DkIT Embedding Employability - Staff Survey

Thank you for agreeing to take part in our survey. DkIT wishes to do everything it can to support graduates' employability. To help do this, we're seeking advice from different groups (students, graduates, our staff, and employers) on how to enhance our existing services and current teaching practices. This research is funded by the National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

We would appreciate hearing your side of the story.

Your participation is voluntary and confidential, and your data will be anonymised for the purpose of data processing and data analysis.

The survey will focus on the following themes:
- DkIT Graduate Attributes
- A DkIT Employability Framework
- Employability Best Practice at DkIT
- Future Employability at DkIT

About You

1. I identify as...

○ Male

○ Female

○ Prefer not to say

○ [   ]

Other

2. Age

○ 18–22

○ 23–35

○ 36–50

○ 50+

○ Prefer not to say

3. Please specify your nationality.

○ Irish

○ EU

○ Non-EU

○ Prefer not to say

4. What best describes your role in DkIT?

○ Academic

○ Administrative

○ Professional and support staff

○ Technical staff

○ Estates

○ [   ]
  Other

5. If you are an academic staff member, which category best describes your area of expertise?

○ Business & Humanities

○ Engineering

○ Health & Science

○ Informatics & Creative Arts

○ _____

Other

Definitions

Before you commence the survey, please have a read of the following definitions, which we use regularly throughout.

EMPLOYABILITY is not just about employment. Employability is considered to be a set of achievements, skills, understandings, and personal attributes. It involves preparing you for the short-term jobs market, but also for a life of learning.

PERCEIVED EMPLOYABILITY is how strong one perceives their chances of attaining fulfilling work upon graduation.

GRADUATE ATTRIBUTES are the core abilities and values a higher education institute agrees all its graduates should develop, and the abilities employers deem necessary for today's graduates.

ALUMNI are past students.

Theme 1: Our Graduates

Within each of the following groups of graduate attributes, rank the 3 you consider most important.

6. GROUP A (please drag up/down to select your preference)

Professionally Confident

Adaptable & Flexible

Confident

Problem-Solvers

Critical Thinkers

Lifelong Learners

Resilient

7. GROUP B (please drag up/down to select your preference)

Team Players

Innovative Partners

Collaborators

Leadership

Networkers

Socially Enterprising

Operationally Savvy

8. GROUP C (please drag up/down to select your preference)

Creative

Public Engagers

Communicators

Self-Promotors

Digitally Fluent

Emotionally Intelligent

9. GROUP D (please drag up/down to select your preference)

Technically Skilled

Knowledgeable

Technology-Driven

Work Ready

Practice-led

Enterprising

Data Literate

10. Our focus group research found that the graduate attributes 'Confident', 'Collaborative' and 'Communicative' were most representative of DkIT graduates. We are looking for you to help us decide on the fourth graduate attribute to headline our Graduate Attribute Framework.

    Please select your preferred graduate attribute headline in terms of how representative it is of DkIT graduates.

    ○ Confidence, Collaboration, Technical, Communication

    ○ Confidence, Collaboration, Enterprising, Communication

    ○ Confidence, Collaboration, Practical, Communication

    ○ Confidence, Collaboration, Technology-Driven, Communication

11. If none of the above, please list your 4 preferred headline graduate attributes.

12. Graduate attributes lend themselves to employability or maintaining work-readiness through lifelong learning.

Please tick the 3 that best describe DkIT's graduates.

☐ Positive Attitude

☐ Determined

☐ Hard Working

☐ Community-Focused

☐ Socially Aware

☐ Transferable Skills

☐ Socially Conscious

☐ Ethically Aware

☐ Responsible

☐ Sustainability/Environmentally Aware

☐ Trustworthy

☐ Interculturally Aware

☐ Creative

☐ Independent

☐ Self-Directed Learner

☐ Life & Well-Being Aware

☐ Self-Aware

☐ Fair

☐ Cross Sectorial Skills

☐ Resilience

☐ [_____]

Other

13. If you chose 'Other', please elaborate here.

Theme 2: Employability Framework

Employability is not just about employment. Employability is considered to be a set of achievements, skills, understandings, and personal attributes. It involves preparing you for the short-term jobs market, but also for a life of learning.

There is also perceived employability: how strong one perceives their chances of attaining fulfilling work upon graduation.

The factors below all contribute to one's perceived employability. Please rank them in order of how you think they impact on perceived employability.

14. Please rank the following SKILLS & ABILITIES in terms of their importance to perceived employability.

Transferable skills (problem-solving, critical thinking or team skills)

Professional competencies (occupational expertise)

Technical competence

Student placement / internships

Degree award (cert, degree, masters)

Final grade (2.2, 2.1, 1.1)

Degree subject (engineering, business, etc.)

Work experience

15. Please rank the following SOCIAL CAPITAL influences in terms of their importance to perceived employability

Personal circumstances (background, family situation)

DkIT's reputation

Engaging in extra-curricular activities

Network of colleagues / contacts / connections

16. Please rank the following CAREER MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES in terms of their importance to perceived employability.

Self-awareness (know yourself)

Career research and planning (know your options)

Personal agency (know how to take action)

Happenstance / luck / right-place-right-time

17. Do you agree/disagree that each of the following positively distinguishes DkIT from other, similar third-level institutes?

	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree
Student community spirit	○	○	○
DkIT partnerships (employers, community, local connections)	○	○	○
Focus on students' work-readiness	○	○	○
Geographical location	○	○	○
Student-orientated supports (diversity and access, health and wellbeing, financial advice)	○	○	○
Student-teacher ratio	○	○	○
Student-teacher rapport	○	○	○
Relationship with past students	○	○	○
Industry-driven programmes	○	○	○

18. If you would like to identify any additional positive distinguishing factors, please outline below.

Theme 3: Employability in DkIT

The following presents a list of excellent examples of employability activities at DkIT. These were highlighted by our recent institute-wide focus group research.

19. We would like you to tell us if you have used these activities in your professional/academic role(s) at DkIT.

    Please tick all that apply.

    ☐ Work placement

    ☐ Placement preparation workshops

    ☐ Industry-partnered assessment

    ☐ Jobs research for written assessment

    ☐ Online profile exercises (e.g. LinkedIn)

    ☐ Reflective logs (e.g. for industry guest speakers)

    ☐ Groupwork assessment

    ☐ Peer learning

    ☐ Formal presenting (as individual or as group)

    ☐ Careers workshop

    ☐ Mentoring programme

    ☐ Professional advice on blog writing

    ☐ [   ]
    Other

20. DkIT is keen for staff to engage in continual professional development to support students' employability.

Please tell us how likely you are to participate in the following.

	Unlikely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Likely
Collaborative activities (e.g. workshops)	○	○	○
Individual activities (e.g. online resources, dedicated webpages)	○	○	○
Externally led activities (training, micro-credentials)	○	○	○
Accredited programme of study	○	○	○

21. Please provide any additional comments here.

The DkIT Careers and Employability Centre is here to support students and graduates identify their career goals, plan for their future and achieve their full personal and professional potential. In the following section, we're keen to understand how you engage with Careers supports, and how effective you consider each support in terms of employability.

22. What Careers and Employability supports have you availed of, or directed students to in the past two years?

    Please tick all that apply.

    ☐ Work placement preparation

    ☐ Careers Connect (online portal for booking appointments, job and event search)

    ☐ Careers Support Hub on Moodle

    ☐ Emails from Careers on range of supports/opportunities

    ☐ 1-to-1 Careers appointments

    ☐ Careers workshops (CV/ LinkedIn/ interview prep, job search skills)

    ☐ Mock interview preparation

    ☐ Employer presentations / talks

    ☐ Careers fair

    ☐ In-class Careers sessions

    ☐ Elevate Award (recognising skills developed from student engagement / extra-curricular activity)

    ☐ Final year Careers workshops

    ☐ Post-graduate study information events

    ☐ External Careers events / supports (eg. GradIreland)

    ☐ [   ]
    Other

23. Drawing from the same list, please identify your top 5 supports in terms of how effectively they contribute to graduates' employability.

- [ ] Work placement preparation

- [ ] Careers Connect (online portal for booking appointments, job and event search)

- [ ] Careers Support Hub on Moodle

- [ ] Emails from Careers on range of supports/opportunities

- [ ] 1-to-1 Careers appointments

- [ ] Careers workshops (CV/ LinkedIn/ interview prep, job search skills)

- [ ] Mock interview preparation

- [ ] Employer presentations / talks

- [ ] Careers fair

- [ ] In-class Careers sessions

- [ ] Elevate Award (recognising skills developed from student engagement / extra-curricular activity)

- [ ] Final year Careers workshops

- [ ] Post-graduate study information events

- [ ] External Careers events / supports (eg. GradIreland)

- [ ] _____

  Other

24. DkIT is made up of a diverse student body.

Do you have any suggestions to support work-readiness / career development for all DkIT graduates?

Theme 4: Forward-Looking Employability

We're looking for you to help us choose the best forward-looking employability ideas for DkIT. The below will shape our future plans, and ensure students enter the workplace with the best possible start to their careers.

25. There are different ways student employability could be recognised in DkIT. Please rate the value from the options below.

	Not Valuable	Moderately Valuable	Very Valuable
Honorary award that recognises employability	○	○	○
Module taken as part of your course (with academic credits)	○	○	○
Special Purpose award upon graduation (completed over course of students' study period)	○	○	○

26. Which of the following employability enhancement activities do you consider essential to implement? Please tick all that apply.

- [ ] Scholarships

- [ ] Industry-partnered student assistant funds

- [ ] Bursaries (for laptops, IT equipment)

- [ ] Exam or year group performance awards

- [ ] Industry co-assessment

- [ ] Cognate courses (module swop with other degree programmes)

- [ ] Career investigation assignments

- [ ] Student conferences

- [ ] National student competitions

- [ ] Mini-companies partnered with the Regional Development Centre

- [ ] Head Start programme for disadvantaged students

- [ ] Student-led recruitment agency on campus

- [ ] Alumni engagements

- [ ] Standalone module on reflective practice

- [ ] Role-play learning, assessed

- [ ] Earn-as-you-learn programmes

- [ ] Video series of guest speakers per theme

- [ ] _____
  Other

27. What method / practice of yours do you feel best contributes to your students' employability that might be transferrable to other Schools or student support areas?

28. Which of the following activities do you perceive to be the most important in developing your students' employability? Please rank your top 3.

Teaching and learning

Industry engagement

Work placement

Self-directed learning

Extra-curricular activities

Student's initiative

29. In what ways do you engage with potential employers on behalf of students and graduates?

30. Which of the following do you believe DkIT should concentrate on to boost graduate work-readiness? Please rank your top 5.

An alumni scheme

Work placements

Focus more on innovation or entrepreneurship

Collaborate with employers or industry

DkIT's image, prestige, or reputation

Develop and expand post-grad programmes

Digital literacy

Expand range and scope of degree pathways

Soft skills (communication, teamwork, ethical behaviour, etc.)

Hard skills (expertise in certain programmes, job-specific skills)

Thank You

We appreciate your taking the time to complete this Embedding Employability survey.