

## Policy on Transfer and Progression

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## Section 1: Introduction

### 1.1 Scope of Transfer and Progression Policy

These regulations apply with effect from September 2017 to all undergraduate full-time / part-time programmes of study and taught / research postgraduate programmes of study, offered by Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT).

In implementing the National Framework of Qualifications, DkIT assist learners in making informed decisions about programme choices and facilitate the identification of access, transfer and progression opportunities. Policies and procedures linked to the implementation of the Framework play an important role in facilitating the mobility of learners within and across the Higher Education System.

DkIT have adopted the NQAI Policy on Progression (2003) which was restated by QQI in 2015. Accordingly DkIT are required to develop a statement of arrangements available in respect of each of their programmes for the recognition of prior learning, for entry, for credit towards an award and for access to a full award. DkIT must also identify transfer and progression routes into and onwards from all programmes leading to awards in the Framework and should make the necessary adaptations to programmes to facilitate participants in making successful transitions.

DkIT collaborates with other institutions and partners (both national and international) to ensure coherent recognition of awards and provision of clear pathways to learners to recognise previous learning.

The Office of the Registrar has responsibility for overseeing the transfer and progression of all students at DkIT. All undergraduate student admissions are subject to the policies and procedures of the DkIT Admissions Policy. <https://www.dkit.ie/academic-administration/policies-procedures>

### 1.2 Guiding Principles:

This Transfer and Progression policy of Dundalk Institute of Technology is approved by Academic Council and administered by the Office of the Registrar. This policy applies to all full-time and part-time undergraduate and taught /research post-graduate programmes:

- DkIT is committed to equality of opportunity in education.
- Entry and progression requirements for programmes are approved as part of programme development or review and are validated by the Institute's Academic Council.
- The Institute reserves the right to refuse admission to any applicant who fails to meet the entry or progression criteria.
- The Institute reserves the right to cancel or modify its programmes at any time.
- To become a student of DkIT, individuals must be fully registered on a programme. Applicants are not considered to be a student on the basis of an offer and/or acceptance of an offer.
- All students are subject to the provisions of the Child Protection Policy and DkIT reserves the right to request any student to complete the Garda Vetting Procedures.

## Section 2: Transfer

### 2.1 Internal Transfer

#### 2.1.1 Transfer Procedure for First Year Students

A successful applicant to a first year full-time programme of study at DkIT may transfer to another first year programme of study within the Institute. To be eligible for a transfer, the applicant must satisfy the following criteria:

- i. Only CAO applicants that are already registered full-time in the first year of a programme are eligible to apply for a transfer;
- ii. Students must have attained the cut-off points and minimum requirements for the programme they wish to transfer to. Mature candidates who do not fulfil the standard entry requirements will be assessed on a case by case basis.
- iii. There must be available places on the programme, i.e. there must be no qualified applicants on the CAO waiting list for the programme. Some programmes have a strictly limited number of places and transfers will not be considered to these programmes if they are full.

Students wishing to transfer between programmes at the beginning of semester one should first check with the CAO to ascertain whether available places are available for the programme into which they wish to transfer. In such cases, applications may only be made through the CAO at [www.cao.ie](http://www.cao.ie).

Internal transfers are available to the following categories of Students on successful completion of an *Application for an Internal Transfer to a First Year Programme*:

- Newly registered 1<sup>st</sup> year students seeking transfer between programmes after close of offers of available places through the CAO.
- Registered students who have completed the first semester of a programme and who are seeking transfer to another programme in the School in which they are originally registered.

Students seeking transfer onto certain programmes will be required to satisfy Garda vetting requirements as well as satisfying the entry requirements indicated above. The Institute accepts no responsibility for the grant (SUSI) or visa implications (international students) that arise as a consequence of a successful transfer. Successful applications for transfer are final and cannot be reversed. The application form is available at:

<https://www.dkit.ie/academic-administration/applications/application-internal-transfer-1st-year-programme>

#### 2.1.2. Transfers at Stages other than First Year

Arrangements for internal transfers at other programme stages may occur where programme content is sufficiently similar or where programmes are designed as a suite to facilitate transfers. Such transfers can include a student transfer to a programme of lower NFQ level, where such a transfer is agreed between the Head of Department and student. All transfers are subject to the availability of places and must be approved by the relevant Head of Department.

Undergraduates in DkIT who are registered on level 6 or level 7 programmes may be eligible to apply for advanced entry to cognate *ab-intio* level 7 or level 8 programmes. Such transfer students must meet specific entry requirements specified at validation. In general, students progressing from a level 6 to level 7 or from a level 7 to a level 8 cognate programme will require a credit weighted average of at least 50% in the stage prior to the transfer, unless otherwise specified during programme validation or approved by Academic Council. The specific requirements for transfer must be approved during programme validation.

Students transferring to programmes at a different level and the same stage (i.e. where such transfers require repeating a stage), must be in a position to obtain all of the required credits for the stage (i.e. all credits must be attributable to new learning).

## 2.2 Advanced Entry to DkIT Programmes:

Applications from students wishing to transfer to DkIT from other Higher or Further Education providers with stage or award qualifications are welcome. Applicants must have passed the stage examinations and have all the required credits and have achieved the learning outcomes for transfer or progression to the DkIT programme.

The Institute considers applicants who have completed Higher Certificate (Level 6) or Ordinary Degree (Level 7) programmes in other Higher Education Institutions and who wish to pursue relevant add-on Ordinary Degree (Level 7) or Honours Degree (Level 8) programmes in DkIT. The relevant application form is available at:

<http://www.dkit.ie/academic-administration/applications/add-ordinary-degree-honours-degree-courses>.

Offers of places will be subject to availability and eligible DkIT graduates from programmes with direct progression routes into the programme of interest will be given priority.

The normal entry requirement for admission to an add-on ordinary degree is a credit-weighted average mark of at least 40% in a cognate level 6 award, unless otherwise specified during programme validation. Non-EU candidates whose first language is not English, must have a score of IELTS 5.5 or equivalent.

The normal entry requirement for admission to an add-on honours degree is a credit-weighted average mark of at least 50% in a cognate level 7 award, unless otherwise specified during programme validation. Non-EU candidates whose first language is not English, must have a score of IELTS 6.0 or equivalent. Students who have already completed undergraduate programmes or stages through English will be exempt from this requirement.

The Institute also considers applicants who have completed stage(s) on cognate Higher Certificate (Level 6) Ordinary Degree (Level 7) or Honours Degree (Level 8) programmes in DkIT or other Higher Education Institutions and who wish to transfer into post-first-year stages of Higher Certificate, Ordinary Degree or Honours Degree programmes in DkIT. The relevant application form is available at:

<https://www.dkit.ie/academic-administration/applications/advanced-entry-beyond-year-1>

Relevant application forms for part-time students are normally available from the Life Long Learning Office (<https://ww3.dkit.ie/parttime-courses.html>).

Admission to all programmes will be subject to the approval of the relevant Head of Department, in consultation with members of the relevant Programme Board.

Applicants who hold other qualifications and/or experience, may be considered for advanced entry to a specific undergraduate programme in accordance with the Institute's Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Policy.

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/recognition-prior-learning-rpl-policy-practice>

In the case of QQI-FET graduates, specific articulation arrangements specified during validation, may be agreed for advanced entry to programmes. Most of these are articulated through the North East Further & Higher Education Alliance (NEFHEA) which is a major regional higher and further education initiative comprising higher and further education institutions in the North East. Its members include Dundalk Institute of Technology, Drogheda Institute of Further Education, Monaghan Institute, Cavan Institute, O'Fiaich College, Dunboyne College of Further Education and Beaufort College.

<https://www.dkit.ie/north-east-further-higher-education-alliance-nefhea>

Arrangements with other QQI-FET providers also exist. In general these progression arrangements enable students from further education institutes who have successfully completed their programmes to join the second year of specific DkIT programmes. Admission arrangements through NEFHEA which are currently in place can be viewed at:

<https://www.dkit.ie/north-east-further-higher-education-alliance-nefhea/getting-dkit-through-nefhea-alliance>

Where there are insufficient places on a programme for all qualified external applicants, the Head of Department in consultation with the Programme Board, may decide to select advanced entry students on the basis of interviews and/or other assessments. The Department or School Office communicates directly with the candidates in relation to the practical arrangements for the interviews and any additional assessment requirements (e.g. auditions, submission of portfolios, etc.). The Head of Department informs the Admissions Office (or Life Long Learning Office) about the result of the interview process and the level and quantity of credit waivers to be applied.

## **Section 3: Progression**

### **3.1. Requirements for Progression of Undergraduate Students within Programmes**

In accordance with QQI Assessment and Standards (2013), where programmes are organised in stages and for learners to progress to the next stage of their programme, they are required to demonstrate the achievement of minimum intended learning outcomes of preceding stages. Subject to programme-specific special conditions and prerequisites, there are 3 exceptions to the general requirement of passing all the required modules:

1. Pass by compensation
2. Exemption from module(s), e.g. due to RPL
3. Eligibility to progress carrying failed modules to be passed during the subsequent stage

The requirements for progression of undergraduate students from one stage to the subsequent stage in DkIT are specified in Section B of DkIT Marks and Standards.

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/marks-standards>

The minimum mark required for a pass in any module is 40% of the maximum marks available for that Module. Achievement of this mark results in the awarding of the module credits in full. In any case where the Approved Programme Schedule provides for a minimum pass mark other than 40%, the minimum pass mark must be indicated clearly on the Broadsheet of Results.

Special regulations may also exist which require students to achieve a minimum standard in a specific element (or elements) of an module. Students who do not achieve the requirements for progression in such cases have an academic standing of FE (Failed Element) in the relevant module(s). Such special regulations are subject to the approval of DkIT Academic Council.

A candidate who fails to attain the required pass standard in one or more modules in an examination may, at the discretion of the Board of Examiners, pass the module by compensation. Performance at the first attempt in modules in a given stage (of at least 30 credits) may be used to compensate in the same stage, provided no module in the stage has been failed outright. A pass earned in this way is referred to as a pass by compensation and is credit bearing. The conditions for a pass by compensation are outlined in part B5.2 of DkIT Marks and Standards.

Before progressing to the next stage, learners are required to pass all modules identified as essential prerequisites for progression, as specified in the approved programme schedule. Learners must also have accumulated the specified minimum credits as indicated on the programme schedule for that stage and must have completed all the requirements of the previous stage. In the absence of an explicit statement on the approved programme schedule, in the case of full-time programmes, the candidate must achieve a minimum of 55 credits to progress. The academic standing of candidates who achieve 55 credits but not 60 credits and who are deemed eligible to progress to the next stage is indicated on the broadsheet as AP (Approved to Progress).

Candidates may not carry modules which have been identified as prerequisites on the approved programme schedule, to the next stage.

Where, in exceptional circumstances, it is proposed to admit a candidate to a second or subsequent stage, who has not fulfilled the above requirements, prior approval of Academic Council must be obtained. The academic standing of candidates who are deemed eligible to progress in such exceptional circumstances is indicated on the broadsheet as EP (Exceptional Progression).

The performance in a second or subsequent examination, by a candidate who has been admitted under either of the above procedures, will not be considered unless the candidate has completed the requirements of the previous examination stage. Students who do not complete the requirements of the previous stage and are not eligible to progress (or be conferred with an award if in an award stage) will have an academic standing of CD (Credit Deficit) and must achieve the credits of the previous stage before being allowed to progress to the subsequent stage (or obtain an award).

Certain programmes may have specific progression policies in place, for example specific requirements exist for progression of students within Nursing and Midwifery programmes. Such exceptional conditions must be approved by DkIT Academic Council.

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/progression-policy-undergraduate-student-nursesmidwives>

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/progression-policy-higher-diploma-midwifery-students>

### **3.2. Progression to Add-On Programmes within DkIT**

Undergraduates in DkIT who complete Level 6 or Level 7 programmes may be eligible to apply for cognate add-on programmes within DkIT. The Institute considers applicants who have completed Higher Certificate (Level 6)/Ordinary Degree (Level 7) programmes who wish to pursue relevant add-on Ordinary Degree (Level 7) or Honours Degree (Level 8) programmes.

The normal entry requirement for admission to an add-on ordinary degree is a credit-weighted average mark of at least 40% in a cognate level 6 award, unless otherwise specified during programme validation.

The normal entry requirement for admission to an add-on honours degree is a credit-weighted average mark of at least 50% in a cognate level 7 award, unless otherwise specified during programme validation or explicitly approved by Academic Council.

Where insufficient places are available to admit all qualified applicants to add-on Honours Degree programme, eligible students will be ranked in the following order:

1. Students who achieved eligibility at the first sitting are ranked in order of credit-weighted average mark. Candidates who were offered a place in a previous academic year but unable to accept it due to extenuating circumstances and were consequently deferred are ranked with these students.
2. Students from previous years who achieved eligibility at their first sitting are ranked in order of credit-weighted average mark.
3. Students who achieved eligibility at the repeat sitting are ranked in order of credit-weighted average mark. Students who were deferred at the first sitting will be ranked with students in 1. above on the basis of their achievement at the repeat sitting.
4. Students from previous years who achieved eligibility at the repeat sitting are ranked in order of credit-weighted average mark. Students who were deferred at the first sitting are ranked with students in 1. above on the basis of their achievement at the repeat sitting.
5. Graduates who do not achieve eligibility but pass overall and have obtained at least one year's relevant work experience.

Where insufficient places are available to admit all qualified applicants to add-on Ordinary Degree programme, eligible students will be ranked as follows:

1. Students who achieved a Merit or Distinction Grade at the first sitting are ranked in order of credit-weighted average mark. Candidates who were offered a place in a previous academic year but unable to accept it due to extenuating circumstances and were consequently deferred are ranked with these students.

2. Students from previous years who achieved a Merit or Distinction Grade at their first sitting are ranked in order of credit-weighted average mark.
3. Students who achieved  $\geq 50\%$  at the repeat sitting are ranked in order of credit-weighted average mark. Students who were deferred at the first sitting are ranked with students in 1. above on the basis of their achievement at the repeat sitting.
4. Students from previous years who achieved  $\geq 50\%$  at the repeat sitting are ranked in order of credit-weighted average mark. Students who were deferred at the first sitting are ranked with students in 1. above on the basis of their achievement at the repeat sitting.
5. Students who achieved 40-50% at the first sitting, are ranked in order of credit-weighted average mark.
6. Students from previous years who achieved 40-50% at the first sitting, are ranked in order of credit-weighted average mark.

### 3.3. International Foundation Programme:

Graduates of the level 6 Special Purpose Awards in the International Foundation Programme may progress to stage 1 of some level 7 and level 8 programmes throughout DkIT, subject to programme entry requirements and level of English language achievement.

### 3.4 Progression to a Programme at the Same NFQ Level

Subject to particular conditions, a graduate holding a DkIT award may present for and, if successful, be awarded a further Major Award at the same level within the same generic subject area. The graduate must attain new learning outcomes in the second or subsequent award. If the area of specialisation of the post-award achievement is not substantially different, and/or if credit is insufficient for granting a new Major Award, the applicant may be granted a Minor or Special Purpose Award, if an appropriate award has been accredited. The following table gives the minimum volume of newly-certified learning required of a candidate who is seeking to qualify for an additional Major Award *at the same level* within the same generic area of study. Repeating learning that is substantially equivalent to previously certified learning is not included in the calculation of post-award credit.

Minimum volume of newly certified learning required:

Award Currently Held	Additional Award Sought	Post-Award Credit for Newly Certified Learning
Higher Certificate	Higher Certificate	A minimum of 60 credits at level 6
Ordinary Bachelor Degree	Ordinary Bachelor Degree	A minimum of 60 credits at level 7
Honours Bachelor Degree	Honours Bachelor Degree	A minimum of 120 credits at least 60 of which are at level 8
Master's Degree	Master's Degree	A complete programme

### 3.5. Progression to Taught Postgraduate Programmes

Admission to taught Postgraduate programmes is administered by the Institute's Admissions Office, in conjunction with the academic Schools. Candidates are required to apply directly to DkIT.

In line with the requirements for progression identified in the National Framework of Qualifications, the minimum entry standard for applicants to DkIT-accredited Level 9 taught programmes is an honours degree (level 8) qualification (at minimum 2<sup>nd</sup> class honours, grade 2 level) in a related discipline (except in some designated cases). Where there are restrictions on the number of available places a selection process will apply. Places will be allocated on a competitive basis.

The Institute will also consider applications in respect of individual candidates who meet one of the following alternative entry qualifications, subject to validation or the approval of Academic Council:

- Hold such other qualifications as may be acceptable to the Programme Board for the purposes of proceeding to a specific Master Degree or
- Have achieved outstanding merit in a specialist artistic field as evidenced by an accumulated body of published/performed work, a scholarly approach to their subject area, and significant national and/or international reputation and this standard to be assessed by the Programme Board.

Candidates holding foreign academic qualifications must submit certified copies of all relevant qualifications held to date at the time of application and demonstrate a minimum proficiency in English at 6.5 on the IELTS scale or equivalent.

### 3.6. Admission and Progression on Research Postgraduate Programmes

The institute provides some opportunities for progression to Postgraduate programmes of study at levels 9 and 10 in the areas of Science, Engineering, Humanities, Health Studies, Business, Business, Creative Arts, Computing and Music. Such opportunities are advertised externally as they become available and are awarded on a competitive basis. Successful candidates are registered in the DkIT/DCU Graduate School and upon completion of their programme of study, will receive a DCU award at level 9 or 10.

Applications will be considered from candidates who:

- hold an NQAI Level 8 award or equivalent (at minimum Second Class Honours, Grade 2 level) in an area of study cognate to the proposed study area **or**
- hold such other qualifications as may be acceptable to the Programme Board for the purposes of proceeding to a specific Master Degree (e.g. professional qualification) **or**
- have achieved outstanding merit in a specialist artistic field as evidenced by an accumulated body of published/performed work, a scholarly approach to their subject area, and significant national and/or international reputation and this standard to be assessed by the Programme Board in accordance with the Institute's RPL Policy.

Candidates are initially entered on the Research Master’s register. Candidates who already have a level 9 qualification in an appropriate discipline with first or second class honours, and candidates with a primary degree in an appropriate discipline with first or second class honours (grade 1) may apply to be considered for entry to the PhD-track register with a view to proceeding towards a PhD (where the scope and funding of the research project is at doctoral level).

Candidates may register for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) once a satisfactorily a period of enrolment at Master’s or PhD-track level is completed. Such candidates must undergo a Transfer Process which is detailed in the DkIT Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research. In exceptional cases candidates with a Master’s degree by research in a cognate area may apply for direct entry to the PhD register.

Candidates holding foreign academic qualifications must submit certified copies of all relevant qualifications held to date at the time of application and demonstrate a minimum proficiency in English at 6.5 on the IELTS scale or equivalent (within past 12 months), in order to ensure that there is no language barrier between research learner and supervisor, which might hinder the research activity at the onset and that the learner is capable of providing written work, as and when required. International candidates whose primary degree was through English are not subject to this English Language requirement.

All admissions to the postgraduate research register and successful PhD transfers are subject to the approval of the DkIT Graduate Research Studies Board and the DCU Graduate Research Studies Board.

Continued registration for postgraduate research programme is dependent on the submission of a satisfactory annual progress report. Evaluation of annual progress reports is made by the relevant School Graduate Research Programme Board who are required to make recommendations to the Registrar’s Office regarding the continued registration of the student.

Admission and Progression of research postgraduate students is subject to the conditions of the DkIT Academic Regulations for Postgraduate Degrees by Research.

<https://www.dkit.ie/registrars-office/academic-policies/academic-regulations-postgraduate-students-registered-dcu-awards>

### 3.7. Progression from Part-Time Programmes in DkIT

Requirements for progression from part-time major awards to cognate full-time major awards in DkIT are identical to those between equivalent full-time programmes. Opportunities for progression from non-major awards may be available, subject to validation, as follows:

Non-major Award Type	Progression and Transfer
Minor Award	Transfer to programmes leading to attainment of a part of one or more major awards. Transfer to programmes leading to special purpose awards. Exemptions on major awards.
Supplemental Award	Progression to programmes leading to major awards at the next level

	<p>in a related field of learning. Exemptions on major awards.</p>
Special Purpose Award	<p>Transfer to programmes leading to major or minor awards at the same level or above. Transfer to programmes leading to supplemental awards at the same level. Transfer/Progression to programmes leading to related special purpose awards at the same level or above. Exemptions on major awards.</p>