

Protocol Sheet & Debriefing – Embedding Employability Project



NATIONAL FORUM
FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING
AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Project Title: DkIT Embedding Employability Project 2020/21

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Thank you for agreeing to take part in our focus group. This consultation aims to develop a shared vision of employability at DkIT and to enhance employability best practice institute wide. The objectives of this consultation aim to engage DkIT staff, students and employers in a conversation to uncover and exchange employability best practice, and to develop a shared vision of the DkIT graduate and their attributes.

The institute's employability results perform strongly with 94% of graduates obtaining employment in their first year, and there are many examples of excellent employability practice partnered with industry. However, these examples tend to be localised and relatively uncelebrated. Therefore, we would like you to use this opportunity to tell us about where [you/ your programme/ your school / or your course] implement(s) employability well.

This consultation is funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching & Learning in Higher Education. We will use this information to contribute to the exchange of best practice institute wide. Specifically, the consultation will develop: A set of DkIT (Dundalk Institute of Technology) Graduate Attributes; An Employability Guide; A DkIT Industry Employability Forum for key industry partners; and An Institute wide Employability Statement.

Remember, your participation will be recorded on audio for the purpose of detailed notetaking to be shared with you within two weeks. Your audio file will be confidential

and destroyed as soon as you sign off on the document notes copy that we will forward to you anonymised and by way of email. The document notes copy will only be stored for the duration of this project. Your participation is voluntary, and you can withdraw your participation at any stage.

We have a set of six employability themes, each accompanied by a set of related questions, to discuss with you. If you need a break at any time, please let us know and we will resume shortly thereafter.

Are you ready to start? Let's begin...

Theme 1. Your understanding of employability at DkIT

- What activities do you believe correspond to the notion of embedding employability in a higher education context?
- What do you see DkIT's vision for employability being or becoming?
- Do you see employability skills being addressed successfully within the curriculum?
- In what ways could employability skills be further embedded?
- How would your lecturers respond to undertaking an employability accreditation scheme for their programme?

Theme 2. Cultivating employability skills within the curriculum

- To what extent do you see a convergence or a conflict between subject-specific skill development and general skill (or soft skills) development regarding graduate employability?
- Do you think that students themselves should be able to draw out employability competencies/develop graduate attributes from their learning, or should the educator/institution prompt them and structurally facilitate awareness of competencies?

Theme 3. Potential attributes for DkIT graduates

- What graduate attributes best describe a typical DkIT graduate?
- What attributes would you like to see moving forward?
- What graduate attributes, if any, do you believe DkIT should prioritise when it comes to designing, renewing or assessing the curriculum?

Theme 4. Employers' role in employability

What should the employer's role be in terms of supporting graduate employability?

Theme 5. DkIT's role in helping recent graduates

- Where do you feel DkIT should focus its energies in preparing future graduates for the pandemic-era labour market?
- Would you like to see DkIT take a more active role in helping recent graduates?
- What supports do you feel should be made available to recent graduates?
- What are the job searching mechanisms for a DkIT graduate?

Theme 6. DkIT's responsibility towards socially disadvantaged students

- How might DkIT mitigate the difficulties faced by socially disadvantaged graduates upon entering the workplace?
- What can or should DkIT be doing to address this issue?

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We look forward to sending our feedback to you and DkIT soon.

Yours sincerely, Catherine Staunton & Team