



## DkIT Unveils Roadmap for Reopening of Campus in September 2020

**Dundalk, Ireland.** DkIT (Dundalk Institute of Technology) has revealed the roadmap to reopening its campus and has outlined preliminary plans for the new 2020-2021 academic year.

DkIT's new plans include a confirmed start date for incoming first year students of September 28th, in line with all Institutes of Technology nationwide, while existing students will commence on the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020.

Part-time and postgraduate taught programmes will commence around similar timeframes and individual plans are being put in place for Postgraduate Research Students. Staff within the institute (where feasible) will commence a phased return to campus over the summer months in line with the Government's [Roadmap for Reopening Society and Business](#).

The health and wellbeing of DkIT staff and students is of primary importance and the preparation for the delivery of the 2020/21 academic year will have that principle at the heart of all decision-making. It is envisioned that while the campus will be open and fully operational from September, the volume of people on campus at any given time will be substantially reduced to allow for social distancing and other public health directives.

In developing its new roadmap, DkIT recognised the clear message from students in Ireland that they are committed to preserving the on-campus student experience and the institute is fully supportive of that. The quality of the student experience is of paramount importance and DkIT aims to protect that experience as much as possible while delivering academic programmes in a way that is safe, inclusive, supportive, and effective.

The Institute will introduce a blended model of learning which will incorporate online teaching including lectures coupled with practical and tutorials that will take place predominantly on campus. Provisions are being made to ensure that all services and supports (including counselling, disability, pastoral care, careers & employability etc.) remain accessible to students via a mixture of on-campus and remote delivery.

The institute is currently developing a newly adapted induction programme for all new and existing students to support students during their transition to higher education. Plans are also underway to ensure that critical learning supports offered via the Library, Student Learning & Development Centre, Math Learning Centre and the IT Learning Centre are available to students via online and face-to-face delivery come to September.

Speaking today, President of DkIT Michael Mulvey, PhD paid tribute to staff for their commitment and endeavours to on behalf of the institute in these challenging times. He also praised students for their adaptability and openness to engage with new ways of learning during the Covid-19 restrictions.

*“We look forward to welcoming students back on to our campus in September, albeit the numbers on campus at any one time will undoubtedly be smaller,” he said.*

*“Staff across the college are working hard to ensure that timetables are developed to reflect new health & safety protocols and as with previous years, these will be made available via our website [www.dkit.ie](http://www.dkit.ie). We understand that plans around accommodation, travel and work are dependent on this information so we are working to have this detail to students and staff as soon as possible.”*

*“The health, safety and well-being of staff and students is of the highest priority in all plans to reopen our campus. This is an evolving situation but I can assure you that all decisions being made over the coming weeks will be done with adherence to CMO, NPHET, HSE, Department of Education and Skills and HSA guidelines.”*

*“New operations plans will include new ways of working and new ways of thinking. All managers across the institute have been asked to update and adapt health and safety plans for their respective departments and functional areas and incorporate new forms of delivery.”*

*“We are currently examining the feasibility of a one-way system for student within college buildings and will introduce new signage around the campus to encourage social distancing and hand hygiene. Mechanisms to facilitate efficient contact tracing are also under review within the institute.*

*“I want to reassure students and their parents/guardians at this time that DkIT is firmly committed to taking care of our students next year. We are investing time and resource into rigorous planning now we want you to come onto our campuses in September, where we will ensure their safety and provide them with a stimulating college experience.*

*“Because our model blends the theoretical with the practical, our students will be on campus for much of their learning. It may be happening in a different way, but it will be happening. The entire sector has been working to ensure that our students will be safe and will experience college life.”*

DKIT's new 2020/21 roadmap was developed in accordance with new nationally agreed principles and guidelines for academic delivery in 2020/21 and have been published today by the Technological & Higher Education Association (THEA). These guidelines state that:

- All Institutes of Technology are fully committed to delivering a fulfilling and enriching student experience while protecting the academic integrity of our programmes and awards and abiding by all public health guidelines.
- All Institutes of Technology will facilitate a substantial on-campus experience for students, particularly incoming first years, and are in the process of communicating directly with students in order to fully outline how their 2020/21 learning will take place.
- All Institutes of Technology are working towards a commencement date in September for the 2020/2021 academic year.

The full statement, released by THEA today can be seen here [http://www.thea.ie/contentFiles/THEA\\_student\\_experience\\_statement.pdf](http://www.thea.ie/contentFiles/THEA_student_experience_statement.pdf) alongside the accompanying document: [Principles and Guidelines for the delivery of 2020/21 Programmes in the Institutes of Technology in the context of the Covid-19 Pandemic](#).

All up-to-date information on DkIT's plans to reopen its campuses and details for the new academic year will continue to be available at [www.dkit.ie](http://www.dkit.ie)

**Ends.**

