Online student wellbeing & personal development support

Technology and Student Mental Health eMen & USI Seminar 18 June 2019

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Presentation Overview

 Discover DCU is an online programme which consists of 8 short interactive courses designed to help students settle in and introduce them to the tools and skills needed to succeed at university.

Coordinated by cross unit collaboration between Student Support & Development, Teaching Enhancement Unit and Open Education.

- Online wellbeing resources for students on Placement including stress management.
- Online mindfulness resources and practices.
- Online self-help practices and information.



Rationale

- Linked to DCU Strategic Plan Student Transition
- Students have access from point of CAO offer
- Material is online 24/7, interactive and accessible
- Use of technology early
- Engages part-time and distance learners
- Feeds into the new DCU Engagement award
- Usage can be monitored, recorded and reviewed





your workload.

DISCOVER Discover key skills so you **STUDY** can grow as a student. Including effective reading & note-making, critical thinking and group work. DISCOVER Learn about effective tools and techniques SKILLS to find appropriate, high-quality information for your assignments. DISCOVER **ASSIGNMENT** Find out how to write WRITING a clear and focused academic paper. DISCOVER Pick up tips and **EXAM** strategies. Learn how **SUCCESS**

to prepare for and

succeed in your

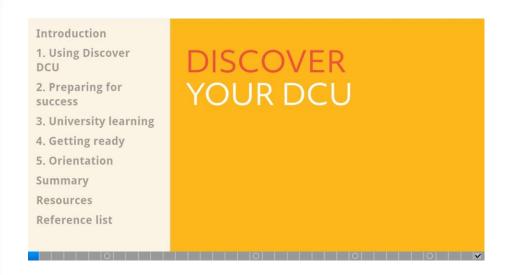
university exams.



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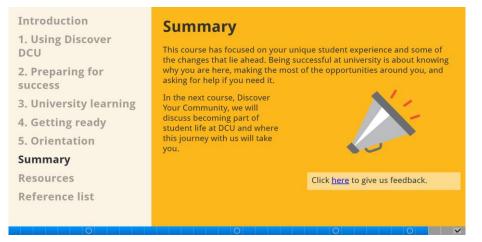
Bhaile Átha Cliath Dublin City University

What does it look like?





Introduction 1. Using Discover DCU 2. Preparing for success 3. University learning 4. Getting ready 5. Orientation Summary Resources Reference list Student success stories In the video below, students reflect on what success looked like at the end of their first year and as they progressed through DCU.





Student Success Video

Introduction

- 1. Using Discover DCU
- 2. Preparing for success
- 3. University learning
- 4. Getting ready
- 5. Orientation

Summary

Resources

Reference list

Student success stories

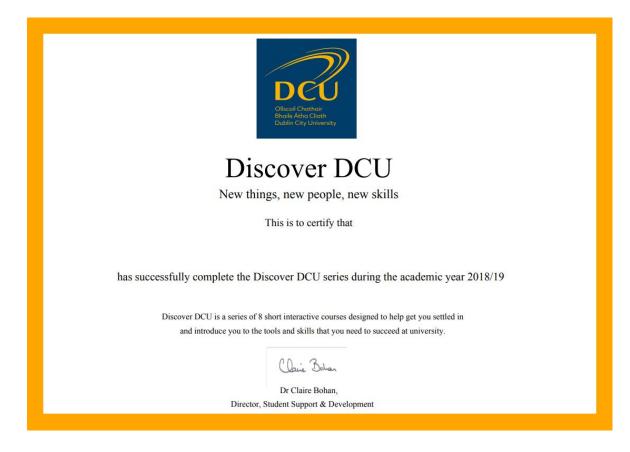
In the video below, students reflect on what success looked like at the end of their first year and as they progressed through DCU.





https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rxc0FpvMg2s#action=share

DCU Engagement Award





Crunching the numbers

1800 individual course completions to date: **1084** pre-orientation courses, **716** study skills courses.

707 unique students attempted at least one of the courses.

92% is the average completion rate for courses attempted.

70 students have completed all eight courses.

123 pieces of feedback received.



image from presentermedia.com



What do the students say?

I feel much more relaxed & comfortable now entering DCU as I know what to expect.

This course has provided me with the knowledge and insight into the life in DCU and beyond. I now have ideas of how to get involved while studying and after graduation.???

I was happy completing Discover DCU as I was left with a much greater knowledge of the sense of community was like in DCU. I feel I will have no trouble fitting in and that I know there are many helpful supports available to me should run into problems.

The course was excellent.

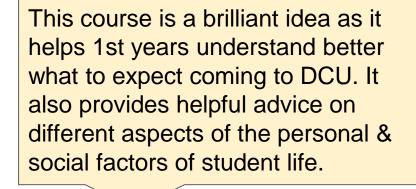
Loved the piece on staying healthy as it something I am very anxious about.



What do the students say?

Discover DCU helped me to get over some of the nerves. Now I feel much more relaxed & comfortable entering DCU as I know what to expect. Thank you very much for the wonderful guidance to plan and organise my study strategy. It has made my life as a mature student much easier.

I don't think there is much need to improve this course. It was extremely informative, and I learned a lot about all the additional Google apps available to me.....Thank you





Placement - online wellbeing resources

Introduction

- 1. Placement context
- 2. Lesson planning
- 3: Time management
- 4. Wellbeing
- 5. Further support

Summary

Resources

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4. Wellbeing

Completing placement can be a demanding experience. It is important during this time to prioritise your own wellbeing - this will have the knock-on effect on making you more relaxed on placement and improve your teaching as a result. This section will explore ways to prioritise your wellbeing, with a focus on:

- Stress management
- Linking in
- Sleep
- Healthy eating
- Physical exercise
- Relaxation exercises
- Voice care

"Wellbeing is your ability to feel good and function effectively. It gives you the resources to navigate the highs and lows we all experience in our work and in our lives, whilst enabling you to intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically 'flourish'." (Professional Development Service for Teachers, 2019)



Online Stress Management Resources

Managing Stress - Brainsmart BBC

https://www.youtube.com/watch?reload=9&v=hnpQr MqDoqE#action=share

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Stress management

Stress is part of everyday life. We experience stress when we perceive an imbalance between the demands placed on us in a given situation, and our resources for meeting those demands.

Stress indicators:

- physical
- cognitive
- emotional
- o behavioural 🗓



How can I manage feelings of stress?











Dublin City University

Stress Indicators

Physical:

- Tense muscles
- Headaches
- Shallow/erratic breathing
- Cold, sweaty hands
- Dry mouth
- Dizzy spells
- Chest palpitations
- Nausea, knot in stomach
- Fatigue
- Bowel problems

Cognitive:

- Inability to concentrate
- Difficulty making decisions
- Memory lapses
- Worrying about things
- Difficulty processing information
- Negative self-statements
- Loss of self-confidence



Stress Indicators

Emotional:

- Increased irritability / anger
- Anxiety / feelings of panic
- Fearfulness
- Tearfulness
- Increased interpersonal conflicts
- Easily frustrated
- Feeling of hopelessness
- Feelings of guilt
- Increased cynicism
- Fear of criticism
- Moodiness

Behavioural:

- Increased/decreased sleep
- Increased/decreased food
- Increased alcohol consumption
- Increased smoking
- Social withdrawal
- Working long hours / absent
- Reckless driving
- Rushing around
- Neglecting personal hygiene / appearance



Online Relaxation & Mindfulness Practices

Steps for Stress Muscle relaxation exercise

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QiP9UGWxTLM#action=share

Smiling Mind

https://www.smilingmind.com.au/mindfulness

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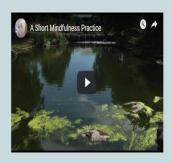
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Relaxa tron exercises

Mindful breathing and muscle relaxation are two simple exercises that can help you relax, connect to your breathing and calm any racing thoughts. The videos below walk you through a simple mindful breathing exercise and a short muscle relaxation.



Smiling Mind is a popular app that many students use to practice mindfulness.



You can access a step by step guide to completing a muscle relaxation here (Centre for Clinical Interventions, 2019).





Mindfulness Podcasts

Mindfulness Practices:

- Mindfulness of Breathing
- A Short Breathing Space Practice
- The Body Scan
- Sitting Meditation
- Mindful Movement Practice

https://www.dcu.ie/counselling/Mindfulness-Podcasts.shtml



Mindfulness Student Handbook

This mindfulness student handbook includes:

- Mindfulness of breath
- Mindfulness of thoughts
- Mindfulness of feelings
- Mindfulness of eating
- Mindfulness of pleasant and unpleasant experiences
- Mindfulness of self-care
- Mindfulness of loving kindness
- Mindfulness of acceptance and change

https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/students/mindfulness_based_stress_reduction_handbook.pdf



Self-help Online Practices & Information

Student Empowerment & Lifeskills Practices:

- 1. Working with unhelpful thinking

 https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/students/working with unhelpful thinking sept 16.pdf
- 2. Thought tracker approaches

https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/students/thought tracker approaches may 2016.pdf

- 3. Understanding your personal response to stress

 https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/students/understand and monitor your personal response to stress sept 16.pdf
- 4. Grounding exercises

https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/students/grounding exercise aug 16.pdf

5. Taking in the good before sleeping

https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/students/taking_in_the_good_before_sleepng_ex_aug_16.pdf

6. A map to our inner psychological world

https://www.dcu.ie/sites/default/files/students/a_map_to_make_sense_of_our_inner_psycological_world.pdf



Counselling & Personal Development Selfhelp website hits

22 March 2018 - 22 March 2019

Homepage: 8198 hits

Mindfulness pages: 960 hits

Self-help online practices & information: 1928 hits

Bibliotherapy: 311 hits



image from presentermedia.com



Thank you Helena & Caroline

