, students understand that they need grounds

for appeal and that these must be accepted by the Appeals Committee before an appeal is granted. Prior to this, students were automatically appealing decisions of the SAF committee without grounds for appeal – the subsequent (and automatic) appeal meeting was a

waste of time for the student and was inefficient in terms of staff resources.

The new system also involves an “appeal by email” facility which should prove convenient for students and improve response times.

OUTREACH ACTIVITIES

In October the Access Office took a stand at the Killester Further Education College Open Day.

Talks were given to VTOS students in Dundalk, Drogheda and Navan Adult Education Centres in November. This is the first year that the Navan centre was included on the round of visits.

Also in November, I attended the School Completion Programme conference with the Access Officer in WIT and took a stand displaying activities by Access Officers in the IT

sector. This was done on behalf of all IOT Access Officers.

We were invited to have a presence at this event by the SCP national committee in order to highlight the cooperation that exists between Access Offices and SCP officers around the country and to encourage attendees to further this cooperation.

In February, the Access Office had a stand at the CAVAN AEGIS Open Day. Also in February, the Access Office in conjunction with the Lifelong Learning Centre had a stand at

the Marshes Shopping Centre Employment Fair.

In March, I attended the MRCI seminar on behalf of IOT Access Officers to contribute to a discussion around the needs of the “1.5 generation” and to put forward proposals to government as to “free fees” being available to this category of student.

In June I will attend the presentation of VTOS certificates in Dundalk Adult Education Centre.

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

In early 2013, I was asked to join the Board of Management of the Ogra Dun Dealgan Community Training Centre (the Magnet Centre). I have attended a number of meetings this year.

The Centre is facing a period of transition / change and one of the areas for development that particularly

interests me is the progression potential for trainees – whether into further / higher education or employment.

I act as the DkIT representative on the AIT (Area Implementation Team) in Dundalk and attend meetings throughout the year. I represent DkIT on the Traveller Sub Group of Louth

County Council's Social Inclusion Measures (SIM) group. One of the pillars of activity is Traveller education and I worked with those in other organisations engaged on the same issue to come up with county-wide plans. DkIT's Direct Access for Travellers Scheme is one of the projects listed under the Traveller sub group action plan.

APPENDIX II - CAREERS SERVICE



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INTRODUCTION

The DkIT Careers Service is a free and confidential service offered to current full-time students and graduates of a maximum of one year. These two groups can avail of resource and take-home careers literature from the Careers Information Area, one-to-one consultation with the Careers Officer, and career information via telephone and email.

The Service also responds to queries from potential students and parents, school guidance counsellors and teachers and guidance counsellors working with adults in the Adult Guidance Service in neighbouring county VEC's providing up-to-date information on DkIT programmes and potential areas of employment.

CAREERS OFFICE

The Careers Office is located in the general Student Services offices along with Sports & Societies, Chaplaincy, Counselling and central Student Services Administration. This has assisted the service in working in a more collaborative manner with other members of the student services team. The Careers Service has benefited in particular from the ease of referral and regular communication with other service providers.

STAFFING:

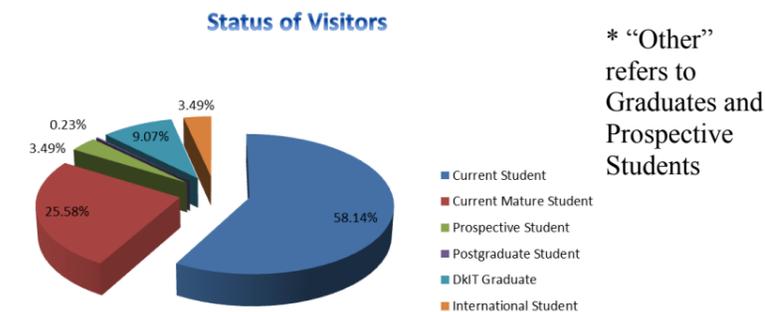
Careers Officer:
Amanda Kirk – Full time
Employer Liaison Officer (Springboard):
Fergal Scully – 3 day week
Careers Administration:
Francis Hutchinson – 3 day week

ACCESSING DKIT CAREERS SERVICE IN PERSON

Approximately 430 career queries (i.e. one-to one meetings and quick queries) were dealt with by the DkIT Careers Service in the 2012/2013 academic year i.e. September to May. Unfortunately, the number of telephone queries and email queries was not recorded accurately, due to time pressures.

Please note this number represents those who presented in the careers Office in the Student Services Administration Area, and does not include all those who attended Careers Seminars (or other Careers Events) held throughout the academic year. Many users tended to have more than one meeting.

A. Study area related to people visiting the Careers Service



B. Current status of people Visiting the Careers Service



A detailed report is available from the Careers Office that gives a breakdown of numbers of students and graduates who used the DkIT Careers Service in the last academic year, including the programme of study they were on.

Some of the presenting issues and trends in those who are being met by the careers adviser are outlined on the next page:

- **Springboard**
In June 2013 an Employer Liaison Officer was recruited to assist Springboard Learners with their Career Planning. Fergal Scully stated that "in general Springboard students are quite time consuming to deal with."

Many require follow up appointments and/or e-mails/ phone conversations. This is to be expected as generally their number one priority is to return to the workforce as soon as possible and they realise the value of the service provided."

- **Continued increase in the number of mature students using the Careers Service**
A high percentage of students who presented to the Careers Service for a one-to-one interview were aged 23 and above.

The mature students tended to under value the full package of skills, knowledge and experience that they have to offer their potential employer.

Mature Students tended to use the Careers Service for a number of return meetings.

- **Change of course/First Year Withdrawals**
The trend is that students want to stay in DkIT rather than move to other colleges.
- **Dissatisfaction with certain course groups**
Specific class groups presented

COLLABORATION WITH ACADEMIC PARTNERS & EXTERNAL EXHIBITORS

In addition to drop in and one-to-one consultations, the Careers Team were invited by academic colleagues to present a careers workshop to their class group.

An all staff email was sent offering this facility to all academic staff in order to improve communication and collaboration. Some schools tend to avail of this service more than others.

A number of external companies and presenters were invited on Campus during the academic year 2012/2013.

The following are a sample of these:

SAMPLE OF EXTERNAL COMPANIES AND PRESENTERS:
Professional Accounting Training Options ACCA/ACA/CPA/CIMA
Teacher Training in the UK EdgeHill Univ & St. Marys London
Intel Recruitment Drive
Washington Ireland Summer Intern Programme
Career Boot Camp Sessions Michelle McMahon Correlate

A full Listing is available on demand.

COLLABORATION WITH STUDENT ENTERPRISE

It was an excellent year for working with the highly motivated Student Enterprise Team. Amanda Kirk, Careers Officer participated on a judging panel for two Student Enterprise competitions assessing the entrepreneurial spirit and innovative ideas of existing students.

Social Media Tool	Number (Aug 2013)
Twitter	613
Facebook	238
LinkedIn	166

with course issues on a large scale and were referred back to their course director in order to deal with issues in a productive and open manner

- **Teacher Training**
Large volume of queries in relation to teaching as a career. There has been a lot of confusion in this regard due to the changes taking place with the Teaching Council (TC).
- **Employer Vacancy Advertising**
Great increase in the number of employer vacancies from January 2013.

FIRST YEAR INDUCTION

The Careers Office was involved in the training of student ambassadors and induction of new students in DkIT for the academic year 2012/13.

EMPLOYERS

The DkIT Careers Office provides a free service to potential employers. Vacancies are advertised on the www.dkit.ie/careers and notice boards and emailed directly to students and graduates. Social media continues to be a great advancement as a means of increasing awareness to students and graduates.

Further plans are in place to develop the use of social media tools and

APPENDIX II - CAREERS SERVICE CONTINUED

increase user numbers. Employers are also invited to host a stand, workshop or presentation on campus should they have recruitment needs.

GRADIRELAND Careers Fair October, 2012, Postgrad Fair February 2013, Summer Fair June 2013

DkIT Careers Service is a member of GCI (Graduate Careers Ireland), which is the representative body for Careers Services in higher education in Ireland, north and south and has 25 members including Universities, Higher Education Institutes and Institutes of Technology.

Each year GCI (in conjunction with GTI) organise the largest graduate careers fair on the island, the GradIreland Recruitment Fair. The DkIT Careers Office organised transport to and from the main October event free of charge for DkIT students. The Careers Officer and Employer Liaison Officer volunteered to assist with the CV Clinic at all events. These events were used as a means of networking with employers and educational providers.

Current Status	No. of respondents	% of 2012 respondents
Employed	213	60.3%
Seeking Employment	65	18.4%
Further Study or Research	91	25.8%
Not Available for work or study	3	0.8%

** A number of respondents indicated that they were both employed and currently involved in further study hence resulting in the overall figure of 372 although there were only 355 respondents

GRADUATE DESTINATIONS SURVEY 2012

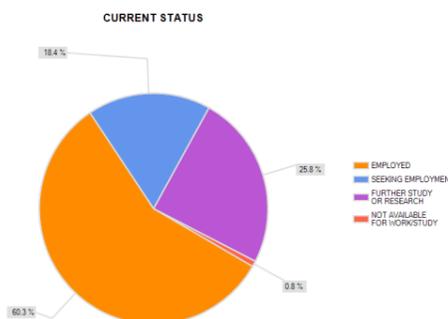
The DkIT Careers Office was responsible for the collation of data on what the class of 2012 did career wise upon graduation. Graduates were posted the graduate destination survey in October 2012 and this was followed up with by email, twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn.

A telephone campaign was conducted at the end of May, by three students. The response rate was a rewarding 35% of a total number of 1027 graduates surveyed.

We do not survey those graduates who are enrolled on a undergraduate higher level course after graduation 2012.

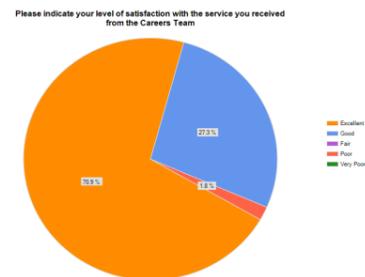
The key findings from this 35% grouping include:

- Employed 60.3% - this includes full time, part time and contract employment
- In Further Education 25.8%
- Seeking Employment 18.4%
- Not available for work or study 0.8%



EVALUATION AND FEEDBACK – AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT:

Users of the careers service were offered the opportunity to provide feedback in relation to their experience of the service. The following graph indicates the level of satisfaction with the service. 98.2% of users that responded to this survey said they found the level of service excellent or good.



Comments included:

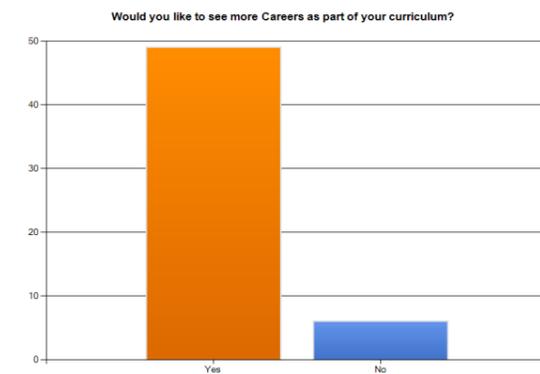
- Very happy with the service, felt really comfortable asking questions and got great advice;
- I found the overall service to be extremely beneficial and helpful to me. I felt the staff done everything they could to assist me;
- Friendly staff, the service was useful to help me decide what I want to do after college. It gave me an idea of what areas I might be interested in like further study or future employment;
- I think it's a brilliant service, think it should be advertised a bit more so students know that it is there to help them;
- I waited less than a week for an appointment, which for a college of DkIT's size is practically instantaneous. My meeting was one of the most positive events I could have hoped for and it gave me the confidence to meet with the head of school for my course in NUIG. I

could not fault my experience with the careers service, in any way, shape or form. Totally brilliant service, keep up the good work.

Respondents were also granted the opportunity for general comments.

The following is a selection of feedback obtained and will guide our practice as we move forward:

- Have career service mandatory for students to consult every semester in final years of study;
- Maybe more awareness of the service being available;
- More publicity & maybe a module here and there throughout the course;
- Perhaps a longer session as just having half hour appointments can be very short especially when you are talking about a person's future careers paths;
- Linking in with social care employers re jobs and other colleges re further study opportunities;
- Careers officer to give talks in class for students completing studies in their fourth year and hoping to continue onto a postgrad course;
- There could be more of an emphasis on sending earlier emails to students with regards to offers of jobs or milk rounds.



89.1% of respondents stated that they would like to see careers as a module within their course as opposed to 10.9% who disagreed.

2012 OBJECTIVES - UPDATE

Objective	What we did
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Careers Service has developed a number of strong partnerships with employers and academics during the last year and we aim to build on this further for the benefit of the student. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An Employer Liaison Officer was recruited in Jan 2013 and an employer database developed to have a central source of contacts for employment opportunities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DkIT Careers Service aim to maximise the use of the Gradireland suite of services that are aligned with best practice and offer enormous potential to our students to be far more prepared and ready for successful careers in the workplace. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Careers Website has been updated with GradIreland resources. All Gradireland publications have been made available free from a new stand on the MPC corridor.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to develop the use of social media as a tool within the career planning and job hunting process. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follower numbers through Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn have increased by more than 100% in the last academic year.

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS

- 35% Response Rate for Graduate Destination Survey an increase of 10%
- Over 100% increase in the following of all social media tools
- 98.2% Level of satisfaction with service provided

OBJECTIVES AND PLANS FOR NEXT ACADEMIC YEAR 2013/2014

The Careers Service continuous to review its practice and improve on the level of delivery offers to service users. The following are set goals of the Careers Service for the next academic year:

- Develop stronger links with the Students Union;
- Increase student participation in the development of careers activities e.g, student committee for the organisation of the annual School of Health and Science Careers Day;
- Increase the marketing activity of the service in order to improve awareness of the service across all academic years;
- Increase the use of social media as a communications tool;
- Conduct more on campus employer events such as employer presentations, CV clinics and workshops;
- Move towards a paperless office by developing more online resources such as appointment booking forms.

APPENDIX III - CHAPLAINCY



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Rev. Stanley Millen
Presbyterian

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INTRODUCTION

Fr. Paddy Rushe was appointed full time chaplain in August 2012.

SERVICE TO STUDENTS

I have had one-to-one contact with over fifty students excluding those connected to bereavements), throughout 2012/13, dealing with a range of issues;

- Individual spiritual guidance (particularly the Sacrament of Confession)
- Seeking advice and support about personal matters (eg, getting married).
- Seeking the Chaplain's involvement in projects (academic, social and charitable) and activities (the Harlem Shake, being the most famous, or should that be infamous?).

Often, contact was recurring - meeting many of the students several times. The most popular method of contact was through e-mail, and/or just 'dropping in' to the office. However, the fact that there were regular 'scheduled' services in the Quiet Room, allowed for moments of contact. I also endeavoured to be present in and around all parts of the campus in a visible way, and tried - first and foremost - to engage with students socially.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Through my development of Chaplaincy on social networks (Twitter @Chaplaincydkit & Facebook - dkitchaplaincy), and through the use of the DKIT web News service, the Multi-Media Screens, and promotional leaflets for the times and services within Chaplaincy, many were aware of Chaplaincy on Campus, and most felt able to approach.

The Chaplaincy Office engaged positively with the other Offices of the student Services suite, taking part in events like 'Fit 4 Life'. The Chaplaincy Office also connected with the Student Union supporting as many of the events as possible.

My involvement with the SAF and the Hardship Fund have a great insight to the practical difficulties that many students have to cope with, and how they impact on their Academic Life.

BEREAVEMENT

By far, the largest engagement with Students and Staff of the College was through support at times of Bereavement.

Throughout the year, two students, one lecturer and over thirty-five family members of students and staff died. As Chaplain, I endeavoured to contact each bereaved person,

distribute the bereavement notice, attend the wake and/or funeral, and follow up with the bereaved person in the weeks/months afterwards.

The production of 'College' Mass Cards proved to be helpful in acknowledging in an official capacity that members of staff and the student body were bereaved. A monthly Mass for those who had died was offered in The Quiet Room (2nd Floor Student Services, beside the Doctors Office).

VALUE LIFE

In conjunction with Rev. Stanley Millen, we have begun to establish a 'support forum' which would be a way for students & staff to share about sensitive issues in a confidential and supportive way. It is hoped that four meetings will be held each year.

ACTIVITIES

The major events throughout the year (& those which were best attended) included Mass for the Graduations; Mass for the Bereaved in November; Service of Prayer for Garda O'Donohoe; Advent Prayer Services & Blessing of the Crib; Prayer Services for the Exams after Christmas; Blessing of the Throats & Distribution of Ashes; Mass with Cardinal Brady for Ash Wednesday; Monthly Mass for those who have

died; Confessions & Prayer Times for Lent; Visit by the Papal Nuncio; Prayer Services for the Summer Exams and a Final Mass for the Academic Year.

As Chaplain, I also attended the training and conference days for the Association of Third Level Chaplains (www.chaplaincy.ie), and the IT Chaplains Association.

FUTURE PLANS

- I want to see the development of a student centred support team for the Chaplaincy Office - the development of Peer-to-Peer ministry, so to speak, and will be working toward that from Induction.
- I would like to see the establishment of some Charitable Society, such as SVP to help students develop a sense of community involvement and participation.
- The development of a 'Gospel Choir' to spearhead the music at religious celebrations in the Institute.
- I intend to develop the resources in the Quiet Room, to make it a place where people can experience a sense of peace and stillness in the midst of the busy College.
- I intend to continue to engage with students using digital and social media, as well as making myself present around all parts of the campus.
- I would like to develop some programmes and religious services more suited to the student experience.
- I would like to offer students and staff the opportunity to attend religious pilgrimages and retreats throughout the year.

IN SUMMARY

The Chaplaincy Service fits in well with the suite of Student Services, and I would believe helps to promote the holistic support of the modern student.

CHAPLAIN FOR ALL

While contracted specifically for the Student population of the Institute, it is inevitable that the Chaplain will also has an important role in supporting staff within the College - both academic and support staff - on whom the pressures of work are ever increasing.

It can sometimes be a challenge to develop times where this can happen, however, I do regard it as

some of the 'Pastoral Work' of the Chaplain to ensure that it happens.

Staff (and their families) have the support of the EAP programme, however, I do think there is a virtue in the entire staff being gathered together and involved in events from time to time, creating a sense of community, which has been eroded somewhat with the ever increasing size of the Institute.

PART TIME CHAPLAINS

The Presbyterian Church are the only other denomination with a part-time presence on campus, in the person of Rev. Stanley Millen (pictured here at the IT Chaplains Conference in June, in Westport).

Stanley reported that 2012/13 was a busy year in connection with his activities in DkIT, which has been mainly that of running a lunchtime bookstall, and teaching The Scriptures to students (usually on a Friday lunchtime). Stanley has a particular connection with foreign

students, and is very aware of the difficulties that they face in coming to Ireland, Dundalk, and the Institute.

Stanley feels that the role of the Chaplain is to be a supportive one for these students, and he provides opportunities for activities (games, hill-walking, and other times of fellowship). It is interesting to note that two Chinese (former students) are getting married at the end of June, and have invited Stanley to be present.

OUTREACH

There are many 'Faith Groups' present in the Institute, and in the course of 2012, I attended some meetings of the Christian Union, took part in the promotion of a Christian Radio Station in the locality, met with representatives of the Islamic Society, and have created a 'space' on the Chaplaincy website for other Faith Groups to advertise and promote their meetings and gatherings.

Several people from the Islamic Religion, use the Quiet Room for their daily prayer activities.

I believe there is more potential for exploring the common elements of the 'Faith' experience, and I look forward to deepening and expanding that contact, communication and collaboration next year.

There are many students, of course, who do not have a religious affiliation, and I hope they see the Chaplain's role as being one of a general support to them as they navigate the third level educational experience. The Chaplaincy Office and services are open to everyone.

APPENDIX IV - STUDENT COUNSELLING SERVICE



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This year the Student Counselling service saw the greatest number of students since it was established in 2003. This increase is difficult to explain but there is no doubt that the recession is having an impact on students mental health and it could also be due to the increased accessibility of the service and that the stigma around attending counselling has reduced.

This has put a lot of pressure on the service and as there is no possibility of increasing resources we have had to review how the service operates.

Where possible in the report this year we have endeavoured to bench mark our service figures against national statistics (in pink) though these are the figures for 2010-11 as the more recent ones are not yet available. These were obtained from the Irish Association of University and College Counsellors which collates figures from the counselling services of 17 colleges nationally.

SERVICE TO STUDENTS

This year saw a number of advances in our service to students.

- Along with other service providers we took part in the 1st year Induction Programme providing a 40 minute information session to all 1st year groups. The feedback has been very positive about this week.

- We also provided a workshop as part of the Mature Students Induction.
- We brought the whole area of mental health to the fore with the Getting Past your Break-up Competition, where students were asked to develop a resource that we could use to help students going through this experience. We also brought the AWARE Life Skills programme on to the campus.
- We have further developed our referral pathways particularly using the problem specific

Service Statistics

The number of students accessing the counselling service increased significantly this year up 23% which put considerable strain on the service. The percentage of student body seen for counselling was 5.1% somewhat higher than the national average at 4.7.

	07-08	08-09	09-10	10-11	11-12	12-13	IAUCC
No of clients	124	144	211	224	197	257	
Avg. sessions per client	6.4	4.8	3.9	4.3	4.8	3.9	4.8
Gender	F 73%	F 59%	F 61%	F 62%	F 62%	F 66%	F 64.2%
	M 26%	M 39%	M 39%	M 38%	M 38%	M 34%	M 35.8%

The number of sessions per client has dropped further and is lower than the national average though the number of hours of counselling offered has increased further.

It is worth noting that in over 5.6% of clients presenting there was a safety concern and that the average CORE score which is indicative of levels of distress was well into the clinical range.

services in the Ladywell. They have recently employed a therapist who specialises in Eating Disorders and we have been able to refer on students. We have continued to refer to Rian service for victims of abuse though their service is under a lot of pressure as resources have been cut.

- Unfortunately progress with the My Mind Matters website has been non-existent this year. There has been some disagreement between the partners about the issue of security and future directions. At the time of writing this remains unresolved.

We continue to see large numbers of non-traditional students accessing the service and it is worth noting that we are above the national average in all areas. Nationally mature students tend to present disproportionately to student counselling and because of their complex nature of their problems they often need the support of the service over a longer time. So as the proportion of mature students in the institute increases that this will increase the demand on the Counselling Service.

Representation of Non-traditional groups

	DkIT 10/11	DkIT 11-12	DkIT 12-13	IAUCC
Mature	25.0%	35.0%	28.9%	23.3%
International	10%	7.8%	7.0%	8.4%
Disabled	4.2%	7.0%	6.3%	4.8%
Access	8.8%	9.2%	7.9%	N/A

Unfortunately the rate of non-attendance has crept back up to 13% from 8% last year, which is too high. The cancellation rate is up 1% to 11%. The SMS service has been down since mid-March so we were not able to send out reminders and we will do this service wide from September assuming the service is operational.

Presenting Issues:

These are the issues that bring the student to the counselling service. The initial reason cited may not be the real and troubling issue, so to get an accurate picture up to 3 issues are recorded per client. A break down of these is given below. The figures are ranked in order of most frequently presenting for Dkit with the comparable figure nationally in the next column.

	NUMBERS	IAUCC
Loss	18.4%	7.4%
Relationships	15.6%	12.1
Abuse	11.4%	2.5%
Anxiety	10.9%	19%
Academic	7.2%	18.1%
Addiction	7%	2.1%
Depression	6.7%	14.2%
Self-Harm	5.8%	2.5%
Self & Identity	5.8%	8.3%
Physical health	4.7%	2.1%
Eating Disorders	2.25	1.8%
Sexual Issues	1.9%	2.5%
Welfare & Employment	1.4%	2.1%
Other Mental Health	0.8%	1.8%

As in the last two years the most common presenting issue is loss. Looking at this area more closely, the issues break down evenly between bereavement and separation/divorce of a client's parents, followed by letting go after a relationship ends. Addiction has jumped from 4.2% to 7% this year and there is no doubt that there is a significant increase in the area of drug abuse and also students who have a parent who is alcoholic.

Rates for self-harm have increased from last year's 4.5% to 5.8% and our level is again more than twice the national average.

Plans for 2013-2014

- The service is going to try a number of new ways to deal with the level of service demand including piloting a drop in service from 2-3 each Wednesday afternoon.
- All clients will initially be assigned to the waiting list and assigned a rating as to whether their need is low, moderate or high, so that we make sure we prioritise those students who are most in need.
- Put up posters in waiting area about the importance of cancelling appointments if unable to attend

STUDENTS ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

This year we had a number of events that brought the whole area of mental health to the fore.

- In November we co-hosted "I see a Darkness" – a hard hitting presentation of the impact of suicide. This was very well attended and the feedback was generally very positive.
- We were involved with AWARE in offering their Living Life to the Full programme on campus. This was oversubscribed and was attended by both staff and students. The feedback from AWARE was that it was very well received. Participants particularly enjoyed the mindfulness session and recommended that we look into providing these regularly.
- As part of our commitment to the continued development of the Mental Health Guidelines we choose as our annual mental health theme "Letting go After a Relationship Ends". We ran a competition for students where they were asked to develop a video, app, story or some other resource, which we could use to educate

APPENDIX IV - STUDENT COUNSELLING SERVICE CONTINUED

students about the issue. This was very successful and we received about 40 entries. We awarded three prizes and we now have three different resources, developed by students for students, that we can use to address this issue with students

As part of the Fit4Life campaign we recommended a Book a Week from our bibliography list. This was very well received.

In response to unprecedented levels of stress at the Christmas exams we developed an email "Coping with Exams" which was sent to all students before the summer exams.

Plans for 2013-2014

- Our theme for next year is "Dealing with Conflict" and we hope to work with more departments about getting them to set assignments around this area so that the theme is further embedded with students.
- Roll out the new products developed by students in the competition this year.
- Offer mindfulness sessions on a regular basis.

FEEDBACK FROM SERVICE USERS

This was very disappointing this year. Despite sending the feedback questionnaire out at the end of first and second semester we only received a 15% feedback rate, our lowest so far.

This seems to be mainly due to problems with the student email system which has not been running properly since March. As a result a lot of students are not using their college email.

The feedback that we did receive is generally quite positive. Of interest is the impact of the induction talks with over a third of clients saying that was how they heard about the service closely followed by the website.

There are also suggestions that despite all our publicity students are still not aware of the service. Posters for Students Services containing contact details for all services have been put up in all departments this year but they are quite small. We have also developed in conjunction with the Communications Office a

promotional video which is now on all screens.

The feedback in the general Student Services Survey about the counselling service was generally quite positive also with almost 80% saying they were aware of the service and 59% saying they were satisfied or very satisfied with the service.

Plans for 2013-2014

- In order to have more counselling hours available without financial implications follow up intern placement.
- Ensure that a large pull up poster with our contact details is up in PJ Carroll's and the Nursing Building as the feedback is that they are less aware of our services.
- Further work on getting a better response on the feedback questionnaire, perhaps bringing to the attention of students during the counselling process.

EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SERVICE

The service has been using the CORE clinical outcome measure for the last number of years. This is an internationally recognised measure of client distress. The mean score for all clients at intake is a full 6 points above the clinical range cut off which means that clients presenting to the service are generally very distressed

Though the numbers completing the post counselling measure are small they indicate a mean decrease in distress of over 9 points bringing them well below the clinical cut-off which demonstrates the effectiveness of counselling.

The service is now benchmarking itself against national statistics from the IAUCC

The service is using Penelope Case Management Database which is now fully operational and allows us to schedule appointments, manage waiting lists and worker case load as well as providing relevant accurate reports. We are also now using it for case notes.

We have continued to develop links with other providers including Body whys, Rian Counselling Service and the

Ladywell Mental Health services. Our work with Bodywhys in hosting two support groups in DkIT was unsuccessful mainly because they did not have adequate resources. However they did some work on the campus on "Size Doesn't Matter" campaign.

We did a radio interview with LMFM on the work of the service.

We are represented on the board of the RCNE and are part of their Policy Review Committee

Plans for 2013-2014

- Continue to develop closer liaison with the Ladywell centre. As part of Vision for Change they will be employing more specialist services which could be a very important part of our referral pathway. Host a lunch for our colleagues from there so that we could see how we could liaise better.
- Explore whether they could give us some hours of Occupational Therapy for students with mental health issues.

ADVISING DKIT MANAGEMENT & STAFF

Sadly one of our main inputs this year in this area was in helping one of our schools in the aftermath of the tragic death of a member of staff. This involved helping them to manage supporting students and staff in the immediate aftermath and in arranging on-going support and debriefing through our EAP providers.

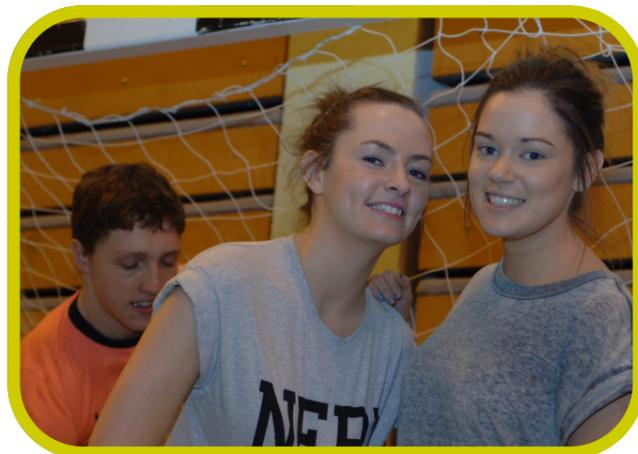
We worked very successfully with a couple of departments in using our mental health theme as a basis of

Continuous Assessment. As well as generating good quality entries it increased awareness among students around the whole mental health area and has helped us to develop a model that we can put out to all departments early in the academic year.

We were involved with other providers on a presentation to the AMPC on the selection process for non-traditional students.

Plans for 2012-2013

- Develop a "road show" on our mental health theme which we can take to the schools in the new academic year to encourage them to set CAs on the theme.



APPENDIX V - DISABILITY



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INTRODUCTION

The Disability & Student Quality Office provides a focal point and a designated person whose job it is to advocate on behalf of, and provide support to any student with a physical, sensory or learning difficulty or who has a medical or mental health condition that interferes with the learning process.

The numbers using the service continue to grow with 168 students registered in 2012-2013, representing an increase of 36% on the previous year. This is the highest recorded figure since the service began.

Breakdown by Disability (Last Year's figures in brackets)	
Specific Learning Difficulty	122 (87)
Physical Mobility	5 (4)
Blind/Visually Impaired	3 (4)
Deaf/Hard of Hearing	2 (5)
Mental Health Difficulties	12 (3)
Aspergers Syndrome	5 (4)
ADHD/ADD	3 (4)
DCD/Dyspraxia	3 (0)
Neurological Condition	2 (0)
Significant On-going Illness/Other	11 (12)
Total	168 (123)

Analysis of Disability Students	
Male	104
Female	64
Apprentices	18
Mature Students	31

PRESENTING ISSUES

- A significant number of students are presenting to the office who feel they may have a Specific Learning Difficulty but have had no previous formal assessment. In total 24 students who are registered with the Disability Office were diagnosed after starting in College. 11 of these were mature students. The time taken to organise an assessment and get the results sometimes means students have had to go through the first semester with no assistance. Administering the profiling test to all mature students in the coming year should prove very beneficial in this regard.
- Students frequently state that they cannot afford to pay for an up to date assessment. This is sometimes the reason why they leave it so late to seek assistance.
- 16 students presented to the Disability Office for the first time in the 2nd semester.
- Some academic staff continue to be very proactive in referring students when they consider further investigation is warranted. Seven students have registered with the Disability Office this year as a direct result of lecturer referrals.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of students

presenting with mental health issues this year. All of these students have been encouraged to engage with the Counselling service.

- A small number of students have expressed concerns that their lecturers are not always aware of their learning agreement.
- A significant number of students do not appear to be using their student email accounts. This has sometimes made it hard to contact a student to clarify exam arrangements or to get feedback. A number of students who have presented to the office have stated that their emails are not working.

BENCHMARKING/ NEW DEVELOPMENTS

- The introduction of two learning support workers offering one-to-one support has been very successful. In total 17 students availed of this service this year with very positive feedback.
- The Supplementary Access route once again resulted in a small number of offers being made on a reduced points basis.
- In April 2013 I wrote to all students who on their CAO application this year had ticked the Disability box and had chosen DkIT among their course

preferences. The purpose of the letter was to ensure that they were clear on DkIT's Supplementary Access Route. This mailing resulted in 20 students contacting the office with queries on their application.

- All students registered with the office during the first semester were emailed at the beginning of semester 2 to check that accommodations provided were satisfactory. Students were encouraged to contact the office if they had any issues they wished to discuss.
- Completed an online course with AHEAD (Association for Higher Education Access and Disability) in Inclusion and Needs Assessments for students.
- Attended newly formed Disability Officers meeting on 12th February. Have also applied to joined DAWN (Disability Advisors Working Network).
- As the number of students registering with the Disability Office continues to rise a consequence of this has been an increase the number of students requiring special exam accommodations. In the May 2013 exams we are introducing a "Smaller Centre" – which can accommodate up to a maximum of 10 students. We have noticed that a number of students who are not suited to the main exam centres do not necessarily need to be in a room on their own for exams. A number of students have been contacted and are happy to use this arrangement. Students who need separate invigilation will continue to be offered it. The "Smaller Centre" is standard in most other Institutes and Universities. From September 2013 the Smaller Centre option will be offered to all relevant incoming first years and separate rooms only offered where necessary.

OBJECTIVES/ PLANS FOR NEXT YEAR

- All mature students entering the college in September 2013 will be offered a Specific Learning Difficulty screening.
- Review of the method of informing lecturers of learning agreements. Perhaps emailing lecturers.
- Review of assistive technology use and relevant training to be carried out.
- Review of Exam accommodations offered.

FEEDBACK FROM SERVICE USERS

An email was sent to 141 students registered with the Disability Office asking them to complete an online survey on the services.

A total of 42 responses were received giving a response rate of 30%. This was up on last year (13%). A significant number of students do not appear to be accessing their emails as a result of password issues that surfaced during the Easter break. Feedback on the service was very positive with over 80% of those surveyed were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service provided.

All comments in relation to the service were extremely positive. Some students did express disappointment that all of their lecturers were not aware of their learning agreements. The service hope to communicate learning agreements to all academic staff for the next academic year.



APPENDIX VI - HEALTH UNIT



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OBJECTIVES OF THE SERVICE:

The Health Unit aims to provide a holistic approach to all areas of student health. To treat with respect and care all students who come to the Health Unit irrespective of age race or gender. To provide on-going health promotion on a one to one basis in the Health Unit with each individual student.

OBSERVATIONS DURING THE CURRENT YEAR:

During the last academic year we continued to provide care to a large number of students on a daily basis. Improvements to the service include:

Closer liaison between the International Office and the Health Unit has been of great benefit to the student body.

This current academic year we have once again observed a large number of students experiencing great financial hardship, so much so that in many instances they leave it to the last minute to seek medical assistance from the Health Unit. Invariably this is due to concerns they have over the cost of prescriptions charges. This has in many cases lead to what would have been a minor ailment developing into a more serious condition.

This year saw the introduction of two sexually transmitted infection clinics

at the Louth County Hospital. These are held on a Tuesday and Friday by Dr. Justin Lowe from St. James Hospital Dublin. All treatments are free of charge to students. Students are referred via the Health Unit. Hopefully this very comprehensive service will continue into the coming year, however this is funded by the HSE as a pilot programme.

A committee has been formed to provide a fully comprehensive first aid delivery throughout the campus with the addition of a defibrillator at each first aid station.

A designated person has been appointed to carry out monthly inspections on the first aid stations.

Once again we have observed an increase in the number of students attending the health unit with psychiatric/emotional health issues. In all cases the college doctor refers them to the counselling services and/or the Ladywell Psychiatric services at Louth county hospital.

Unfortunately we have observed a disproportionate number of international students presenting with the above. These students as well as experiencing emotional and psychological pain have the added disadvantage of communication difficulty due to language and cultural differences.

Due to difficulties observed over a

number of years with students presenting for their placement vaccines via the Placement Office, it has been decided that the students will obtain their vaccines from another source e.g. the Tropical Medicine Bureau System, which is available throughout the 26 counties or by their own GP.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMING ACADEMIC YEAR:

Further adjustments will be required to the new first aid stations as a number of issues concerning positioning and signage has arisen.

The International Office are redesigning the information pack which will be sent out to all prospective students with special regard to any current or previous psychological or health issues. A medical report will be required from their own Doctor outlining their medical history.

The Isolation/Rest room still requires upgrading. Hopefully the budget will allow its completion in the coming academic year. We are proposing that a built in locked storage area for old records be incorporated into this room as medical records must be kept for ten years. The entire Health Unit area is in need of painting due to the construction works carried last year 2011/2012.

For safety and security reasons the college doctor has recommended to the Health Unit and the Counselling Service that a 'panic button system' would be advisable as there has been a number of break-ins in Doctor Surgery's

in Dundalk. He feels that we are quite vulnerable at certain times of the day on the 1st floor of the Padraig Faulkner Building.

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ATTENDING THE HEALTH UNIT FROM 12TH SEPTEMBER TO 31ST MAY 2013

Date	Total
12th September to 30th September 2012	246
1st October 2012 to 31st October 2012	645
1st November 2012 to 30th November 2012	606
1st December 2012 to 15th December 2012	284
5th January 2013 to 30th January 2013	238
1st February 2013 to 28th February 2013	524
1st March 2013 to 31st March 2013	414
1st April 2013 to 30th April 2013	534
1st May 2013 to 31st May 2013	383
1st June 2013 to 17th June 2013	11

TOTAL NUMBER OF STUDENTS ATTENDING THE DOCTOR

Date	Total
12th September to 30th September 2012	187
1st October 2012 to 31st October 2012	492
1st November 2012 to 30th November 2012	467
1st December 2012 to 15th December 2012	252
5th January 2013 to 30th January 2013	205
1st February 2013 to 28th February 2013	464
1st March 2013 to 31st March 2013	367
1st April 2013 to 30th April 2013	776
1st May 2013 to 31st May 2013	327



APPENDIX VII - SPORTS AND SOCIETIES



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INTRODUCTION

With over 66 Sporting Clubs and Non-sporting Societies in Dundalk IT, including a number of new clubs/societies and events, it has been a very active year for all concerned.

As Sports & Societies continue to develop in the college it will be important to constantly formulate new ways to entgage students and provide them with the opportunity to feel like a valuable part of the student community. Sports & Societies provide students with the chance to meet new people, experience new settings and are a valuable asset in the fight against loneliness and isolation and departmental societies in particular provide an important link between students and academics. Staff support within clubs and societies can be especially beneficial in the sustainability and success of departmental societies in particular.

One of the many challenges which we constantly face is the lack of space and access to facilities, and with the outdoor pitches in constant demand, resulting in the pitches becoming overused, the Sports & Societies Office set up two new soccer pitches across the large GAA pitch, this relieved some of the pressure on the overall usage of the pitches during the academic year and also resulted in the soccer pitches being rotated on a regular basis.

Sport Clubs and societies are formed by Students motivated by a common interest and desire to participate in a specific sport activity, whether it is recreational, instructional, or competitive in nature. Involvement in

the Sport Clubs Program enhances development, leadership, and overall college experience for students by supplementing skills learned in the educational environment.

HIGHLIGHTS DURING 2012/2013

- In September 2012, the Sports & Societies Office held its Annual Sports & Societies Sign Up day on Wednesday 26th September, with more stands than ever before, students at DkIT were able to avail of all the active Sports Clubs and Societies that Dundalk IT have to offer, and with over 60 clubs/societies gaining more than 2500 members on the day, the event proved to be very successful.
- In November 2013, the DkIT Senior GAA Team, which is managed by the well renown retired Armagh footballer, Oisín McConville, were triumphant in securing a place in the quarter finals against University of Coleraine, unfortunately losing out by 2 points in the final few minutes against the Coleraine side in UUC.
- The annual GAA Louth All-Star presentations were again held in Dundalk IT and were co-hosted by the Sports & Societies Office. This was a great opportunity for young talented players to not only get recognised for their efforts but also to introduce them to staff and students at Dundalk IT.
- On 6th December, a plebiside was held in Dundalk IT to offer the students of Dundalk IT the opportunity to vote for an annual levy in order to secure and utilise the JJB Sports Facilities. The vote was passed at an overwhelming 67%.
- The Sports & Societies Office held its first ever Mini Sign-Up Day in the second semester, on Wednesday 30th January. The aim of the Mini- Sign Up Day was not only to target the new enrolling students of 2013 but also to remind the existing students of what Sports Clubs and Societies Dundalk IT have to offer. With more Sports clubs and societies than ever

DKIT'S SPORTS AND SOCIETIES ACTIVITIES

The 2012/2013 year saw 2455 members within Dundalk IT Sports Clubs and Societies.

On a national level it is estimated that on average students within colleges will join two or three sports clubs and/or societies, which would mean that in DkIT we have approximately 1,100 individual members, of which half of these would be active members.

Below is a list of some of the active sports clubs and societies during 2011/2012, with membership numbers:

Club/Society	2012	2013	Club/Society	2012	2013
Airsoft Club	92	142	Labour Society	0	21
Archery Club	47	110	LGBT	36	59
Badminton club	117	203	Laptop Music Society	62	37
Break-dancing Society	47	75	Ladies Gaelic Football Club	176	130
Camogie Club	61	47	Martial Arts Society	0	36
Christian Union Society	29	61	Mature Students Society	130	55
Cricket Club	27	59	Macre Na Feirme	81	52
DJ Society	129	47	Men's Soccer Club	290	179
Christian Union Society	29	61	Men's Rugby Club	80	103
Cricket Club	27	59	Men's Basketball Club	105	86
Equestrian Society	53	41	Men's Gaelic Football Club	142	86
Engineering Society	0	45	Nigerian Society	23	103
ESN Society	44	150	Ogra Sinn Fein	0	42
Fashion Society	32	42	Paint Balling Club	154	119
Fencing club	92	130	Photographic Society	72	37
Fianna Fail Society	0	53	Pool Club	122	145
Fine Gael Society	0	86	Robotic Society	0	86
Fit 4 Life	35	36	Salsa	62	40
Film Making/Media Society	206	106	Student Enterprise	132	156
Fresher's Gaelic Football Club	65	63	Surf Club	145	209
GAMMA Society	0	55	Womens Soccer Club	59	20
Go Karting Society			Table Tennis Club	77	84
Kickboxing Club	201	80	Yoga Club	57	40

HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUED:

before, it is important that clubs continue to promote their club/society to try to sustain and increase participation levels.

- This year's programme had events from Mock-tail sessions to Beat the Smoking Habit Bungee Run with the programme concluding on the third week with a Dodge-ball Competition which was open to both staff and students. The Sports & Societies Health Promotion Placement Students, Julie Walsh and Jane Duffy, were at the forefront in organising and promoting the 2012/2013 Fit 4 Life Programme.
- On Wednesday 13th March, the Sports & Societies Office in partnership with the Irish Sports Council and the DkIT Athletics Club hosted the first 3km walk/run in Dundalk IT in aid of The Irish Heart Foundation. This event was part of a nationwide scheme to encourage third level students to engage in physical activity. It was a mass participation event therefore everybody of all

APPENDIX VII - SPORTS AND SOCIETIES CONTINUED

levels of fitness where encouraged to participate.

- The GAA Club and Archery Club committee combined in the second semester in order to raise money for the Irish Heart Foundation, and setting up a new society in the process – “Pass it on”. The concept involved bringing as many of the sports clubs and societies together to utilise their skills and raise money for a chosen charity. In its initial year, the new society managed to raise over €1000 for the Irish Heart Foundation, and this was all through, bucket collections, gaming competitions, pool competitions and a cross border Archery Competition.
- Amy Fitzpatrick (Archery) secured both the Female Compound Student Indoor National League title and the Female Compound Indoor

Student Nationals Championship title in March 2013 beating archers from large and small colleges to win the two major competitions of the year for student archers.

- Dundalk IT attained the All-Ireland Intermediate Table Tennis Championship title for the second consecutive year, and with only a one year break, the Dundalk IT Table Tennis Club have attained this title six times over the last seven years. The team varies each year, with the majority of the clubs members being international students.
- Dundalk IT sports scholar, Brendan Forde, was selected to compete in the National Championships over the weekend of the 3rd March. Brendan has been regularly selected for the Junior Irish Squad and is one of

the top three Junior Archers in the country.

- On Wednesday 13th March, Dundalk IT hosted Molloy College Rugby Team in a bid to strengthen relationships between DkIT and Molloy College. DkIT’s Men’s rugby team came head to head with Molloy College Men’s Rugby team. However it was a well fought game with DkIT losing out, 26-42. DkIT hope that this relationship will continue and develop in the forthcoming months.
- Dundalk IT Student, Fearghal Cotter and Students Union Vice-president, Brendan Traynor were selected to represent Dundalk IT in the Irish Universities Annual Home Nations which was held in Glasgow this year, and were narrowly beaten to the title by the Northern Ireland Squad.

‘FIT4LIFE’ HEALTHY LIFESTYLE PROGRAMME

The Fit 4 Life programme is designed to target staff, students and also the local community on the following issues:

- Health Awareness,
- Alcohol Awareness,
- Sexual Health Awareness,
- Nutrition,
- Mental Health Awareness and Fitness & Physical Activity,

Fit4Life is usually administered over a 6 week period and more recently, 7 weeks. This year the committee opted to change the format of the programme and contain it to 3 weeks and hoped to make a larger impact on the staff and students within these three weeks.

The Fit 4 Life Programme is a chance for students, staff and the local community to reflect on their own health & well-being and to participate in various different events throughout the campaign.

All events were well attended by both staff and students alike. This year the programme did not have set themed weeks and tried to cover a number of topics within the one week.

The first week addressed many health issues, with a ‘Beat the Stig’ drink driving obstacle course outside the main canteen. The committee also organised a mocktail (alcohol free cocktails) session on one of the evenings to try to encourage students to drink less.

On the second week of the programme the “My Mind Matters” website was re-launched to promote positive

mental health. A Beat the Habit Bungee run was also organised outside the canteen to bring awareness to the dangers of smoking. On the final week of the programme a Dodge-ball tournament was organised where all students and staff were given the opportunity to enter this was aimed at promoting physical activity and fitness.

Due to the change in format the Fit 4 Life Programme has received a very positive reaction from the entire DkIT Community, and we hope **SPORTS & SOCIETIES SURVEY REPORT**

to progress the programme further in the next academic year.

A Students Services Survey was sent out to ‘All Students’ in Dundalk IT. Out of the 5,000 students who received the survey only 180 people responded which is a 4% respond rate. This may be due to the time of year the survey was sent out, during end of year exams and also all of the Sports & Societies activities had concluded for the academic year. The survey was

From the 180 people who responded 86.4% of those were aware of the Sports & Societies Office. 33% of the students who completed the survey have utilised the service.

From the survey it was found that over 40% of students who have used the service were very satisfied with the service.

40% of the students surveyed found that the communication and marketing of the service was very good, however a large percentage of the students have requested that there should be more of a presence in the PJ Carrolls building. 35% of the students surveyed feel that they could avail more of the Sports & Societies Service.

As a result of the Student Services Survey, the Sports & Societies Office have now planned to ensure more events and awareness will be focussed in the PJ Carrolls Building and that students throughout the campus will be aware of the Sports & Societies Office and the benefits of being involved in extracurricular activities.

SCHOLARSHIPS

Now in its third year, the Dundalk IT Sports Scholarship Programme was opened for all full-time students enrolled in Dundalk IT to apply.

The programme allows scholars to attain Sport Science Support, Financial Support, Access to Sports Facilities, Sports Equipment, Vouchers for Canteen and Printing and photocopying.

There were 18 students awarded with the scholarship over the 2012/2013 Academic Year:

- Glen Martin (Tae-Kwon-Do), Caolan Rafferty (Golf), Paul Cullen (Golf), Kate McKeever (Soccer), Karl Fleming (Basketball), Kate Flood (Soccer), Cathal Bellew (Gaelic Football), Scott Craven (Soccer), Brian Fitzpatrick (GAA Admin), Damien Whelan (GAA Admin), Caoimhe Mohan (Ladies Gaelic Football), Aaron Lawless (Basketball), Kate Byrne (Ladies Gaelic Football), Cliona Murphy (Camogie), Patrick O’Rourke (Gaelic Football), Brendan Forde (Archery), Andy McDonnell (Gaelic Football), and Shaun Buckley (Gaelic Football)

DKIT FITNESS SUITE

The DkIT Fitness Suite received new Pulse Strength equipment towards the end of last year, this encouraged students to sign up for membership for the fitness suite.

Although the student full-time membership is down 25%, the student semester membership rate is up 5%, and student monthly rate is up 48%, this could be due to the delay in student grants at

the start of the new term and also the economic downturn as students are now opting for the short term payments.

Overall, the membership has decreased by 4.5%, this has been the first year of decline since 2009.

Type of Membership	Members 2011/12	Members 2012/13
Student—Full Time	121	90
Staff—Full Year	11	9
Student Semester	161	169
Staff—Semester	7	3
Student-Monthly	23	34
Staff Monthly	1	-
Summer	-	3
Scholarships	18	18
Total Number of Memberships	342	326

APPENDIX VII - SPORTS AND SOCIETIES CONTINUED

DUNDALK IT SPORTS & SOCIETIES AWARDS 2013

The seventh Annual Sports & Societies awards evening was held on Thursday 21st March 2013 in the Crowne Plaza Hotel, Dundalk.

The event recognises various students, staff and/or individuals for their involvement and contribution to student based activities in DkIT, and was attended by approximately 200 people.

The main award winners were:

Society Award Winners 2013

- Best Media Production by a Society: HACT Society
- Best Event by a Society: International Welcome Days – ESN Society
- Best New or Improved Society: Irish Dancing Society
- Best Overall Society: Erasmus Student Network (ESN) Society
- Best Individual within a Society: Conor O'Callaghan (ESN)

Sports Awards Winners 2013

- Best Administrator within a Sports Club: Darren Weldon (Run DkIT Athletic Club)
- Best New or Improved Sports Club: Rugby Club
- Coach of the Year: Des Currihan (Volleyball Club)
- Sports Club of the Year: Volleyball Club
- Sportsperson of the year: Brendan Forde - Archery

On the night a number of Individual Achievement Awards were also presented, these awards are to recognise students who each contribute to their society/club or are consistent member within their club:

Anna Hynes (Table –Tennis), Kevin Hearty (Fresher's Gaelic Football), Damien Whelan (Senior Gaelic

Football), Alison McEvoy (Ladies Gaelic Football), Cian Lambe (Pool/Snooker), Jennifer Maguire (Hip-Hop), Barry Keogh (Rugby), Avril O'Driscoll (Surf), Darrell Elliott (Break-Dancing), Anna Ponikova (Volleyball), Sean Enright (Archery Club), Mathew Walsh (Gaming Society), Iarla O'Neill (Media Society), Ruth Mawhinney (Christian Union), Carol Huang (Irish Dancing Society), Jackson Santhosh (Cricket), Eden Wang (Badminton Club), Aaron Lawless (Basketball Club), Gabriel Malocca (Airsoft), Ceara Daly Carney (Fencing Club), Declan Mulhivill (American Football), Pdraig Branagan (GAMMA! Society), Darren Weldon (Athletics Club), Vojislav Spasojevic (DJ Society), David Deane (ESN), Bevan McQuillan (Golf Club), David McQuaid (HACT Society), Tim Qain (Photography Society), Anthony Cooney (Self Defence)

BICS AWARDS 2013

The Annual Board of Irish College Society (BICS) Awards was held in the Hudson Bay Hotel, Athlone over the 10th - 11th April 2013.

Dundalk IT students, Conor O'Callaghan, David Deane, Kelly-Anne Conneely, Andrew Harford and Patrycja Wroblewska from the DkIT Erasmus Student Network (ESN) Society picked up the award for Best Event with their ESN Launch Day at this year's Annual Awards Evening. This is a great achievement to be recognised on a National Scale and acknowledge the effort the students have invested in their societies this academic year.

Dundalk IT also were represented by the ESN Society in the Best New Society, placing second, and Best Individual Category, by Joint President of the Society, Conor O'Callaghan, also placing second, however the students have gained invaluable experience in the process



and are enthusiastic to continue to progress within their society and make a difference to college life.



APPENDIX VIII - STUDENT SERVICES ADMINISTRATION



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INTRODUCTION

Student Services Administration provides administrative support to all of the student service providers. Student Services Staff played a major role in 1st year registration and induction. Staff assisted students completing the HEA survey and provided an information stand at the registration venue.

An information desk was also operated in the foyer of the main building for the first two weeks of term for students. Student Services staff also assisted in the presentation of services to all incoming students.

STUDENT ASSISTANCE FUND

The Student Services Officer continued to administer the Student Assistance Fund. The Student Assistance Fund (SAF) at DkIT is funded by the Irish Government and part funded by the European Social Fund under the Human Capital Investment Operational Programme 2007-2013. The DkIT allocation for 2012/13 was €241,224.

The Fund provides limited support for full-time students who are in severe financial difficulties due to unforeseen circumstances, or who are disadvantaged and require additional financial support to enable them in so far as is possible to participate fully in their studies while at the Institute. The Fund was administered by the Student Services Office and the Student Assistance Fund committee, examining each application on a case by case basis. Students who applied to the fund were assessed on an individual and confidential basis. Students were required to produce financial information to support their application for assistance.

SUSI (Student Universal Support Ireland) the new single grant awarding authority was created in 2012 to handle all new grant applications for 2012/13. As a result of difficulties with the SUSI grant process and the current economic climate the Student Services Office experienced an increase in demand for student assistance which resulted in a higher allocation of funds in 2012/13. The HEA provided a supplementary allocation of funds of €45,652 as a response to support students during this period. In total, 292 student applications were received to the Student Services office of which 255 students were awarded funding.

The following table provides information on the types and amount of assistance provided to students:

Student Assistance Fund	
Category of Assistance	Total Amount
Books	308
Books & Childcare & Living Expenses	1400
Books & Living Expenses	10130
Childcare	5860
Childcare & Living Expenses	8000
Class Materials	4950.82
Class Materials & Living Expenses	9950
Class Materials & PC	500
Living Expenses	229890
Medical Expenses	1000
TOTAL	271,988.82

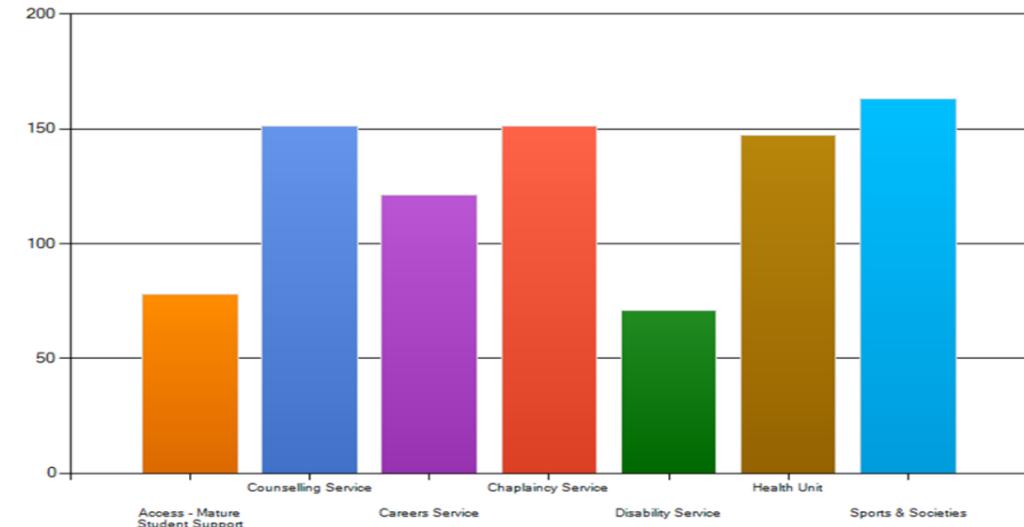
APPENDIX IX - STUDENT SERVICES SURVEY

STUDENT SERVICES SURVEY

Total Responses 189

Student Services conducted an on-line survey of students in relation to their knowledge, usage and satisfaction of the services. The response rate was poor which may be attributed to the downtime of Student Emails prior to the end of term. The following are some findings from the survey:

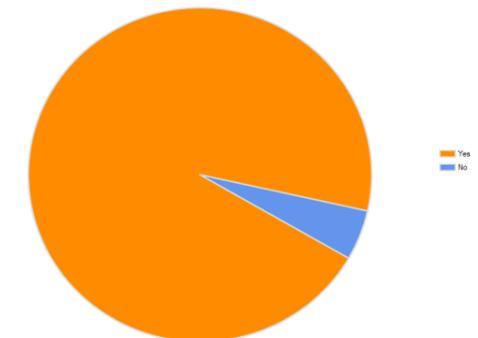
Which of the following Student Services Supports are you aware of?



2. Which of the Support Services have you used this year?

- Access/Mature Student Support - 11.5%
- Counselling Service - 18.9%
- Careers Service - 29.7%
- Chaplaincy Service - 9.5%
- Disability Service - 6.8%
- Health Unit - 52%
- Sports & Societies - 32.4%

Would you recommend the service to other students?



3. How satisfied are you with the service you received?

Service	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Access/Mature student support	34.8%	13.0%	43.5%	0.0%	8.7%
Counselling service	45.5%	14.5%	32.7%	3.6%	3.6%
Careers Service	39.1%	20.3%	26.6%	6.3%	7.8%
Chaplaincy Service	40.0%	20.0%	40.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Disability Service	26.5%	8.8%	61.8%	2.9%	0.0%
Health Unit	46.9%	30.6%	18.4%	3.1%	1.0%
Sports & Societies	39.4%	33.3%	22.7%	3.0%	1.5%

APPENDIX IX - STUDENT SERVICES SURVEY

5. Please give your views on the Student Services Office.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Poor
Location	27.3%	52.7%	13.9%	6.1%
Welcoming & Assistive	32.5%	52.5%	13.1%	1.9%
Knowledge of Staff	32.7%	51.9%	12.2%	3.2%
Ease of access to office area	27.0%	52.2%	18.9%	1.9%
Helpfulness of verbal communication	33.1%	55.4%	8.9%	2.5%
Helpfulness of written communication	32.0%	51.3%	13.3%	3.3%
Issues resolved to your satisfaction	35.3%	48.1%	12.8%	3.8%
Confidentiality of information shared	49.7%	41.8%	7.8%	0.7%

6. How would you rate the communication/marketing of each of the services?"

	Very Good	Good	Average	Poor
Access-Mature Student support	12.7%	31.4%	30.5%	25.4%
Counselling Service	26.0%	37.4%	27.6%	8.9%
Careers Service	17.9%	39.0%	30.9%	12.2%
Chaplaincy Service	36.4%	41.4%	16.1%	5.1%
Disability Service	9.0%	35.1%	29.7%	26.1%
Health Unit	24.4%	40.7%	23.0%	11.9%
Sports & Societies	43.2%	38.6%	15.2%	3.0%

7. In your opinion how can the service providers listed above increase their presence for students in the Institute?

Respondents looked for more advertisements for services around campus, email, noticeboards etc. It was suggested that more targeted advertising of the services would be better, series updating students with up to date information on what activities they had available. Services should continue to provide class visits to 1st year students at the start of term advising of the services available to them. It was also recommended that services advertise in the student apartments. Email could also be used more.

8.

