Dundalk Institute of Technology

The DkIT Event Planner's Handbook

Your guide to perfect planning

DUNDALK
INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
INSTITIÚID TEICNEOLAÍOCHTA
DHÚN DEALGAN

Introduction

Welcome to DkIT's event guide handbook. This guide will help you plan a great on-campus event. Planning an event in DkIT requires careful attention to detail, a clear understanding of the event's goals, and collaboration with various stakeholders, both on and off campus.

As the event organiser, your role is to make sure the event runs smoothly, that includes choosing the right audience, sorting the logistics, and shaping the content, speakers, and activities to suit your goals. This Handbook will guide you towards the supports and assistance available in achieving this.

The Marketing and Communications team are here to support the promotion of your event as part of our broader effort to enhance DkIT's public profile. While we are not involved in event management or audience coordination, our role is to spotlight how the event aligns with key institutional themes such as leadership, innovation, and excellence. Our goal is to ensure the event reflects positively on DkIT and demonstrates our commitment to relevant and impactful conversations.

Key Responsibilities

Responsibilities of the Event Organiser:

- Define the event's objective i.e. academic, social, or cultural.

- Tailor content, speakers, and activities to the event's purpose.

- Identify the target audience i.e. students, faculty, or external guests.

- Develop a strategy for internal and external promotion. (Social Media, Radio, Print Advertising)

Manage Logistics:

- **Scheduling & Programme:** Create a detailed agenda with time slots, breaks, and networking opportunities.

- **Technical Needs:** Coordinate with IT for necessary equipment (audio-visual, microphones, projectors, live streaming).

- **Signage & Directions:** Provide clear signage, maps, and event staff to guide attendees.

- Promote: DkIT MazeMap

Responsibilities of the Marketing & Communications Department:

- Use the event to raise the Institution's profile.

- Showcase the Institution as influential, and actively connected to current issues and our community both internally and externally.

- Highlight themes like leadership, innovation, and excellence to reinforce what the Institution is all about.

- Support promotion of the event, (Note: sourcing attendees is the organiser's responsibility).

- Make sure the event reflects the Institution's values and supports our bigger-picture goals.

- Help shape clear, relevant messaging that connects the event to what's happening in the world, industry trends, and community needs.

- Use tools like social media, press releases, and marketing materials to boost visibility and increase positive coverage.

The Pre Planning

Getting Ready

The pre-planning stage is the foundation for a successful event. It sets the tone for everything that follows. During this phase, you would need to answer these important questions: **The 5 Ws.**

Who?

Who is your target market for the event (staff/students/guests) and how are you going to encourage them to attend? Who else would you like in the room? (President, Registrar/ Heads of School/Heads of Department)

Booking requests from students cannot be processed without authorisation of a lecturer or Head of Department.

Why?

Why are you hosting this event?
Why should staff/students attend this event?

What?

What is the topic or theme of the event? What makes this event stand out? What message do we want to convey to staff/students?

The Pre Planning

When?

The date and time of the event is extremely important. Does it suit your target audience? Is there something else happening on the campus that day/time? You need to consider other factors like buildings being open and accessible, weather, and light conditions on campus.

Consider the campus calendar. Avoid scheduling conflicts with major campus events, such as holidays, graduation, or exam periods. Choose a time that accommodates the majority of your audience.

Where?

As the event organiser, it is up to you to choose the venue.

Think about venue type. Depending on the event size and purpose, decide whether the venue should be a lecture hall, classroom, outdoor space, or the canteen.

Some spaces in DkIT are not accessible to everyone. Ensure the venue is accessible to all students, including those with disabilities.

As a student or staff member you can request to book a room for your event on Roombookings@dkit.ie. This is an booking service for booking classrooms, lecture theatre, labs etc. Bookings can only be made where a teaching space is available. Class timetables take priority.

The Planning

Setting the stage

Time now to compile your event checklist, an example of which can be found at the end of this booklet. List all the elements that you need to cover, consider the timeline to do them in, as well as who is responsible for ensuring they are done.

Budget

As the event organiser, it is your responsibility to secure a budget. You may need to liaise with your Schools office to raise the PO's with Finance Department.

Your budget should include, guests, catering, extra technology, extra props (special chairs/podium), entertainment, miscellaneous costs, guest gifts etc. Keep contingency funds for unexpected expenses. Marketing & Communications Dept will cover photography, potential press release and videography if warranted.

Seek Funding or Sponsorships. Many events may benefit from external sponsors or campus department contributions. Explore opportunities for funding through partnerships, student union, or local businesses.

The Planning

Risk assesment

Safety and Security on campus has to be given due consideration by the event organiser. If the event is expected to attract a large crowd, plan for crowd control, emergency exits, and first aid stations.

If looking for advice on how to plan for safety, you can contact the Health & Safety Officer.

Emergency Protocols.
Ensure that all staff members assisting at the event know the campus emergency procedures, including evacuation routes, fire safety, and first-aid contacts.

If you are hosting your event on the campus you need to fill in an risk assessment and forward to the Health and Safety Officer. Contact information can be found Here.

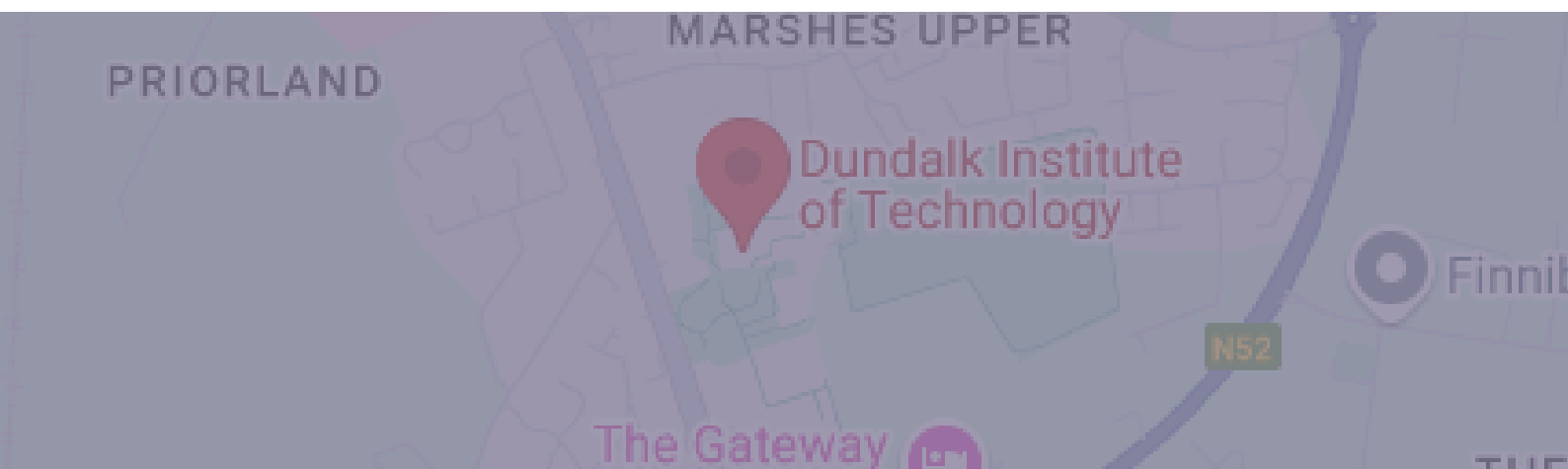Risk assessment forms: Here

Travelling to DkIT

How your attendees or guests are getting to DkIT needs to be considered. Are they using public transport or driving. Below is the link you can share with them about getting to DkIT.

Getting to DkIT

The Planning

Catering at DkIT

If you plan on providing food or light refreshments for your guests at your event you need to make preparations well in advance. There has to be at least 48hrs notice to place a catering order (not including weekends).

Be mindful that there is a 48hr cancellation period for all orders. Here is the link that should be filled and sent to catering@dkit.ie at least two days in advance before your event. Give the following some consideration. Be mindful of attendees dietary restrictions (vegan, gluten- free e.t.c.) and ensure all allergies are listed at the time of order.

Parking at DkIT

As DkIT is a commuter campus, parking is very limited. It is essential that you share parking information with your guests before they arrive on campus, to ensure their experience is as enjoyable as possible. Below is the information you will need on how to get parking on campus, including the rates.

Parking

An alternative option is parking at DkIT Sport and availing of the free shuttle bus.The link below provides you with all the information you need for this service. It is also possible to request extra shuttle buses to run by contacting Sevens, at 042 93 77777 or Info@sevens.ie

Shuttle bus

Should you require a car parking space at the front of the building reserved for a VIP (e.g. A Government Minister, Ambassador etc.) you need to contact Valerie Ward in the Presidents Office.

There are a small number of guest car parking spaces available on campus. These are for guest speakers and VIPS, attending events. To acquire one of these you need to contact your School office.

The Planning

IT Requirements/ Support

Most events will require some form of technology, such as lighting, projectors, microphones, or internet access. To ensure everything runs smoothly, it is essential to coordinate with the IT department well in advance.

Key Steps for Arranging IT Support:

1. **Plan Ahead:**
Once your event location is secured, assess your technical needs and contact IT as early as possible. Ideally 4 weeks in advance. This allows time for scheduling and resource preparation.

2. **Raise an IT Ticket:**
Submit an IT support ticket Here as your first step. This officially logs your request and gets the process started.

3. **Follow Up Personally:**
After raising the ticket, follow up with a call or face-to-face meeting. This ensures mutual understanding of your requirements and confirms IT's ability to support the event.

4. **Understand the Limitations:**
While IT will do their best to support your event, please remember:

- All campus spaces are first and foremost for teaching and learning.

- The IT team has a limited number of AV-skilled technicians.

- Multiple events may be scheduled simultaneously, which can impact availability.

The Planning

Whittaker Theatre - AV Tech	
Podium	The podium has recently been replaced. This podium is NOT moveable and you must never attempt to move it. It is height adjustable.
Computer log in	Please use your DkIT credentials as normal.
Projectors	Turn on the desk's white extron ('on' button) to power on the two ceiling mounted projectors. Press 'off' to switch off the projectors.
Laptop	Plug in HDMI (video) and USB (audio) to use your laptop.The system will automatically find your laptop within 10 seconds. When you unplug the HDMI, it will go back to the PC feed.
Monitor	The podium's monitor is a touch screen.
Speaker system	The speaker system's volume can be adjusted via tools at bottom right of desktop monitor when logged in –or via the keyboard's volume up/down buttons.
Microphones	Microphones are present on the podium, and on the stage ceiling.(what is said on stage will be amplified for audience)
Camera	The camera is ceiling-mounted, located towards rear of theatre.
MS Teams call's	Use a MS Teams call's 'camera on' and 'mic on' options to engage with camera/mic technology for hybrid call/online meeting etc.
Room lighting	Lighting is controlled via a wall panel in the 'control room'. (Only really needed if room in darkness upon your arrival)

The Planning

Medical Centre

To be ready for any situations, you should also become familiar with DkIT's health and safety policies and the locations of the campus's AED (automated external defibrillator) units.

Student Health Unit Information

- **Location**: The Student Health Unit is Here

- **Opning Hours:** 08:30 - 16:30

- **Emergency Contact Numbers:**
  042 3970245 / 087 2566240
  Extensions: 2990/2777

- **Email:** healthunit@dkit.ie

Out of Hours Emergency Procedures

- Contact the Caretaker on duty.

- Emergency Services:
  Dial 112/999 or use the pre-programmed number on the phones located at the AED stations.

- Louth Hospital Minor Injuries Unit: 042 9334701

AED Stations on Campus

Below are the locations of all AED (Automated External Defibrillator) Stations on campus.

These units are located below and are equipped with first aid supplies and pre programmed phones for easy access to the following contacts:

- Trained First Aiders

- Student Health Unit

- Emergency Services

Building	Hoy's lane entrance
North Block	Corridor above "The Well"
South Block	Main Reception area
Whittaker building	Reception area
Regional Development Centre	MPC entrance
Faulkner building	Student Health Unit
Faulkner building	Ground floor entrance
Muirhevna building	Exercise Physiology Lab 1" Floor
Theatre & Restaurant	Theatre entrance
PJ Carroll building	Caretakers office main entrance
PJ Carroll building	School of Informatics & Creative Arts School office
Clubs and Societies	1 portable AED unit

The Planning

Caretaking and Housekeeping

Our Caretaking and Housekeeping staff work very hard to keep the campus looking pristine at all times.

However, if you need a space to be given particular attention, you need to let them know well in advance. A clean and well organised space can only make a good impression on your guests.

As a matter of courtesy a key contact person should be established with the Housekeeping team for each event.

Here is the information for contacting Estates.

Child Protection

The child protection policy is taken very seriously in DkIT and should be considered if you are inviting people under the age of 18 onto the campus.

Here is the link to all the information you need regarding child protection policies at DkIT.

Promotions and Marketing

Alerting the Marketing and Communications Department in plenty of time before your event is crucial for several reasons.

If the event is going to be of interest to local/national media the team needs enough time to write a pitch document/ press release to garner external interest.

M&C have one photographer/ videographer and one graphic designer. If the event requires high- quality content, whether it's graphics, videos, or promotional materials this can take time for filming, editing, approvals, and printing.

Events often involve many moving parts, and the marketing team needs to coordinate various efforts across platforms, working with other departments, external partners, and influencers. Ideally at least 4 weeks notice allows for smoother collaboration and prevents any last-minute confusion.

Here is a link for raising a ticket for the Marketing Department.

The Planning

Staffing and Volunteers

Finally, identify the staff or volunteers who will help with event coordination, registration, guest management, security, and other logistical duties. Assign clear roles and ensure they have the training or information needed.

Event Day Coordination.

Plan a briefing session for all involved to ensure smooth execution, including event timelines, emergency procedures, and point-of-contact information.

Feedback and Evaluation

Collecting Feedback: After the event, gather feedback from attendees to understand what went well and what can be improved. This can be done through surveys, polls, or informal conversations.

Post-Event Reporting: Compile a post-event report detailing attendance, budget adherence, and other important metrics. This will be helpful for future event planning and providing accountability

Sustanability

As outlined in DkIT's Strategic Plan (2024-2028), we are committed to embracing sustainability across all aspects of our Institute. At DkIT, we strive to foster sustainable development and integrate the UN Sustainable Development Goals across our campus, ensuring we have a positive impact.

When planning an event, Consider implementing eco-friendly practices, such as reducing waste, using reusable materials, or promoting digital registration.

Sustainability should automatically be a key point of focus for all of our on campus events, aligning with broader Institutional goals.

Sustainability
Dundalk Institute of Technology

The Checklist

Pre-Planning (The 5 Ws)
Who: Target audience, key attendees identified.
Why: Event purpose and value defined.
What: Event topic/theme and key message established.
When: Date/time suitable, campus conflicts checked.
Where: Venue selected and accessibility confirmed.

Planning (Setting the Stage)
Budget: Secured, including contingency. Funding/sponsorship explored.
Risk Assessment: Completed and submitted.
Safety & Security: Measures considered (if needed).
Emergency Protocols: Staff briefed.
Travel & Parking: Info provided to guests. VIP parking arranged (if needed).
Catering: Ordered (if required), dietary needs considered.
IT Requirements: Arranged with IT, ticket raised.

The Checklist

Planning (Setting the Stage)
Medical Centre: Location & contacts noted.
Caretaking: Contacted if special attention needed.
Child Protection: Considered (if under 18s involved).
Marketing: Informed in advance.
Staffing/Volunteers: Identified and briefed.
Event Day Coordination: Briefing planned.

Post-Event
Feedback: Plan for gathering attendee feedback
Reporting: Plan for post-event report.