

We build **futures**

one success story at a time



**Strategic
Plan** 2021 - 2025

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Introduction

The spread of the COVID-19 virus in 2020 and 2021 caused all of society to change the way it did things. The normal physical, face-to-face interactions were restricted because of the virus and much of our activity moved online.

We are fortunate that the technology enablers were, for the most part, in place and with relative ease, teaching, learning and assessment were able to move online. This was enabled further by the prolific use of digital technology in regular everyday life so for many learners, accessing their education through technology was a welcome alternative in an otherwise restricted life.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated many changes that were going to happen in higher education. We were already seeing changes arising from the increased availability and use of digital technology; people were seeking greater flexibility in how and when they learned; and particularly because of the impact of COVID on employment, there is a growing demand for skills-focused education and training.

Our strategic plan for the next five years is influenced by these expected changes, and others. Our teaching delivery will be developed taking account of how people want to study, at their own pace or in their own time, and will be focused on the outcome for the learner.

Our programmes will recognise changing work patterns and the need for lifelong learning and upskilling, as influenced by employers and government policy on skills requirements. Our programme portfolio will evolve to the changing international education market where many international students will continue to travel to Ireland to experience the culture as well as the education, others will remain at home and take an international course online, while some will remain at home and take an international course on their home campus. Our teaching will provide a learning experience that will be entertaining, immersive, experiential and guided.

Mission & vision purpose

DBS Mission

Our mission is to help individuals achieve their education and career goals. We build futures, one success story at a time.

DBS Vision

Diverse, innovative and collaborative.
Recognised globally for excellence in teaching and learning and for supporting every learner build a successful career.

DBS Purpose

We're here to inspire and nurture every learner to realise their career ambitions.



Values

Our values inform everything we do and underpin our behaviours and actions. They are the foundation upon which we develop and grow as an institution. They are to:

- 1 Act with integrity
- 2 Empower and support
- 3 Create opportunity
- 4 Grow knowledge
- 5 Drive results together



We act with integrity

which means we are honest and fair

For DBS:

Integrity is ingrained in the way we work, and everything we do is consistent with our purpose and values. We build clarity around how we will create success. And by being honest and fair, we also build trust between all of us to create a strong, dynamic and close team with clear roles and responsibilities.

For Learners:

Our relationships are built on fairness and trust. We do what we say we'll do. We deliver excellence in learning material and programmes. We provide the best in teaching. This integrity inspires learners and partners to continue engaging with us.

We empower and support

which means we are nurturing

For DBS:

We're in it together and we remember to stand in the other person's shoes. Yet we never stand still. We nurture our people to ensure they have the space and tools they need to work together to continuously improve how and what we deliver, directly or indirectly.

For Learners:

From delivering outstanding learning experiences to helping people, we genuinely care about empowering learners with the right tools, personal support and encouragement, to nurture them towards their individual successes.

We create opportunity

which means we are innovative

For DBS:

Opportunity doesn't just happen - we make it happen. From truly understanding the individual needs of learners to exploring exciting new approaches, we keep DBS personal, relevant and progressive. A place where we can become inspirational educators, grow into experts in our specialist fields and build leadership careers. Those who drive DBS' success, find their success at DBS.

For Learners:

By innovating and increasing quality, we actively help each learner to succeed and help them realise their personal ambitions. This in turn develops earning power - for them and the businesses they are part of.



We grow knowledge

which means we are inspiring

For DBS:

Learning is in our DNA. Investing in knowledge of our ever changing markets, and our individual fields, creates success for our learners - and for ourselves. It all starts with thinking "How can we all keep learning and making a difference, to help DBS grow?"

For Learners:

Through excellence in service and learning environments, we are totally focused on delivering successful outcomes for every learner.

This is how we help businesses grow the knowledge, quality and potential of their staff - and the future talent of tomorrow.

We drive results together

which means we are agile

For DBS:

Whatever our role, we all play an active part in helping our learners, and our organisation, consistently achieve success.

Focusing on what matters most, we collaborate and partner with colleagues, setting targets and measuring progress to turn ambition into outcomes, which we all celebrate.

For Learners:

We are passionate about the shared success of helping all our different learners to qualify and progress - and making businesses thrive. Our blend of traditional methods, innovative use of technology and seamless administration means we drive outstanding results and futures for every learner.

Strategic Objectives

Our strategic objectives are focused on delivering our institutional vision of being Diverse, Innovative and Collaborative. Recognised globally for excellence in teaching and learning and for supporting every learner build a successful career.

Our objectives are:

- 1.** Create work-ready graduates
- 2.** Deliver outstanding learning
- 3.** Support student engagement and success outside the classroom
- 4.** Be independently sustainable
- 5.** Support the national agenda on skills, citizenship and the environment
- 6.** Be distinct
- 7.** Develop a strong international ethos to build further on our international reach and reputation

2021 – 2025

1. Create work-ready graduates

We will create graduates who have the skills, knowledge and attributes sought by employers in their sector such that they can successfully progress to employment or further education.

To achieve this we will:

- Create and maintain strong links with employers for programme development
- Pursue an active engagement strategy with alumni to support current students in their careers
- Introduce more work-based learning where appropriate into our programmes
- Create an award-winning careers function that supports students into employment and is an attractive source of recruitment for employers
- Attain above-sector average employment outcomes amongst FT undergraduate students
- Be successful in labour market activation programmes (e.g. Springboard+, HCl, others) because of our progression rates to employment.

2. Deliver outstanding learning

We will deliver high-quality, teaching and learning that engages students and helps them to achieve their best academic outcome. Our teaching will be agile, using multiple modes that are best suited to the way our students learn and it will leverage digital technology. We will feed scholarship through employer-led practice-research by students and academic staff.

To achieve this we will:

- Describe and communicate to staff the desired learning experience across all teaching modes
- Redefine the roles required for the delivery of T&L in the new multi-mode environment
- Attract and retain talented academic delivery staff who are passionate about T&L and supported to develop professionally
- Create an academic culture whereby student success is the core objective and meeting that objective is an ambition for all staff
- Further evolve the academic supports offered to students, targeting those who are at risk
- Use our learning infrastructure to enhance T&L and the student experience
- Improve student retention, progression and completion rates, in excess of the sector average
- Provide opportunities for staff to engage in practice research.

Strategic Objectives

3. Support student engagement and success outside the classroom

We will create an engaging experience for students that embeds them in the College, helps form lasting friendships, supports their learning achievement and helps create well rounded citizens.

To achieve this we will:

- Create opportunities for learners to bond outside the classroom, taking account of how learners access their teaching
- Encourage the active participation of the student body in student life outside the classroom
- Promote initiatives to learners that contribute to community and society
- Offer supports to learners for their health and wellbeing
- Offer specific enhanced supports to international learners based on their additional needs arising from being in a different country or culture
- Participate in sector-wide initiatives such as studentsurvey.ie, National Forum initiatives and others that contribute to sector-wide student support activities.

4. Be independently sustainable

We will invest in growth, programme viability, the quality of our academic delivery, our customer service and our efficiency with the purpose of ensuring our future sustainability, expanding both our national and international footprints.

To achieve this we will:

- Maximise lifelong learning opportunities and develop a long term relationship with learners
- Continue to develop market-led programmes to a known need
- Develop a commercial professional training and education business to target the market for short, skills-based courses
- Have a clear pathway to achieving Delegated Authority from QQI
- Actively seek and use feedback from students to improve their experience and increase NPS
- Create a customer service plan and charter, covering internal and external customers
- Further develop our IT Infrastructure to support the operations of the college and our T&L strategy
- Review and enhance our processes to increase efficiency for students and staff and reduce wastage of time and resources
- Have a talent management strategy that ensures we recruit and retain staff with the optimal mix of attributes who are highly engaged with the organisation and motivated to the overall DBS objectives
- Establish an internal communications plan that informs staff, creates opportunities for feedback and contributes to a positive, professional, effective culture.

2021 – 2025

5. Support the National Agenda on Skills, Citizenship and the Environment

We will contribute to the Irish national objectives of meeting skills gaps to enhance the economy, advance the green agenda and enable people to understand what being a good citizen means.

To achieve this we will:

- Develop programmes to meet the specific skills needs identified by government
- Ensure all programmes and teaching delivery promote values of good citizenship
- Actively promote and pursue equality, diversity and inclusion in everything the College does
- Take specific actions to reduce the environmental impact of the College and its community
- Develop and use collaborations with others to further this agenda, including ICOS, HECA, National Forum for the Enhancement of T&L, and others
- Build on engagement locally and nationally to support national objectives.

6. Be distinct

We will differentiate ourselves and stay ahead of competitors by leveraging new technologies, innovation and student experience initiatives that develop and deliver propositions that engage and excite learners and clients.

To achieve this we will:

- Continue to increase the use of digital technology in teaching and learning delivery, making multi-modal teaching the standard at DBS
- Leverage the agility enabled by our centralised organisation structure
- Introduce greater innovation to programme design, content and teaching delivery
- Develop an innovation hub and supports for students to actualise their ideas
- Define the expected experience of different learner profiles and create propositions to meet their needs
- Have our distinct proposition recognised through international award ratings.

7. Develop a strong international ethos to build further on our international reach and reputation

We will enhance our global presence by attracting increased numbers of international students to DBS and by expanding our teaching footprint abroad. Our success will be a function of the relevance of our programmes to international learners, the ease a learner has interacting with DBS and the quality of the support we provide to international students.

To achieve this we will:

- Identify new international markets for student recruitment
- Target more articulation arrangements with HEIs in other countries
- Widen our offering overseas through transnational provision
- Provide easily accessible information about the programmes, services and activities we offer
- Focus on developing long-term strategic partnerships which meet our criteria for collaboration and will enhance our reputation
- Offer an experience that explicitly meets the needs and expectations of international students, from recruitment to graduation
- Develop a strong international focus and awareness in all our staff
- Pursue a strategy with overseas alumni to recruit new international students.

