**HEA Healthy Campus**  **Case Study**

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| **HEALTHY CAMPUS CASE STUDY** | |
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| **Name of Institution/ Organisation** | Dundalk Institute of Technology |
| **Who led the initiative?** | School of Business and Humanities |
| **Date and timeframe of the initiative** | First Rollout 2015 - Ongoing |
| **What was the reach of the initiative?** | Approximately 140 students per year for full module; and a further 60 students where topics are ‘infused’ into other modules. |
| **Initiative Title** | Embedding Wellbeing into the Curriculum – Development and Provision of a Credit-Bearing Module on Wellbeing & Resilience across Six Programmes in the School of Business and Humanities. |
| **Aims/ Objectives** | The objective was to provide education in wellbeing and resilience skills such as Mindset, Stress Management, Time Management, Identifying Strengths, Goal Setting and Habit Management to as many students as possible. |
| **The rationale for the action, including any identified health needs.** | These skills are important graduate attributes and as such belong in the curriculum itself. In addition, often the wellbeing and health supports available on campus are accessed by students already ill or in crisis. The premise of this module is to reach students and provide training in Wellbeing to help them develop the awareness and skills to be more resilient to challenges and possibly help prevent them reaching crisis level. For others, access to this education may help them not only survive but thrive. |
| **Identify all frameworks, policies, or strategies this initiative aligns to**  **(internal, local or national)** | While the staff driving this initiative recognised and responded to the need for such an initiative nearly 10 years ago, the idea of providing more interventions on wellbeing and resilience to third-level students has gained much attention and focus recently. For example, the following reports and policies have really given HEIs a mandate to act on this important aspect of third-level education:  Fox, T., Byrne, D. and Surdey, J. (2020) National Student Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Framework. Higher Education Authority  Byrne, D. and Surdey, J. (2021) Embedding wellbeing across the curriculum in higher education. USI and National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.  Dundalk Institute of Technology Strategic Plan 2024 – 2028  UN Sustainable Development Goals:   * SDG 3 Good Health and Wellbeing * SDG 4 Quality Education * SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth |
| **Summary** | As educators, our purpose is to create a range of learning opportunities for students in our discipline area to enable them to achieve explicit learning outcomes and develop skills and attributes that will stand to them upon graduation. We work hard to employ the most effective teaching and learning techniques along with creative and level-appropriate assessment methodologies to help students successfully work towards their qualification. We now know that academic success is influenced by the student’s mental health and wellbeing. In addition, feedback from industry tells us that desirable graduate attributes include things like Resilience, Confidence, Ability to Work in Teams and Effective Communication, as well as more specific and perhaps more easily measured ‘hard skills’. So, can we include mental health and wellbeing in the curriculum itself? Student wellbeing has always been an important consideration in Dundalk Institute of Technology, and we recognise the importance of meaningful efforts to support and encourage our students’ positive mental health. As far back as 2015 we have included a full, credit-bearing mandatory module on Resilience and Wellbeing in three programmes in the School of Business & Humanities; and as an elective module on a further three programmes. The module covers Goal Setting; Habit Formation and Modification; Fixed vs Growth Mindset; Time Management; Signature Strengths and Stress Management. The teaching & learning approach is a combination of theory, experience, and reflection. Students are assessed through several projects that challenge them to further investigate, experience and reflect on the research and recommendations explored in class. The feedback from students has been overwhelmingly positive, particularly in response to the assessment methods used. While in many ways a standalone module is ideal, some of these topics can be ‘infused’ into existing modules across the programme. For example, in DkIT, the material on Habits and Stress Management has been added to several modules such as Leadership, and Sustainable Entrepreneurship, in programmes in the Science Department; and Mindset is now being taught as part of a module on Organisational Behaviour in another Business programme. So it is not only desirable, but very feasible to embed wellbeing into the curriculum as a credit-bearing, academically sound area of third-level education. As educators, we have options as to how we can accomplish this and contribute to the ongoing work of HEIs to fully support the development of students both academically and socially throughout their college years. |
| **Did you collaborate with internal and/or external stakeholders to deliver?** | Internal collaborations:   * Head of School of Business and Humanities * Heads of Department of Management & Financial Studies; Business Studies; and Humanities. * Colleagues on programme boards. * Centre of Excellence in Learning & Teaching (CELT) * DkIT Counselling Service Staff. |
| **How was the initiative organised?** | 1. Initial study on feasibility of introducing such a module as part of a thesis completed for the DkIT MA in Learning & Teaching: ‘Positive Life Skills for Today’s Irish Graduate: Increasing the Provision of Positive Education in an Undergraduate Programme’ (2012) 2. Development of Module on Wellbeing/Life Skills. 3. Proposal for inclusion in several programmes as part of 2013-14 Institute Programmatic Review. 4. Initial pilot across three programmes as mandatory module in the Department of Business Studies and Department of Humanities. 5. Inclusion as elective module across three programmes in the Department of Management & Financial Studies during the 2019 Programmatic Review. |
| **What resources did you need?** | Staffing for module delivery across six programmes. |
| **Has it been evaluated? How successful has it been?** | Student feedback has been gathered. Response has been overwhelmingly positive, especially to the assessment methods. Needs to be evaluated more formally. Also, more longitudinal study among alumni who had participated in the module would be really useful. |
| **Any future plans, including the sustainability of the initiative?** | As we are approaching the next Programmatic Review, there are plans to embed Wellbeing & Resilience education into more programmes across the Institute, whether it be through full modules (mandatory or elective) or through topic ‘infusion’ in other modules in a programme. In addition, a new, more advanced module at Masters level is being designed for inclusion in a new MSc in Applied Management which is currently under development. |
| **Key Learning Points** |  |

**Healthy Campus Framework Categories (please tick all that apply)**

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| **Healthy Campus Process** | **Whole Campus Approach** | **Topic** | **Population Group** |
| Commit | Leadership, Strategy & Governance | Alcohol | Students |
| Coordinate | Campus Environment (Facilities & Services) | Substance Misuse | Staff |
| Consult | Campus Culture & Communications | Healthy Eating / Food | Wider community |
| Create | Personal & Professional Development | Mental Health & Wellbeing | Other |
| Celebrate & Continue |  | Sexual Health & Wellbeing |  |
|  |  | Tobacco Free Campus |  |
|  |  | Physical Activity / Active Transport |  |
|  |  | Wellbeing on the Curriculum (can also fall under ‘Personal & Professional Development) |  |
|  |  | Health & Sustainability |  |
|  |  | Other |  |

**Contact Details**

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| **Links** | Module Descriptor:  <https://courses.dkit.ie/index.cfm/page/module/moduleId/56130>  HEA National Student Mental Health & Suicide Prevention Framework:  <https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2020/10/HEA-NSMHS-Framework.pdf>  Embedding Wellbeing Across the Curriculum – USI/National Forum Report:  <https://usi.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/Supporting-Wellbeing-in-Practice-October-2021.pdf> |