Dublin International Study Centre

Induction Policy

Contents

Induction Policy

Section One: Purpose of the Policy

1. The purpose of this policy is:

- To ensure that DISC has a structured and comprehensive induction programme in place.

- To provide all learners with the necessary information, resources, and support required for their academic success, as well as opportunities for integration and familiarisation with the community. The induction process is designed to help international learners transition smoothly into their new academic, social, and cultural environment. This is achieved through access to key support services, the introduction of social and cultural activities within both DISC and UCD, and opportunities to participate in the wider community. In this way, learners are supported academically and socially, fostering a sense of belonging and integration.

- To involve staff in the design and delivery of the induction process, ensuring that learners' experiences are impactful and that opportunities for meaningful interaction between staff and students are maximised. This allows relationships to be established early on, promotes mutual understanding of roles and expectations, and enhances the overall student experience.

Section Two: Scope

2. This policy applies to the following:

- **Active scope:** All DISC staff members and stakeholders directly involved in the planning, design, and delivery of induction activities. These individuals are responsible for ensuring that the induction programme is implemented effectively and in line with institutional and regulatory requirements.

- **Receptive scope:** All international learners enrolled in DISC programmes, as well as staff and stakeholders who need to be aware of the induction process and expectations for learners. DISC operates with two new learner cohorts per academic year: the September cohort and the January cohort. Both cohorts receive a comprehensive induction programme. DISC ensures parity of experience, regardless of entry point, by guaranteeing equal access to relevant information, services, and opportunities to participate in activities that support acclimatisation, integration, and a sense of belonging.

Section Three: Induction Programme Objectives

3. Induction Programme Objectives (Learner Focus):

- familiarise learners with the academic and administrative structures of DISC.

- promote understanding of the regulations governing the QQI award.

- provide learners with access to all relevant resources, policies, and support systems.

- ensure awareness of relevant policies, procedures, and expectations regarding programme components and progression requirements, such as attendance, assessments, academic integrity, and learner conduct.

- introduce the support services and mechanisms available to provide assistance for their wellbeing and academic progression.

- introduce learners to essential academic knowledge, skills and competences needed for success in their studies.

- introduce learners to the campus environment and the facilities available to them.

- create a welcoming and inclusive environment that fosters intercultural awareness and opportunities for mutual understanding and integration.

Section Four: Alignment with QQI Core Statutory QA Guidelines

4. This induction policy aligns with the following key principles of QQI quality assurance:

- Information and Communication: Learners receive clear, accurate, and accessible information on all aspects of their programme and institution.

- Learner Support: Learners are made aware of the range of academic, personal, and language support available within the centre and across the university.

- Assessment of Learners: Learners are informed of assessment policies, grading criteria, and the procedures for feedback and appeals.

- Fair and Consistent Treatment: Processes are in place to ensure equitability, transparency, and responsiveness in addressing learner queries and issues.

- Monitoring and Self-Evaluation: Feedback from learners is gathered systematically and regularly to support continuous improvement of the induction process, ensuring it has the maximum positive impact on each newly enrolled cohort.

Section Five: Learner Access to Information and Resources

Student Handbook

5. To support learners effectively, DISC ensures that all students have access to an up-to-date Student Handbook, which includes information on:

- Teaching, learning, and assessment approaches and methodologies
- Typical assessment task types
- Examination formats and procedures
- DISC support services and learner facilities
- Academic regulations
- Semester timetables

6. In addition to the Student Handbook, learners are also provided with a Life in Dublin Guide, which contains practical information on Irish currency, banking, weather, music, food, and cultural sites to support their social and cultural adjustment.

7. Each learner receives an Induction Pack at the beginning of their programme. This includes a DISC notebook, a pen, the Student Handbook, the Life in Dublin Guide, and copies of key institutional policies.

Virtual Learning Environment

8. Learners have access to informative and relevant content on DISC's Virtual Learning Environment (VLE), including:

- Module notes and reading lists.
- Module descriptors.
- The current version of the Quality Assurance Manual.
- Handbooks on Life in Dublin, and a regularly updated FAQ section.
- All relevant DISC policies.
- Student tutorials and study resources, including study skills resources and Harvard referencing guides etc.

Full Programme Information

9. All learners are provided with comprehensive programme information, including:

- The Intended Learning Outcomes.
- Expectations of learners on the programme.
- Assessment strategies, methodologies and procedures.

- Entry requirements, and progression requirements.

- Access to individualised study supports.

Section Six: Induction Programme Components

Pre-Arrival Support

10. Learners are supported by the Study Group Global (SGG) Central Student Support (CSS) team, who are their main point of contact before they begin the programme. Learners with a confirmed place are sent a welcome email from the CSS team containing a comprehensive pre-arrival guide to help them prepare for their arrival and enrolment.

11. As part of this support, learners are invited to participate with other pre arrival students in the Prepare for Success Programme, a three-week online pre-arrival programme designed to boost confidence, build practical life skills, and prepare students academically, and socially for life at their destination International Study Centre (ISC). Combining interactive online activities with live sessions led by ISC staff, the programme provides targeted guidance on adapting to a new cultural environment and becoming an independent and confident learner. Learners are also given access to the DISC Welcome Hub, which contains pre-arrival information, including an outline of what to expect during their first two weeks, information about learner insurance, accommodation, along with checklists to help them prepare for moving from their home country to Dublin.

12. The CSS team are contactable by email and assists DISC learners with all their pre-arrival needs, including:

    - The facilitation of accommodation bookings and issuing of accommodation deadline reminders.

    - Securing airport transfer services.

    - Providing induction information, including timetables and guides.

    - Supporting the completion of arrival forms.

13. The CSS coordinator also provides general information and advice about DISC, tips regarding studying in Ireland, the city of Dublin, and what to bring with them when moving to Ireland.

14. At an earlier stage, during the confirmation of offer, the Admissions Team provides learners with guidance on the visa application process to ensure they have the necessary information and support to complete their application in a timely manner.

15. DISC's Deputy Director of Student Experience works with the CSS team to ensure that information provided about DISC and Dublin is current and comprehensive.

Onsite Induction (First Week of Programme)

16. The following comprises a list of standard activities and sessions during the first week of induction. The list is not exhaustive and is reviewed regularly through DISC's monitoring processes to ensure any emergent needs are met.

17. List of sessions & activities:

- **Welcome and Orientation Sessions:** Introduction to DISC, key staff and student services.

- **Academic Overview:** Programme structure, learning outcomes, assessment methods, and NFQ framework.

- **Academic Expectations and Management:** Guidance on understanding academic standards, managing workload, meeting deadlines, and developing effective study skills throughout the duration of the programme.

- **Teaching and Learning Approaches:** Introduction to the types of teaching and learning methods used, including tutorials, group work, independent study, and formative assessments. Learners are expected to engage actively in all aspects of their programme, participate in class activities and discussions, complete assigned tasks, and take responsibility for their own learning and development.

- **Administrative Guidance:** Documentation submission, timetable access, and IT systems training.

- **Student Life:** Information about clubs, societies, cultural adjustment and living in Ireland.

- **Wellbeing and Safety:** Mental health support, health services, safeguarding policies and emergency contacts.

- **Regulatory Requirements:** Compliance and policies, attendance requirements, disciplinary procedures, assessment schedules and deadlines, and the complaints and appeals process.

- **Cultural Induction:** Introduction to local culture, customs, and supports for language development.

- **Campus Orientation:** Introduction to the university partner campus and accommodation.

- **Induction Games and Events:** Activities that allow learners to meet with each other, DISC staff and become familiar with campus locations in an enjoyable, safe, and academically informal social setting.

Ongoing Induction Support

18. Along with the introductory induction programme, DISC also provides ongoing induction support, which is known as the long induction programme. The long induction programme consists of a range of mandatory induction modules. All learners are required to participate in and complete these mandatory induction modules which

takes place over the course of the first term.

19. These induction modules are:

- **Self-Study Skills:** Developing independent learning habits, time management, and organisational skills.

- **IT Skills:** Navigating the VLE, using academic software, and digital literacy.

- **Academic Integrity:** Plagiarism awareness, referencing techniques, and ethical academic conduct.

- **Pathway to Success Module:** Highlights skills that are necessary for success in DISC and university.

- **Cultural Activities:** Visits to cultural sites and engagement in cultural activities.

Section Seven: Roles and Responsibilities

20. To ensure the successful planning, delivery, and monitoring of learner induction, specific roles and responsibilities are allocated to key members of staff. The table below outlines the main responsibilities for each role involved in the induction process:

Role	Responsibility
Student Experience Team	Coordinate and deliver induction activities and provide follow-up activities.
Academic Staff	Participate in academic orientation and offer subject-specific guidance.
Data and Operations Coordinator	Ensures all learner information is correct and updated to centre systems.
Progression Coach	Identifies and supports learners requiring additional help.

Section Eight: Implementation and Monitoring

21. This section outlines how the induction programme is delivered, evaluated, and continually improved to ensure it meets the needs of learners and complies with regulatory standards. The Centre Management Team (CMT), in collaboration with the Student Experience team and academic staff, is responsible for the effective implementation and ongoing monitoring of the induction process.

22. The effectiveness of the induction process is reviewed using data from student feedback (post-induction survey), academic performance tracking, and quality assurance evaluations.

23.   Issues raised by staff or learners are reported to, and addressed by, the CMT. Any required changes will be implemented within the following induction cycle.

24.   Reviews are conducted through meetings with the Student Experience Team, incorporating the collation of student and staff data gathered from post-induction student surveys and staff feedback. Updates to the induction processes are made after each induction cycle, once feedback has been collated, to support continuous improvement and ensure alignment with regulatory standards.

Section Nine: Review of Policy

25.   This policy will be reviewed annually to ensure continued alignment with QQI regulations and an agile responsiveness to the various profiles and needs of international learners.

Document Control

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Related documents	

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